

ENGLISH  ACTION

Students Lives:  
A Selection of Cases

Report 1: 2011



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*Students Lives Study: A Selection of Cases (Report 1 : 2011).*

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# Students Lives Study: A Selection of Cases (Report 1)

## Executive summary

### a) Background

The *Students Lives Study* investigates the learning journeys of a group of students who have, at some point, been learning English in the classrooms of teachers who are taking part in the English in Action (EIA) schools programme. These teachers themselves are the subject of a parallel study entitled the *Teacher Lives Study*. Both studies seek to represent what it is like to learn and experience English language (EL) in a communicative way (and for the *Teachers Lives study*, also what it is like to teach) and to see how this develops over the life of the EIA programme. The *Students Lives Study* is the start of a series of small studies which follow a group of students over a period of up to seven years as they progress through the school system and beyond. (The *Teachers Lives Study* similarly has a longitudinal case study design.) Both primary and secondary students are investigated through the study.

The focus of the study is the experience of EIA for a student in terms of his/her life as an English speaker and learner, family and community member, and, if appropriate, an employee/higher education student. It explores how their views and beliefs change in relation to each of these facets of their life as they get older, within the period of the study.

The results reported here are from the first round of data collection (February 2011). The next set of data was collected in March 2012; this study (reported subsequently) shows changes for the students over that year.

### b) Methodology

The approach of this research is that of a case study, but carried out as a series of annual snapshots over time. The students (the 'cases') selected are not typical or representative, but are seen as unique. Although superficial similarities or dimensions may exist at this initial stage of the study, the cases are likely to diverge over time. An initial sample of 90 students were selected from the classes of 15 teachers (those who are the subject of the *Teacher Lives Study*), with the expectation that this group will deplete over the years of the study.

Data collection involved interviewing students, their parents, their English teachers and another of their other teachers, observing the students and teachers in the classroom, and taking photographs.

Researchers from the Institute of Education and Research (IER) at the University of Dhaka collected, transcribed and translated the data and also constructed the case study accounts. They were trained by the EIA team in February 2011, and then undertook fieldwork in March 2011 over a period of at least three days. The interviews and classroom observations focused on trying to understand the students' experience of learning and using English language, drawing on data from both the school and the student's home. The data collection involved following ethical guidelines based on confidentiality and informed consent from those involved.

Analysis in this first year study of the *Students Lives Study* was based upon the headings used in the interview schedules, and these were used to organise and create a narrative case study for each student. This report contains 10 such case studies, chosen to demonstrate the range of students and to show some interesting, typical and untypical cases. The analysis was carried out initially through a workshop led by the EIA team and there was subsequent checking of the cases by that team. Attempts were made to account for case selection bias, and to minimise sources of bias in the data collection and analyses processes.

### **c) Cases reported**

The 10 cases in this report were chosen according to a range of criteria: gender, English language (EL) competence, rural/urban school location, geographical (district) location, support at home, economic circumstances, and school class (Class 3–7). The cases cover each of these criteria, but were neither comprehensive, nor exhaustive, of the range. Short summaries of each case are provided below.

#### *i) Mariam*

Mariam is positive about her secondary school and, in her mother's view, is very regular in her attendance. Mariam's favourite subject is mathematics but she also likes English 1st paper class because of the participatory nature of the activities. In particular, she likes the games. On the other hand, she has a more negative attitude towards learning the rules of grammar through memorisation in English 2nd paper class and Bangla 2nd paper class. Mariam is a self-motivated student. She is attentive and enthusiastic and tries to do well in her studies but is not always satisfied with her performance. The other teacher interviewed and her mother thought the same. Mariam thinks if she studies more, she will do better. She does well in co-curricular activities too. She can draw, sing and participates in the assembly regularly. Mariam was elected as one of the class captains by her classmates and she works collaboratively with others. The other teacher said she is regular in her class and with her homework.

Mariam lives in a rural area with her parents and two brothers. Her father has a tailoring shop and mother is a housewife. She is from a middle-class family. Mariam's mother did not complete her studies at secondary level, but reads different types of books as a hobby – she thinks this helps her to guide her daughter. Mariam's father is the sole earner of the family and her mother manages the household and childcare. Though Mariam gets proper support from her family members for homework and study, she also has a private tutor to assist her.

Mariam wants to be a doctor, and it is her mother's dream to see her daughter in this profession. The socio-cultural practice of the area is for girls to marry at an early age. Moreover, the mother has a conventional attitude towards 'serviceholder' mothers; according to her, service-holder mothers cannot look after their children properly. This reveals a conflict between Mariam's mother's aspirations for her daughter's future and her traditional values. Both the student and her mother are aware of the importance of learning English, but there is no use of communicative English in the home environment; Mariam only uses English in her English classes. At home, they usually watch Hindi programmes on TV.

#### *ii) Mozibur*

Mozibur likes attending primary school. He thinks that his school is good as the teachers take care in the teaching–learning process. However, his guardian is moderately pleased with the school. Overall,

Mozibur is good at all subjects. He performs best in mathematics, although he likes English the most. He seems to like topics that help him to develop a deep understanding of a subject. He is spontaneous in participating in classroom activities. Generally, he is friendly and likes to work in groups with his friends. He is only interested in sports when it comes to co-curricular activities.

The student lives in an urban area with his guardian (aunt); both her and her husband are primary school teachers. They are both well educated. Mozibur is from a middle-class family and gets help from his house tutor with his schoolwork/homework. His aunt does not go to the school often, although the school invites her and welcomes her cordially. She is supportive of Mozibur's study at school and at home. She thinks that English is important for his future life, although Mozibur gets limited opportunities to speak English at home. Mozibur wants to be an engineer in the future, though he does not have a clear understanding of the 'journey' required to become one. Moreover, he does not seem to know about the importance of speaking English to get into such a profession. However, Mozibur is good at English and he is confident in speaking in English at school.

### *iii) Razia*

Razia attends secondary school regularly. Her mother described her daughter as an enthusiastic student and said that she has never missed classes since enrolling at the school. Razia likes to go to school because it is a friendly environment. Razia rated English 1st paper and 2nd paper as her preferred classes. She likes English classes because of the way the teacher teaches the lessons. Razia was found to be very active in English class. She engaged with her peers during group work and participated in co-curricular activities. Both the English teacher and the other teacher commented that despite achieving an average result in English, Razia is better than other students. She participates in a range of co-curricular activities such as singing, dancing and sports. Razia receives a stipend from the school.

She comes from a poor family and lives in a rural area with her parents. She has three sisters and one brother. Her mother said despite financial difficulties, she tries to provide all the necessary items which Razia needs to do her homework and schoolwork. She is not, however, able to provide Razia with books. Razia gets sporadic help her homework from her sister; her teacher also helps her with this. Her mother said that they are usually invited to the school for the result-giving ceremony, sports day, and on occasions when their children are absent from school.

The student wants to be a magistrate, as does her sister. She is aware that it will require her to sit exams at college and university levels. Razia also wants to study at in the English-medium because she wishes to speak in English. Her mother is fully aware of the necessity of English and she thinks that her daughter is interested in learning English.

### *iv) Nadira*

Nadira attends primary school regularly. She enjoys school and is interested in learning English. She is less interested in mathematics, and both she and her mother think that she is poor in in this subject. Despite this, her teachers say that she performs well in all subjects and gets good grades. She is very enthusiastic when participating in classroom activities and does not like it if the teachers do not ask her questions. Nadira is not sure whether she performs well at school – she knows she answers questions that her teachers ask, but says sometimes she does not fully understand the questions. Her mother thinks

Nadira is an enthusiastic student and her school performance is very good, but that she could make more progress. Both Nadira and her parents like the school: Nadira likes it because she has good friends and teachers who inspire her; her father likes the school because it does not pressurise the students. Nadira takes part in co-curricular activities, such as dancing and singing, and often takes the lead in these. She also participates in sports. Nadira wants to become a scientist, and her father would also like her to pursue this profession. She knows that she will need English to go in to this career and will have to study for many years.

Nadira lives in an urban area with her medium-class, educated family – her mother is an English teacher in a high school and her father is a government employee. As such, she has a strong family background and is expected to acquire higher education. Her mother often visits the school, for instance, to discuss Nadira's performance; however, she does not do this as often as she would have liked due to her busy job. She gets support at home from her mother, father, sister and a home tutor. These favourable conditions, and the good relationship between her parents and her teachers, seem to have a positive impact on her school performance.

*v) Nur*

Nur likes going to primary school and attends regularly. He thinks his school is good, that his lessons are very interesting, and that the teachers are good and helpful. His mother also thinks the school is good because of its location and the teachers. Nur thinks he does well at school and says his teachers also think this. He says he is able to answer the teachers' questions and that he gets praise from them for this. His mother is also pleased with his school performance, is proud of him and thinks he is enthusiastic. His teachers also said he was a good student – he does well in both English and maths, though sometimes does not pay attention in maths lessons.

Bangla and English are Nur's favourite subjects. He tries to sit at the front so he can participate in the class, for instance, to answer questions. He is more spontaneous in English than mathematics. In English class, the teacher involves him by asking him questions and asking him to mark other students' writing tasks as a reward for performing well in class. In maths class, he sometimes doesn't understand, but does not ask questions to clarify. He does, however, learn from other students when he has difficulties, and they also learn from him. Indeed, he prefers to work with his friends and thinks the competition between them helps them to learn quickly: in a group he tries to perform better than the others. He takes part in co-curricular activities, such as sports, and often takes on a leadership role in these. He has friends he plays with at school. Nur says he wants to become a doctor; though his mother says that he sometimes says he wants to be a doctor, and sometimes an engineer. Nur receives help with his fees from the school fund.

Nur lives in a rural area with his family. His mother works at a college and his father has a small business. They have relatively low-level education and some financial difficulties. They want Nur to acquire a higher education, if they can afford to support him. Nur would also like to go on to study at the college where his mother works and then further college. There are few opportunities for him to experience English at home: they do not own a TV and no English is spoken here. He receives help with his homework mostly from his mother, but gets a little help also from his father, aunt and uncle. He also has a home tutor. His mother visits the school every month or two to pay fees and sometimes to discuss his performance, etc.

*vi) Tapan*

Tapan likes going to primary school and thinks his teachers are good; his parents also think this. His teachers say he does not attend regularly and this is because he is indifferent to his studies, his parents lack awareness, and he plays truant. The student, however, reports that he attends school on most days. His teachers also say that he does not do his homework regularly.

Tapan thinks he is a good student; he knows this because the teacher asks him questions. He thinks that his work is well-received by his teachers and his parents. Having said this, he knows that he gets help from the teacher when he cannot answer a question or if he doesn't know the answer. Tapan's other subject teacher does not regard him as a good student – she thinks he is naughty and inattentive and disrupts the class. However, his English teacher thinks he is not a bad student, but that he is shy and often uses limited English in class and none with his friends. Tapan likes English the best of all his subjects, because of how the classes are taught and because he likes to read English. He has good relationships with his classmates and has a best friend in his class. He prefers to work with others than on his own because they can help each other. His father visits the school regularly, when he is invited by teachers and to check on his son's progress and attendance.

Tapan lives in a rural area. His father is a driver and has no formal education. Tapan wants to be a teacher and his father wants this too. Tapan has a younger brother. In terms of support at home, he has a private tutor and his cousin also helps him. However, there is no English spoken in the home and there are no English books, apart from his school textbooks. Both Tapan and his father are aware of the importance of English for his future life. However, Tapan's teachers are doubtful about his future prospects considering his lack of attention at school and his living conditions at home. His English teacher thinks he could do better if his parents were more concerned.

*vii) Shahina*

Shahina is positive about her secondary school and her teachers, and enjoys attending. Her father also has a positive attitude towards the school. Shahina's attendance is good. She likes maths best and is very good at it. She likes English second best. Her English teacher says she is becoming more confident in speaking English with him and her classmates; however, her father thinks she could do better. Shahina thinks her teachers are positive about her work, and her teachers think that she understands everything taught. She likes to work with her friends in groups and gets help from them if she does not understand something. She takes part in sports in school, although her father says she is not keen on this.

Shahina lives in a rural area. Her mother is conscious of her daughter's education and helps her with her homework. Shahina's father studied up to Class 10. He has a fishery and agricultural business. He thinks both English and Bangla are important; he understands that English is important for job prospects and for communicating with foreigners. He often visits the school to see how Shahina is performing, and attends parents meetings when invited. Shahina has two brothers: one who works in the Middle East, the other who is studying at university. Shahina does her homework regularly and usually does it by herself, but sometimes gets help from her mother or private tutor. At home she watches television programmes such as the BBC Janala programme *Mojay Mojay Shekha* to help her to learn how to speak English. Shahina wants to be a doctor; her parents support her high aspirations and her teachers think she can achieve this. She knows she will have to study hard to do this and that English will be important to her.

*viii) Monimur*

Monimur is an average primary school student – he is attentive, responsive and is usually regular in attending both academic and co-curricular activities. He thinks his school is good and that he is doing well, although sometimes he misbehaves outside of class. He is good at English, but cannot speak it well. His English teacher thinks he is bright. He likes Islamic studies best; English is one of his least favourite subjects. At school he likes to work with his friends. In terms of co-curricular activities, he participates in singing and the cultural programme. Over the last few years his health and family problems have sometimes caused him to be absent from school.

Monimur is from a rural area. His mother has no formal education. He has two sisters; his elder sister attends a BRAC school. Monimur's parents visit the school, and his teacher visits the home where he discusses Monimur's progress with his parents. He has resources for study at home (e.g. books, notebook, pen) but no TV or radio. He does his homework regularly and gets help to do this from his uncle and aunt.

The school helps Monimur by providing a stipend, relief from exam fees, etc., which may help him to progress in his education. His mother wants him to finish primary education, and Monimur wants to go beyond this.

*ix) Kazi*

Kazi is positive about his primary school and his attendance is good. His favourite subject is mathematics, which he thinks he is good at; English is his second favourite. His English teacher thinks he is one of the most confident in speaking English in his class and he encourages Kazi to come to the front to speak in English to further improve his confidence. Kazi is spontaneous in his responses in class and prefers group work to individual work. He has some friends. He is introvert and as such he is not very interested in the various co-curricular activities that take place in the school; he does, however, engage in these if the teachers ask him to.

Kazi lives in an urban area. He is a member of a tribe and is not fluent in speaking Bangla, although he can write in Bangla well. His father is a small farmer. His parents have some formal education but to a relatively low level. They are not able to help Kazi much with his homework as they are busy, but his cousin and elder sister help him. Despite this help, sometimes Kazi brings his homework back to school. His parents think the school is very good in terms of its environment and teachers. His father visits the school to discuss his son's progress. Kazi thinks he has the basic materials at home to do his study. He tries to speak English at home. Kazi wants to be a doctor and his parents also wish for him to pursue this career. Kazi understands that education is required to become a doctor, but does not think learning English will be necessary in pursuing this. His teacher thinks he is capable, and has the necessary support, to pass the HSC.

*x) Khaleda*

Khaleda has a positive attitude to her primary school, attends on a regular basis and does her homework. She is not very responsive in class and is afraid of her teachers; as such, she does not always ask them for help. She prefers group work to individual work. She is a tribal student and struggles in Bangla (although she likes this subject the most). She does worse in English than Bangla. Because she has difficulties with



languages, the English teacher asks her fewer questions than her classmates. However, the other subject teacher does the opposite (i.e. asks her more questions) for the same reason. She is best at science, though this is not one of her favourite subjects. Khaleda is introvert and has few friends, but she does have a friend that she walks to school with. She is less interested in the co-curricular activities that take place at school, but does any work the teachers ask of her.

Khaleda is currently living in an urban area, but her home is in a remote, rural village, deep in the hills. She does not live with mother and father - she lives with one of her aunts (her guardian) so she can go to school. Neither of her parents have any formal education. Her father has only visited the school once to register her at the school. If the school calls for any reason, her aunt tries to go to the school; however, most of the time she is busy with work. The aunt does, however, help Khaleda with her homework. The aunt has a good opinion of the school; she thinks it is good as the students get the opportunity to sing songs and draw in class. Khaleda wants to be an English teacher and to teach students with singing, not beating. However, as she does not have a steady family background, both of her school teachers are doubtful of the level of education she can achieve.

#### **d) Looking to the future**

The future stages of the study will focus on issues that need further exploration, or those which seem to be significant in the progress of the student as a learner and user of English. In addition, there will be the need to complete the picture of aspects of students' lives that have been missed during this first stage. As data about the students are built up, it will be possible to undertake a cross-case analysis to explore some of the concepts and ideas that might represent general themes around the various features of the students' lives. The initial themes that have emerged are: teaching and learning experience/preferred approach to learning; parental involvement/home-school partnership; effectiveness of the school; motivation; engagement; available resources; social skills development; support with homework; and perceived importance of speaking English/opportunity to speak in English. The cross-case analysis intends to derive an in-depth understanding of these experiences by exploring the datasets.

Future reports will both capture the transitions which students make and explore themes which have emerged from the cross-case analysis. There will possibly be an online report, which could be updated annually, of all the cases.



## Table of Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>i</b>
a) Background	i
b) Methodology	i
c) Cases reported	ii
d) Looking to the future	vii
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Methodology</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 The instruments	3
2.2 The sample	3
2.3 Training of researchers	4
2.4 Undertaking the fieldwork	4
2.5 Ethical issues	4
2.6 Data analysis	4
2.7 Issues of representativeness and bias	6
<b>3. Overview of the cases</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. Individual cases</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 Mariam	10
4.2 Mozibur	13
4.3 Razia	14
4.4 Nadira	16
4.5 Nur	19
4.6 Tapan	23
4.7 Shahina	26
4.8 Monimur	27
4.9 Kazi	28
4.10 Khaleda	30
<b>5. Looking to the future</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>35</b>

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Student interview schedule	xii
Appendix 2: Teacher interview schedule	xiv
Appendix 3: Parent interview schedule	xv
Appendix 4: Observation schedule	xvi
Appendix 5: Subject Ranking Sheet - Primary	xix
Appendix 6: Student Ranking Sheet - Secondary	xx
Appendix 7: Students Information Sheet	xxi
Appendix 8: Interview guidance notes	xxii
Appendix 9: Observers instructions	xxvi
Appendix 10: Ethical guidance	xxx
Appendix 11: Fieldwork and file management guidance	xxxii
Appendix 12: Fieldwork schedule	xxxiv
Appendix 13: Training notes	xxxv
Appendix 14: Training programme	xxxviii
Appendix 15: Analysis template	xl
Appendix 16: Analysis workshop training material	xli

## List of tables

Table 1	Output 4, Indicator 3	2
Table 2	Cases selected by criteria	9

## 1. Introduction

The *Student Lives Study* is a longitudinal study which investigates the experience of students who are learning English and have taken part in English in Action (EIA) schools programme for some of their school life; the students have, at some point, been learning English in the classrooms of teachers who are taking part in the EIA programme. These teachers themselves are the subject of a parallel study entitled the *Teacher Lives Study*.

The *Students Lives Study* looks at the learning of English in the context of school, home/community and higher education or employment (at later stages). In particular, the study examines individual students ('cases') to illustrate 'learning journeys' in relation to changing attitudes and beliefs about developing English language (EL) competence. At the time of this report (2011), the students studied were participating in the English in Action (EIA) intervention in primary or secondary schools in Bangladesh.

As a longitudinal study, annual data collection rounds will be undertaken over the remainder of the project (a maximum of seven years) to capture the students' 'lives' as they move through their school careers and on to employment, higher education or other activities subsequent to school. Thus, the cases presented in this first report are not the whole story; rather, they are a small part of an account over a number of years, and one that will get richer as time progresses. Each round of data collection will provide a snapshot of each student's experience in school, at home and in the community, in relation to his or her aspirations and EL competence.

This study provides an in-depth account of individual students and contextualises their EL acquisition, enabling EIA to better understand student learning. The cases reported here exemplify a range of factors that currently shape these learning journeys, such as family economic background and support at home.

The *Student Lives Study* addresses the following research questions:

- What is the experience of EIA for a student in terms of his or her life as an English speaker and learner, family and community member and, if appropriate, an employee or higher-education student?
- How does that student's views and beliefs in each of these facets (above) of his or her life change as he or she gets older, within the period of the study?

The study is part of the EIA research action plan (see Table 1):

**Table 1: Output 4, Indicator 3\***

Indicator 3: Research activity - Mapping, Reviewing and Disseminating research - drawing on Sector and RME generated studies and knowledge products						
Indicator	Study	Purpose	Process & Product	Timeline	Completion Date	Persons/ Contractors Responsible
Researching wider context.	Nine-year (longitudinal) cohort studies and individual research (case) studies.	To contribute to the 'numbers and stories' detailing individual learning journeys. To provide evidence for EIA capacity building in communicative English.	Individual studies to be agreed through appropriate RME Steering Committee protocols.	Interviews, participatory research (including multi modal methods): October 2009 to March 2010.	Ongoing - initial reports in May 2010.	EIA base and OU RME team.

\*Information extracted from EIA 2009.

It is also linked with the following logframe indicators:

- Indicator 2: Access to improved employment and higher education.
- Indicator 2: Employer satisfaction (with applicants' /employees' communicative English).
- Indicator 4: Motivation for learning and using English among the population of Bangladesh.

This study is parallel to the *Teacher Lives Study* and provides context to the other EIA studies on English language competence (3a), classroom practice (2a) and student perceptions (2b).

The results reported here are from the first round of data collection (February 2011) of the *Students Lives Study*. The next set of data was collected in March 2012, and will be reported later to show changes for the students over that year.

## 2. Methodology

The *Student Lives Study* utilises a case-study methodology with a longitudinal dimension. It endeavours to be biographical, based on a series of snapshots taken at annual intervals. The student selection is not intended to be typical or representative, but the cases will be explored to show that each is a unique individual, though there may be superficial similarities or dimensions at this stage. The cases are likely to diverge as they are studied over time.

### 2.1 The instruments

Several different instruments were used to collect the data for this study: interview schedules for students (Appendix 1), teachers (the English teacher and another subject teacher) (Appendix 2), and parents (Appendix 3); a classroom observation schedule (Appendix 4); a subject-ranking sheet (Appendix 5 and 6), asking students to rank their subjects in order of preference; and also a Student Information Sheet (Appendix 7) to collect basic contact information for each student. Some guidance was included in the instruments themselves, but additional guidance was provided for the interviews (Appendix 8) and observations (Appendix 9). Further to this, guidelines were also produced on ethical considerations (Appendix 10) and fieldwork and file management (Appendix 11). The researchers were also given an suggested fieldwork schedule (Appendix 12).

The interviews were designed to explore the student's life at school and home, as well as his or her aspirations for his or her future education and work. Each interviewee was also asked about the student's English language (EL) capability (it is intended to collect formal assessment data on this at a later date). The classroom observation schedule was designed to focus upon the student's participation in classroom activities, collected through notes taken by the observer during the lesson.

### 2.2 The sample

A total of 600 government school teachers participated in the EIA schools programme during the pilot stage of the project (2010–2011): 400 primary teachers (from approximately 200 schools – two teachers per school), and 200 secondary teachers (from approximately 100 schools – two per school).

The sampling for this first study of student lives was linked to a parallel one of teacher lives. This study was designed to reach the students of 2.5% of those 600 EIA teachers (i.e. 15 teachers). The sampling of teachers was done first – 8 primary teachers and 7 secondary teachers were chosen – then six students of each of the teachers were selected for this study (90 in total). The teachers were chosen partly on the basis of the schools which the IER researchers were able to access regularly, but they also covered a variety of geographical areas. Classes the teachers taught were then selected, covering the grades of interest (chosen to follow a student's school career and beyond, but avoiding, where possible, very young students, i.e. those in Grades 1–3). As such, students from Class 4 (primary school) and Classes 6 and 7 (secondary school) were targeted. This would enable the study to track transitions from primary to secondary, through most of the secondary grades and then on to destinations following school. Where possible, the intention was to select an equal number of boys and girls in each class, although there were modifications to this to counter gender bias in secondary schools (e.g. some secondary schools selected were girls schools).

The size of the sample of students (90) was chosen to allow for the inevitable 'loss' of students to the study through untraceable movements to other schools, drop out from school and movement to unknown destinations subsequent to school. The relatively large sample size should enable EIA to report on a

number of cases who have been studied for the whole life of the EIA programme, and a number of other partial cases who will have been studied for several years.

### **2.3 Training of researchers**

The data for this first study of student lives was collected by 15 researchers from the Institute of Education and Research (IER) at the University of Dhaka. The IER researchers are independent of both the EIA programme and EIA staff. In February 2010 the researchers were given two days of hands-on training by two members of the EIA team in order to fully brief them about the study, to introduce and explain the instruments, allow trialling, and to clarify any issues. (Training notes and a training programme are included as Appendices 13 and 14.) The researchers were given the instruments and guidance documents which provide instructions on conducting the research (see Appendices 1-12). Both the guidance documents and the training aimed to ensure that the instruments were used correctly in the field and data was captured as intended. This helped to maximise the validity and reliability of the data collection.

### **2.4 Undertaking the fieldwork**

The IER researchers carried out the fieldwork between 9-14 March 2011. (Note that these researchers had already carried out fieldwork in these schools for the *Teacher Lives Study* and earlier EIA studies, and as such they were familiar with, and known by, the schools and teachers involved.) The fieldwork consisted of a minimum of three days of interviews and observation, and an initial day to select the students and contact their parents. On the first day of data collection the first three students were observed in an EIA English language lesson as well as a lesson in another subject. The two teachers involved in these lessons, and the three students, were also interviewed. The second day repeated the previous day's data collection on a further three students in another class (observations and interviews). The third day was used to interview the students' parents. (Details and fieldwork guidance are provided in Appendices 1-12). Transcription and translation of the interviews were carried out subsequent to the fieldwork by the IER researchers.

### **2.5 Ethical issues**

As with the *Teacher Lives Study*, the researchers were made aware of the important ethical issues that lay at the heart of the *Student Lives Study*. The guidance provided (see Appendix 10) stressed confidentiality and informed consent from students, parents and teachers. It assumed that the student would be identified, but allowed for the inclusion of students who wanted to remain anonymous in any subsequent reports or publications (to maximise the sample). The process of obtaining consent will be undertaken in each subsequent year of the study.

### **2.6 Data analysis**

There were two basic stages of analysis in this first year of the study: 1) to establish a case record from the raw data of interviews and observations, and ii) to create from this case record a narrative of the student as a learner and user of English in his or her first year. The first stage of analysis was undertaken in a session with IER researchers (7-9 August 2011; see Appendix 15). The researchers worked through all data collected and associated documents (interview transcriptions, observations, etc.) to organise them in terms of the following headings:



- Background
- At school
- At home
- Aspirations
- EL competence

Some of these headings were further subdivided to indicate specific elements of the interview questions as follows:

- *At school*: student's views of school (motivation); attendance; views as a learner (student's view of self); participation in lessons; peer relationships (or with friends); student-teacher relationships; engagement in co-curricular activities<sup>1</sup>; parent-school relationship (home-school partnership); ranking of subjects (by student).
- *At home*: parental/family background; support (to student) in doing homework (resources for learning); parent's views on learning English (and opportunity for learning English); parent-school relationship (home-school partnership).

Some of the IER researchers chose to introduce further subdivisions which they deemed relevant to the particular students and the information they collected about them. In all cases the conceptual level of the headings (i.e. categories) was low as at this stage the cases are descriptive rather than analytic.

This organisation and subsequent writing of the narrative case (the second stage of the analysis) was aided by using a template (Appendix 15), made up of two parts: the first for quotes pertaining to each of the headings; the second enabling the corresponding narrative case for each to be constructed based on the quotes. The training material provided a sample narrative, based on an analysis done by the EIA team on the data from one student (see Appendix 16). The analysis workshop focused on enabling the IER researchers to produce one case narrative.

Subsequent to the workshop, one case was produced by each researcher (the completion of the second stage of the analysis) and these were submitted to the EIA team. The team checked the cases against the data (using the table (see Appendix 15) and revisiting the original data where necessary) and provided comments that enabled the researchers to construct the rest of their cases (six each). These remaining cases were then checked by the EIA team using the templates that contained the original quoted data, and language was corrected, if necessary.

Each IER researcher, and the EIA team member checking the researcher's work, were asked to choose one or two cases that provided some interesting, typical or untypical examples from the six they worked upon. From this, a selection of 10 cases was made for the purpose of reporting in this first year of study (reported in Section 4). All of the cases (and, indeed, the data upon which they were based) will be used in subsequent years to document the changes that take place in the students' lives.

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<sup>1</sup> These are activities outside the academic subjects of the Bangladeshi curriculum, which might be considered within the curriculum in other countries.

As the aim of the *Student Lives Study* is to present particular student lives as case studies, there is no requirement for a 'cross-case' analysis, as there was, for example, in the qualitative study of the classroom practices of teachers (EIA 2011). Nevertheless, there will be an attempt to look at some common features across the cases, which gives rise to a third stage of analysis. Although some commonalities were evident in considering the cases as a whole (see Section 3), it is too early in the study to carry out a definitive analysis. Indeed, it may be that the features vary with time.

Nevertheless, a number of themes seem to occur in the current cases, and may add resonance as the students develop. These are:

- teaching and learning experience/preferred approach to learning;
- parental involvement/home-school partnership;
- effectiveness of the school;
- motivation at school;
- engagement in co-curricular activities;
- resources available for learning;
- social skills development;
- support with homework;
- perceived importance of speaking English/opportunity to speak in English.

Section 5 of the report will return to these features in the context of analyses at a later stage.

## **2.7 Issues of representativeness and bias**

Inevitably, a selection of case studies and the analysis of those studies will lead to questions of bias. The selection was not intended to be representative of all students who experience the learning of English through EIA approaches. There are few, if any, such longitudinal case studies that would enable a selection to be made that would represent the variables that lead to specific kinds of biographies of students. It is likely that the socio-economic class of the student's parents, the district where the school is located, whether that is a rural or an urban location, and perhaps features of the school, all have an effect on the outcomes of students' lives as they learn and use English, but beyond that there are many factors that may lead to different paths. Furthermore, a reason for looking at individuals and their experience over time is to understand and celebrate the differences and complexities that create these differences. The best that can be achieved is to have in the sample an adequate range of students and lives, and the number selected helps to enable this. Inevitably, the 'loss' of students over the years of the study will erode this range and do so in a way that is entirely unpredictable and adding further unknown bias. In the light of these sources of bias, it is important to bear in mind that the quantitative studies in the EIA research programme establish a representative picture of student behaviour and English language competence. However, this representativeness misses the very details that the *Student Lives Study* seeks to understand. As with all research, a wide range of studies using a variety of methodologies provides confidence in the overall findings.

There is one final and deliberate element of bias in the case selection that might seem peculiar to this particular report, but not to the study as a whole: not all of the 90 cases are presented, rather a selection of 10 has been made. As noted earlier, this selection (by the IER researchers and the EIA team) was not intended to be representative of all the cases studied; rather, it deliberately attempted to show diversity. Some students are 'typical': for example, a student with one parent who is an English teacher and who does well, and who probably will go on to do well in school; in contrast, another from a poor economic background, yet seems to exhibit good competence; together they may be typical of what might turn out to be a successful English speaker and one who may well be, but will have to overcome many obstacles. Both of these examples contrast again with another student who the IER researchers describe as 'irregular, reluctant and naughty' (on the basis of what the teachers reported), yet who himself or herself wants to be a teacher. The remaining students reported here are typical, untypical or just 'interesting' (as the IER researcher described the student who wants to be a teacher).

Putting the sample selection bias to one side, there remain issues of bias in the way the data collection and analysis have been undertaken. The first of these was countered by having clear sets of questions and areas of investigation for the researchers to cover in the interviews/observations, and any biases in these are open to scrutiny. In the initial stages of this study it is likely that the biases of particular researchers will have little effect, as the questions provided are fairly straightforward with few probing questions that could be open to different interpretations. As time goes by, this source of bias may increase, but this is typical of any such qualitative study. Training sessions and discussion among researchers were used to minimise such bias.

Second, there is the analysis process and the selections and interpretations made as part of this, which are also sources of bias. Here the use of the template (see Appendix 16) and the headings used (which are of a low inference) enable the researchers' choices to be examined. Indeed, the first case study produced by each researcher was open to an alternative analysis by one member of the EIA team. Again, the relatively low level of interpretation involved with the responses reduces the risk of bias at this stage. However, some interpretation is required and the template enabled this to be examined by a second person.

The approaches adopted in the design of the instruments, training, data collection and analysis go some way to meet Yin's (2003: 34) criteria for quality in research design, which he applies to case study research.

### 3. Overview of the cases

General criteria were used to select the 10 case studies reported here: gender, English language capability, rural/urban school location, geographical (district) location, support at home, economic circumstances, and school class (Class 3–7). There are cases with high, medium or low English language competence, rich or poor family backgrounds, varied levels of family support for learning, and from a range of age groups. The intention was to portray potentially different ‘learning journeys’ that develop English language learning, experience and competence, while taking into account various factors that might influence and shape the individual journeys. Thus, although the selection aims to provide typical, untypical and ‘interesting’ cases, there was also an attempt to represent a range of students against the more obvious features of the cases. This prevents any gross bias in trying to provide a picture of the students who participate in classrooms where the EIA approach is used. As Section 2 made clear, the selection of cases was not meant to be a representative sample, even of the 90 studied, let alone of all the students involved in EIA schools programme.

Table 2 shows the cases selected to be reported here, against the various criteria discussed above.

**Table 2: Cases selected by criteria**

Case study	Gender	Primary/ Secondary	Class	English capability	Support at home	Rural/urban	Economic circumstances [rich v poor]	Geographical area
Mariam	Girl	Secondary	6	Not clear: Teacher says he gets good response when he uses 'greetings'. Her mother thinks she is strong in English. Mariam likes learning English.	High: She gets help from her mother, brother, cousin and a private tutor. Medium: He gets help from the private tutor.	rural	Medium: Professional family (mother is a housewife; father owns a tailoring shop).	Biantbazar, Sylhet
Mozibur	Boy	Primary	3	High: Teacher thinks he is doing well. The guardian thinks he can do better in writing but is good overall.	Medium: He gets help from the private tutor.	urban	Medium: Both guardians are primary school teachers.	Chatak, Sylhet
Razia	Girl	Secondary	7	Medium: The teacher thinks that she an average student (but tries hard). When asked questions in class, she tries to respond in English.	Low: Gets additional help from her sister at times at home.	rural	Low: Father does agricultural work; mother is a housewife.	Kapasia, Gazipur
Nadira	Girl	Primary	4	High: Teacher says she is a very good student in both his English class and other classes.	High: Mother (a teacher of English), father, sister and home tutor help her.	urban	Medium: Mother is an English teacher; father is a government employee.	Burichang, Comilla
Nur	Boy	Primary	4	High: Teacher and parents think he is doing well; the student thinks this too.	Medium: Mother helps mostly; help also from father and home tutor.	rural	Medium: Mother works at a college; father runs small business (low education).	Burichang, Comilla
Tapan	Boy	Primary	4	Low: Limited use of English; tries to speak but not yet confident.	Medium: Illiterate father, but has a private tutor. Has help from cousin and home tutor.	rural	Low: Father is a driver.	LaxmipurSadar
Shahina	Girl	Secondary	7	Medium: Becoming more confident in speaking English with the English teacher and her classmates.	High: Gets help from mother and a private tutor helps her with homework.	rural	Medium: Father has a fishery business and also some seasonal crops business; one brother works in the Middle East; one brother at university.	Dumuria, Khulna
Montimur	Boy	Primary	3	Medium: He is an average student in English but does not do very well in speaking.	Low: Mother is illiterate. No extra resources. His uncle, aunt help him to do his homework.	rural	Low: According to the English teacher, his mother is sick and has financial problems.	Chowgacha, Joshore
Kazi	Boy	Primary	4	High: English teacher thinks he is the most confident among the students in speaking English. He also tries speaking English at home.	Medium: He gets help from a cousin and elder sister to do his homework.	urban	Low: His father is a farmer.	Rangamati, Sadar
Khaleda	Girl	Primary	4	Low: Student has problems in both writing and speaking.	Medium: She gets help from her aunt and a private tutor.	urban (currently living in, but home is in a remote area)	Very low: Her father is a small farmer.	Rangamati, Sadar

## 4. Individual cases

The basis for the selection of these case studies was provided in Section 3. In this section the cases are presented using the headings described in Section 2.6, with the addition of brief background information on the school and area (this information comes from the *Teacher Lives Study*). In an effort to both ground the case in the data, and to be clear of the source of the data upon which particular elements are based, a reference to the sources (in parenthesis) is given at appropriate points and use the following nomenclature:

- SI = student interview (with a suffix A or B to indicate which interview, if more than one was carried out)
- PI = parent interview
- ETI = English teacher interview
- OTI = teacher of other subject interview
- OE = observation notes of English lesson
- OO = observation notes of other subject
- SRS = subject ranking sheet completed by student

The student's name is prefixed with this, for example 'Mariam: SIA' refers to the first interview with Mariam (a student); 'Monimur: ETI' refers to an interview with Monimur's English teacher. Note that all the students' names are pseudonyms, and so are the names of their schools.

### 4.1 Mariam

#### *Background*

Mariam goes to Rupsha High School in Bianibazar (Sylhet). She is in Class 6 (2011). The school was established in 1979 and is in a calm and quiet place in a rural area. There are 379 students in the school and 64 students in Class 6. There are nine teachers at the school, two of whom are female. The school has two one-story buildings constructed in an 'L' shape. There is a school yard in front of the two buildings (on the 'inside' of the 'L').

#### *At school*

##### *Views on school*

Mariam likes to go to school. She enjoys the school environment, being with her classmates and her classes. She likes to be prepared for a class and feels uncomfortable if she is not (Mariam: SIA).

##### *Attendance/motivation*

The student goes to school regularly (Mariam: PI). If she misses any class work, she gets help from her cousins. One of the other language teachers thinks that, generally, she is regular in attending her classes (Mariam: OTI). Mariam's mother thinks she is an attentive student and that she generally has good health, with occasional illness. According to her, Mariam needs proper guidance in her studies and, as a mother, she tries her best to show her the way. The mother is pleased with her daughter's enthusiasm about school and also happy that Mariam is interested in drawing and singing, but says that she cannot afford to send her to a music school (Mariam: PI).

### *Views as a learner/ participation/ peer relationships/ ranking of subjects*

Mariam likes to play the games (as part of the lesson activities) in her English 1st paper class (Mariam: SIA). She is good at written tasks but has a fear doing oral presentations in front of the teacher. Mariam is not completely satisfied with her performance, and thinks she has to study more to improve her results. She said that she gets compliments from the teachers and her parents (Mariam: SIB). She thinks her parents are pleased with her progress (Mariam: SIA)

Although Mariam's favourite subject is mathematics, she also likes the English 1st paper a lot and thinks she is best at it. The English 2nd paper seems hard to her, but she has a positive attitude about overcoming the difficulties she has. Interestingly, her second favourite subject is English 1st paper but she ranks English 2nd paper in tenth (Mariam: SRS). She said that dialogues and new words help her to make new sentences. She can see the importance of learning English. However, the letter and essay topics from the English 2nd paper seem difficult to her and they take time to learn (Mariam: SIB).

Mariam was elected as one of the class captains by her classmates and she manages the class in her own way. She likes to work in groups as she thinks there benefits of group work: she says: 'We can help one another, talk, discuss and make fun together. This makes our mind fresh.' Also, Mariam said that through group work 'we can share our difficulties'. She enjoys group tasks as there is room for discussion. According to her, 'it's easy to work together'. In her group, she often plays the group leader's role and presents the task to the class. She usually manages to finish her English class work by herself and likes helping her classmates (Mariam: SIA; Mariam: OE).

She is attentive in the other subject lesson observed, responds to the teacher, and engages in reading, writing and presenting the task. She seems motivated during classroom observation (Mariam: OO). However, in the English class Mariam is attentive but quite restless. She responds to the teacher and engages with the writing task (Mariam: OE).

Mariam has friends in her class. She mentioned someone as her best friend for her honesty and cooperative attitude (Mariam: SIA). The other language teacher thought the students generally work collaboratively and have good relationships, though sometimes they make noise in class. Also, they attend assembly regularly (Mariam: OTI). According to this teacher, Mariam tries to do well and her overall performance is good. Generally, all the students do their homework regularly. The teacher sees Mariam as a self-motivated student.

### *Home-school partnership*

The English teacher thinks Mariam's parents are not eager to come to the school (Mariam: ETI).

The other teacher and the English teacher do not visit students at home, though they think knowing students' family background is important as it impacts on student learning (Mariam: ETI; Mariam: OTI).

### *At home*

#### *Parental / family background*

Mariam and her family live in a rural area. Her father owns a tailoring shop and her mother is a housewife (educated to Class 10 level). Her mother enjoys reading different types of books and thinks this habit helps her to guide her daughter (Mariam: PI). Mariam has two brothers. Her elder brother (16 years old)

is an SSC candidate and her younger brother is four years old (Mariam: SIA). The children do not help with their father's work. The father is the only family member who earns; the mother manages the family (Mariam: PI).

### *Resources for learning*

Mariam goes to school on foot and has resources at home to support her studies (Mariam: SIA). Though her mother tries to guide her daughter, she employs a private tutor to help Mariam too. Mariam said she gets help with her homework from her mother, cousin and older brother (Mariam: SIA).

### *Importance of and opportunity for learning English at home*

Mariam's mother thinks English is important for communication as it is an international language.

She does not have much time to communicate in English with her children. They do not use English at home and mostly like to watch Hindi programmes on TV, though their mother thinks that being able to communicate in English is important for their future life (Mariam: PI).

### *Home-school partnership*

The school have not invited the parents to the school since admitting their daughter three months ago (Mariam: SIA). Mariam's mother thinks that if the school invited them, she would visit it. She did not express any negative attitude towards the school (Mariam: PI).

### *Aspirations*

Mariam wants to be a doctor (Mariam: SIA): it is her aim in life as well as her parents' wish. Her mother thinks that studying science is important for Mariam as she wants her daughter to be a doctor. She thinks there is a lack of female doctors in rural areas (Mariam: PI).

Though Mariam mentioned that knowing English is important for her, she thinks that she is not old enough to start thinking about her career (Mariam: SIB). Her mother also thinks that she is too young to understand the importance of her future (Mariam: PI). However, Mariam knows that she will have to study hard and English will be necessary for her job, if she goes abroad (Mariam: SIA).

Although Mariam's mother wants her to be a doctor, she has a negative attitude towards service-holder mothers. She thinks that working mothers cannot look after their children properly. She also thinks that usually boys aspire to go abroad whereas girls aspire to get married. Girls are not usually involved in work, unless they need to be (Mariam: PI).

Mariam's English teacher thinks that family support is very important for a student's achievement and, in this respect, the school has some scope to increase awareness among parents (Mariam: ETI). The other teacher mentioned that Mariam has the ability to do well (Mariam: OTI).

### *EL competence*

Mariam likes to learn English (Mariam: SIA). Her mother thinks she is strong in English and also interested in learning English. Mariam has a private tutor, but her mother is not very well informed about the details of her English lessons in school (Mariam: PI). The English teacher said that in his class he gets a good response from Mariam when he practises greetings (Mariam: ETI).



## 4.2 Mozibur

### *Background*

Mozibur goes to Fulkoli Primary School in Chatak, Sunamganj (Sylhet). He is in Class 3 (2011). The school is located in an urban area. Mozibur lives nearby – it takes five minutes to get to school. The school does not have a playground, so the students do not have assembly or play sports at school (Mozibur: ETI).

### *At school*

#### *Views on school*

Mozibur likes going school: he likes everything about the school and the lessons. He thinks that the school is good because the teachers teach in a way that he can understand (Mozibur: SIA). His guardian is moderately pleased with the school. She thinks lessons are regular, although the school has insufficient teachers (Mozibur: PI).

#### *Attendance/motivation*

During classroom observations, Mozibur participated spontaneously in the classroom activities (Mozibur: OE; Mozibur: OO). Overall, he attends lessons regularly and is a good student, according to the English and the other subject teacher (Mozibur: OTI; Mozibur: ETI). If he misses a class because of illness or another reason, he catches up with the schoolwork quickly as he gets help from his home tutor and classmates who live near him (Mozibur: SIA).

#### *Views as a learner/ peer relationships/ ranking of subjects/ co-curricular activities*

Mozibur thinks that he is good at schoolwork. He is best at mathematics, but he likes English most and ranks this as his favourite. He particularly likes English because of the topics which help him to understand properly. He also enjoys poems and stories in English. He likes handwriting less and ranks this as his least favourite subject. The reason for this, according to him, is because handwriting does not need deeper understanding (Mozibur: SRS; Mozibur: SIA). Overall, his teachers think he is moderately good in all subjects (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI).

His guardian is not so pleased with his progress at the school. She thinks that Mozibur is good at reading and learning in general but that he is weak in writing – this skill should be improved. But overall, she thinks that Mozibur's performance is good. She thinks both mathematics and English are important subjects: maths requires understanding, and developing English-speaking skills will be particularly important for Mozibur (Mozibur: PI).

Mozibur has friends in his class. He likes to work in a group them because he enjoys learning like this (Mozibur: SIA; Mozibur: SIB). His teachers think he is friendly and usually gets on well with other good students like him. In terms of co-curricular activities, he is only involved in sports (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI).

#### *Home-school partnership*

Although the school invites them to the school and welcomes them when they go, Mozibur's guardians do not come to school often because they are busy elsewhere (Mozibur: SIA; Mozibur: PI). As a result, his guardians are not involved in school activities (Mozibur: PI).

## *At home*

### *Parental/family background*

Mozibur lives with his aunt and uncle who are his guardians (Mozibur: SIA). His aunt is a primary school teacher and is a graduate. She and her husband, who is also a primary school teacher, are the earning members of the family (Mozibur: PI). Mozibur and his guardians live in an urban area.

### *Resources for learning*

Both teachers mentioned that Mozibur does his homework regularly (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI). He has the resources needed for doing his homework at home, and also a home tutor who helps him with this (Mozibur: SIA). However, both his English teacher and mathematics teacher give him guidance on how to do his homework at school, so Mozibur should not need help with his homework (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI).

### *Importance of and opportunity for learning English*

Mozibur has few opportunities to speak English at home. Apart from a dictionary, Mozibur does not have any other English books at home. However he watches English programmes, such as cartoons, on TV. His guardian thinks that 'English will be needed in every sphere of his future life, so it is important for him to be able to communicate in English' (Mozibur: PI). His aunt thinks English is an important subject and that being able to speak English is particularly important for Mozibur (Mozibur: PI).

### *Home-school partnership*

Mozibur's English teacher meets his guardians often and has also visited his home, but not for academic reasons (he has attended social events there) (Mozibur: ETI). The other subject teacher had not visited the student at home because Mozibur attends school regularly. However, she says meets the guardians in school to keep them informed of Mozibur's progress (Mozibur: OTI).

## *Aspirations*

Mozibur wants to be an engineer. However he does not have a clear understanding of the requirements for study to be an engineer, including the importance of being able to speak English (Mozibur: SIA). His teachers and guardian expect him to complete his studies at least to university level (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI; Mozibur: PI). One teacher thought he will get full support from his family, but the other is doubtful (Mozibur: ETI; Mozibur: OTI).

## *EL competence*

Mozibur's English teacher says that he is good at English. In particular, he is confident in speaking in English (Mozibur: ETI).

## **4.3 Razia**

### *Background*

Razia goes to Shitallakkha High School in Kapasia, Gazipur (Dhaka). She is in Class 6 (2011). The school was established in 1941 and rebuilt in 1993. It is an 'L' shaped one-storied building. The school is in need of renovation, although it has electricity. The classroom is adjacent to a road; the noise from the road disrupts teaching and learning in the classroom. The school is five minutes from Razia's home, so she comes to school on foot (Razia: SIA).

## *At school*

### *Views on school*

Razia feels good about going to school, especially because she likes English and general knowledge classes. She said that she can talk to her friends and teachers freely, which she enjoys. Razia likes her school and believes that it is a good one and said her parents agree with her (Razia: SIA). Her mother is pleased with the school as it is near to their home and she does not need to spend money on transport or snacks. Razia receives a stipend from the school (Razia: PI).

### *Attendance/motivation*

Razia's mother describes her daughter as an enthusiastic student. She said that Razia has never missed classes since she was enrolled in the school (Razia: PI).

### *Views as a learner/participation/ subject ranking/ peer relationships/ co-curricular activities*

English 1st paper and 2nd paper are Razia's most preferred subjects (Razia: SRS). She said that she performed well in maths and English and liked general science too. She liked English class because of the way the teacher gives the lessons (Razia: SIA).

She is very active in the English class and frequently raised her hand to answer teacher's questions. She listened to the teacher attentively and chorused with everyone. She actively participated in the classroom tasks (both in the English and maths lessons) (Razia: OE; Razia: OO).

Though her parents did not mention their daughter's co-curricular activities, the English teacher said that she sings, dances and participates in sports and other school activities (Razia: ETI).

Razia likes working with her friends during groupwork activities (Razia: SIA; Razia: SIB). Her English teacher noted that she gets on well with other students and has friends in the class (Razia: ETI).

### *Home-school partnership*

Both the English teacher and the other subject teacher said that Razia is better than other students, despite coming from a poor family. She could improve more if her elder sister, who is a postgraduate student, helped her (Razia: ETI; Razia: OTI).

## *At home*

### *Parental / family background*

Razia's mother studied to Class 8 and is a housewife. Her father does agricultural work in the rural community in which they live. He is the only earner of their family (Razia: PI). Razia has three sisters and one brother. Two of the sisters are married; the other is a postgraduate student and is preparing for the Bangladesh Civil Service examinations. The brother is young and does not yet go to school (Razia: SIA).

### *Resources for learning*

Razia's mother is sad that she is unable to provide books for her daughter. According to her, the family would sacrifice food to buy books to support her daughter's studies. Sometimes her daughter goes to school without having anything to eat or reading materials for classes. Despite good intentions, they struggle to support Razia (Razia: PI).

Razia gets help with her homework from her teacher at school and her sister when she comes home once a week or month (Razia: SIA). Her mother said she tries to provide all the necessary items needed for Razia to do her homework and schoolwork. Razia's parents do not tell their daughter about the financial difficulties they face in order to provide these resources (Razia: PI).

#### *Importance of and opportunity for learning English*

Razia's mother is fully aware of the necessity of English in her daughter's future life; she spoke of the need for English in order to get a prestigious job. She also said her daughter is interested in learning English. They do not have a television for watching programmes in English, but her eldest sister, who studies in English, brings English books for Razia (Razia: PI).

#### *Home-school partnership*

Razia's parents sometimes go to the school to find out about their daughter's progress (Razia: SIA) and when meetings are called. When they visit the school they are always cordially welcomed by the school staff. Her mother said they are usually invited to the result-giving ceremony, sports day, and on occasions when their children are absent from school (Razia: PI).

#### *Aspirations*

Razia said she wants to be a magistrate; her sister wishes also to be one. She said that she will have to sit exams at college and university to reach her goal. She wants to study in an English medium institution because she wants to be able to speak English (Razia: SIA).

Razia's mother also wishes her daughter to study to the university level, like her other daughter. She said that she will continue to support her daughter's study as far as Razia wants (Razia: PI).

#### *EL competence*

According to the English teacher, Razia is achieving average results in English. She also said that Razia tries to speak in English using parts of a sentence, and answers in English when she asks questions (Razia: ETI).

### **4.4 Nadira**

#### *Background*

Nadira goes to Gomati Primary School and is in Class 4 (2011). The school is the model school in Burichang, Comilla (Chittagong). There are physical problems with the school building which impact on teaching and learning in the school: the buildings are in need of repair and the classrooms are crowded. The school has a large playground but it is very dry and has no grass.

#### *At school*

##### *Views on school*

Nadira says she enjoys going to school as she has good friends and teachers there. She enjoys everything about school. She thinks her parents also like the school. Her father thinks that other schools in the area pressure the children to study and he dislikes this. Nadira thinks the school is a friendly place; she is able to play, sing and read there. Nadira's elder sister has a scholarship from the school this year (Nadira: PI).

### *Attendance/ motivation*

Nadira's attendance is good; her teacher says she comes to school even when it is raining or in rough weather. She only misses school one or two days a year, when the family go to visit their relatives or when she is sick (Nadira: ETI). Her mother says when there is nobody at home (e.g. when the family go away), her daughter has to stay at home to look after it. In these circumstances she does not go to school. Nadira suffers from asthma and colds, but she is otherwise in good health (Nadira: PI).

### *Views as a learner/ participation / peer relationships/co-curricular activities/subject ranking*

Nadira said that she is not sure whether or not she is good at school, but the teachers ask her many questions in the class, although sometimes she cannot answer these properly (Nadira: SIA). Her mother describes her as an enthusiastic student and thinks that Nadira's school performance is very good, considering her age, but that she could make more progress (Nadira: PI). Her teacher also says that she is a very good student and that she gets good results: she does well in English class and other classes (Nadira: ETI). Nadira says the teachers are very helpful if she does not understand something; if she makes a mistake while writing, the English teacher will write the correct answer in her notebook, and if she makes a mistake while speaking, she corrects her. The other teachers help in the same way (Nadira: SIA).

Nadira likes Bangla and English most and thinks she does best in both of these subjects (Nadira: SRS). Bangla is her most preferred subject, along with English 2nd paper (her mother agrees). She does not say specifically why she likes English, but says it is interesting and the teacher teaches the lessons well (Nadira: SIA). She is less interested in mathematics, and both she and her mother think that she is poor in in this subject.

In English class the teacher asks Nadira questions most days. The teacher does this so the other students can learn by listening to her (Nadira: ETI). Nadira says the teacher asks questions of students who can answer correctly. When no one else knows the answer, Nadira raises her hand (Nadira: SIA). She does not like it when the teacher does not ask her questions (Nadira: SIB)

Nadira participated spontaneously in both the English lesson and maths lesson (Nadira: OE; OO). In the English lesson she took part in chorusing, listening, writing the meaning of words in her notebook, and showing her written work to the teacher. When she had finished writing she helped others sitting towards the back of the class (Nadira: OE). In the mathematics lesson, when the teacher asked the other students questions, Nadira was sometimes willing to answer; she stood up and raised her hand to get the teacher's attention. During the lesson she participated in activities such as clapping and raising hands, chorusing, doing sums in her notebook, watching the teacher write on the board, listening to the teacher, and showing her written work to the teacher. She helped others when she finished her own work (Nadira: OO).

Nadira is friends with all the girls at school, but her best friends are in the same class as her and live nearby. She always sits with them and enjoys their company; they have been friends since Class 3. If she needs help, she asks these friends; they can get help from her (Nadira: SIA). She likes most to work with friends as she can learn from them.

Nadira takes part in co-curricular activities, such as singing and dancing in the cultural programme, and taking part in daily assembly, and takes on a leadership role in these (Nadira: ETI). She participated in the recent annual school sports competition and won a prize (Nadira: ETI; OTI). She is also very good at reciting poems (Nadira: OT1).

### *Parent-school relationship*

Her mother says that she is busy with her job and does not have enough time to go to the school, but she keeps in touch with some teachers by telephone, especially with the mathematics and English teachers. If she goes to school, she is welcomed very cordially. She is a former student of the school and knows the teachers. She was a member of the Upazila Primary Education Committee, but is not currently involved (Nadira: PI).

The teachers said they met with Nadira's mother regularly for different purposes: sometimes for official reasons, sometimes to discuss her daughter's performance. They invite the parents of all students to teacher-parent meetings and to the various cultural programmes. They also come to school at admission time, to pay examinations fees or receive progress reports (Nadira: ETI).

### *At home*

#### *Parental/family background*

Nadira's family is well educated and economically sound and they live in an urban area. Her mother is a high-school English teacher with both a BEd and MEd degree and her father is a government employee. Her strong family background means that she gets support from her family (Nadira: PI). Nadira's teachers know her family background and think she gets enough support from her family (Nadira: OT1).

#### *Resources for learning*

Nadira thinks that she has all the resources she needs at home to do her homework, such as art paper, coloured pencils for drawing pictures, notebook, pen and other equipment (Nadira: SIA). She says when she needs help with her homework she gets it from her mother, father and home tutor (Nadira: SIA). Her mother agrees with her and also mentioned that her elder sister also helps her at times. As such, her mother thinks there are many people in their family available to help her (Nadira: PI).

#### *Views on learning English*

According to her mother, Nadira needs to be able to communicate in English – this will be very important in every sphere of her life. Nadira tries to speak English at home (Nadira: PI). As her mother is an English teacher, she also speaks English. Sometimes, Nadira watches cartoons on TV and DVD, which are mainly in English. Her mother says that her daughter also thinks English is essential for her (Nadira: PI). She says Nadira is very interested in learning English and she tries to speak it at home and understands it as well (Nadira: PI).

#### *Teacher-parent relationship*

The teachers say that it is very important to know the economic and educational backgrounds of the students' families as it can affect the students' learning. The English teacher says his experience is that students whose parents are educated and economically solvent perform well. He said there is a colony of homeless people beside the school and their economic and educational status is not good; he does not get a good response from their children in the class. But as he knows about their background, he tries to give more support to these students. (Nadira: ETI). The other teacher says a good relationship between guardians and teachers is necessary to reduce the drop-out rate and increase student attendance (Nadira: OTI).

The English teacher says that he meets with Nadira's mother regularly outside school for official purposes, as her mother is a high school teacher. He says that when they meet (inside or outside of school), they discuss their children's performance and results (Nadira: ETI). The other teacher says he has visited Nadira's home: he was passing her house and, as she is his student and her mother is a teacher, he felt it necessary to meet with her mother to discuss her performance (Nadira: OTI).

### *Aspirations*

After completing primary education, Nadira wants to go to the high school where her mother is a teacher and her elder sister studies. Nadira wants to be a scientist and her father wants this also; she thinks she needs to know English to become one. She knows she has to study a lot to go into this career and that she will need to obtain higher education (Nadira: SIA). Her mother is very ambitious about her daughter's education (Nadira: PI). The English teacher thought that Nadira would be able to go on to higher education (Nadira: ETI). Her parents are aware of the need for Nadira to study so she can do well at school (Nadira: ETI).

### *English language competence*

Nadira's mother says her daughter is very interested in learning English. She tries to speak English at home and can understand it well (Nadira: PI). However, Nadira says that the English teacher asks her questions but sometimes she cannot understand them all. When she gives a correct answer, the teacher thanks her. (Nadira: SIA). Her English teacher says she is a very good student and that she gets good results (Nadira: ETI)

## **4.5 Nur**

### *Background*

Like Nadira, Nur goes to Gomati Primary School and is in Class 4 (2011). As stated in subsection 4.4, the school is the model school in Burichang, Comilla (Chittagong). The school buildings are in poor repair and the classrooms are crowded; as a result, teaching and learning suffers. The school has a large playground but it is very dry and has no grass.

### *At school*

#### *Views on school/teachers*

Nur likes going to school and feels good about it because he can play with friends, the teachers teach well, and he thinks that the lessons are very interesting (Nur: SIA). To him the school is the best in the neighbourhood: there is a large playground, and the teachers are very good and helpful. He is aware that the results of this school are very good and that some of the students obtained scholarships this year (Nur: SIA). His mother says that she is pleased with the school as it is situated in the Upazila town (Sadar) and the teachers teach well. Her workplace is near to the school so she can look after her son at any time and pick him up from school (Nur: PI).

Nur thinks his teachers are very helpful and that they take special care of students who do not perform well in class; the teachers try to make lessons clear, for example by writing on the board and teaching a topic several times. He thinks that all the teachers are helpful, but the English teacher is especially helpful to him (Nur: SIA).



### *Attendance/motivation*

Nur's attendance is good: he goes to school most days. On occasions he is absent because he goes to visit his grandmother with his family or he suffers from fever, though usually he is in good health. Since progressing to Class 4 he has not missed school (Nur: SIA). His mother confirms this but admits that he sometimes goes to school without eating as she has to go to college (where she works) before he leaves. He was absent for 10–12 days after a cycle injury last month and a minor operation (Nur: PI). (The teachers confirm this (Nur: ETI & OTI).)

### *Views as a learner/participation/peer relationships/co-curricular activities/subject ranking*

Nur says that he is good at schoolwork and tries to keep up as this enables him to answer the teachers' questions. He says his teachers praise him for his spoken and written answers to questions and they think he is a good student. In his previous class, his class position was second, but now he is fourth – which would appear to show a decrease in performance. However, his parents are happy and pleased as they think that any position from 1 to 5 is acceptable (Nur: SIA). Indeed, his mother is pleased and proud of his performance. She describes him as enthusiastic, though sometimes he does not read willingly and she has to pressurise him, and spends time helping him (Nur: PI).

His English teacher says that he catches on quickly and has a good level of understanding for his age. He sits at the front of the classroom. He also thinks he is doing well in English (Nur: ETI). On the other hand, the other teacher says that although he is good, he is sometimes inattentive in Mathematics lessons (Nur: OTI).

Nur usually tries to sit on the front bench if he gets to school early enough so that the teacher asks him many questions and he can get the teacher's attention easily. Usually this works, but sometimes the teacher does not ask him questions, even when he is willing to answer and this surprises him. He says that he likes the classes and he always prepares for them. When he does writing tasks well, the teacher asks him to check the work of other students to point out their mistakes as a reward for him (Nur: SIA; OE). The teacher says that when he asks questions, most of the students raise their hands and it is very difficult to ask all of them, but he tries not to ask questions of the same students every day to give all an equal opportunity to speak (Nur: ETI).

Nur likes Bangla and English most. They are his best subjects: he rated English as his favourite subject and then Bangla (Nur: SIA). His mother also thinks that he likes to read English and is enthusiastic about it. But he only starts reading his English work after completing his Bangla work (Nur: PI).

In the English lesson the teacher asked Nur several questions. Nur spontaneously participated and made an effort to answer. He also raised his hand, chorused, read from the textbook, listened to the teacher and other students, looked at posters and wrote in his notebook. Sometimes he tried to attract the teacher's attention by standing for a while. In contrast, in the mathematics class he seemed shocked because he could not do the sum on the board and the teacher told him to stand and observe how another student did it. He understood that by watching others he could learn, but the teacher did not call him to the board again. (His problem was that he could not see the teacher's poster at the time, and was confused while doing the sum in his notebook, but was helped by his friend sitting next to him (Nur: SIB).) The teacher thought that he lacked concentration at such times, which is why he called him to the board to involve him in the activities, and when he could not answer he hoped Nur would learn by watching another student do it (Nur: OTI). Most of the time Nur participated in the mathematics class (in similar activities as the English class), but on occasions he did not join in the chorusing. Even when he appeared unclear about a topic he did not ask questions, but he did seek help from others and helped them in return (Nur: OO).



Nur has friends and has known his best friend in the class for three years and sits next to him. They read together and so have a good relationship, and help and discuss with each other. He prefers to work with friends as competition develops among them and they can learn quickly. In a group, he tries to perform better than others. He says that his friends help him to catch up with schoolwork when he cannot attend school. He usually asks a friend in class, who lives near him, which lessons were taught on the previous day, so he can complete those lessons at home (Nur: SIA).

During the mathematics class he tried to do the sum on his own but could not, so he asked his friend sitting beside him. When faced with a problem, he tried to first attract the attention of the teacher but, when the teacher was busy, he asked for help from his friends (Nur: SIB).

The English teacher said that, in general, Nur takes part and plays a leadership role in various co-curricular activities, such as physical exercise, singing the national anthem and taking the national oath etc. His teacher says that he also takes part in different school programmes (Nur: ETI: OTI).

#### *Parent-school relationship*

His parents go to school occasionally, every one or two months, particularly to pay the fees at admission or examination time. The school gives him 300 taka from the school fund for fees, and his parents go to sign for this money (Nur: SIA). His mother says that she usually goes to the school as his father does not have much free time. In addition to going to pay fees, she also goes to discuss her son's progress and attendance. For example, in the previous week she went to school for an official purpose and also discussed his performance with the subject teachers. She is welcomed very cordially and the teachers behaved well towards her (Nur: PI).

Teachers confirmed that they met with Nur's mother regularly for various purposes. In general they organise meetings with all the mothers or guardians. For example, on the day of the case study visit they organised a meeting with mothers because they know best about student's home activities. They discussed how much care they take of their children at home and tried to impress upon them to encourage their children to attend school regularly (Nur: OTI).

#### ***At Home***

##### *Parental/family background*

Nur lives with his family in a rural area. His mother studied up to Class 8 and she says her husband is not well educated. Because of financial problems, she could not continue her studies, though she was a good student. She works at a college and her husband has a small business (Nur: PI). His teacher knows of his family background and thinks that Nur might not be able to acquire a degree as his family do not have sufficient income, and this may hamper his educational future (Nur: OTI).

##### *Resources for learning*

Nur gets homework and writing tasks almost every day, but sometimes the teachers do not look at his completed homework. He has all he needs at home to do his homework, such as art paper, coloured pencils for drawing pictures, notebook, pen and other equipment (Nur: SIA). Sometimes he gets help with his homework from his mother, father, aunt and uncle; for example, with the spelling of a word (Nur: SIA).

His mother says that as her husband is not well educated; she helps Nur most of the time. Sometimes her brother and sister live at her home, and when they do they also help Nur with his homework. When he cannot understand difficult words in Bangla or English, or cannot do sums, his mother helps him; however, as she has a young daughter (1½ years old), she cannot always help. She is weak in mathematics, so cannot always help him with that. That is why he has a home tutor, particularly for Mathematics (Nur: PI).

### *Views on learning English*

His mother thinks he needs to be able to communicate in English because it is very important. She said: 'Our age is changing very fast, and to develop ourselves, we need to know and speak English well, to be advanced or to get a good job. English is essential.' She feels that, in the present context, English is being used everywhere, more so than Bangla. She thinks that her child is interested in learning English, but the family do not speak it at home, nor do they have a TV (Nur: PI).

### *Teacher-parent relationship*

His teachers understand the importance of being informed about students' family backgrounds and the impact of this on the students' learning. Hence, they try to find out about the family background of most students. The teachers organise meetings in school at different times; but they also meet parents regularly outside school. The mathematics teacher knows Nur's mother is a member of staff at a college and visited his home when he had not been at school for over three days to see why he had been absent. He found Nur to be very sick and suggested his parents take care of him so that he could return to school soon (Nur: OTI).

### *Aspirations*

After primary school, Nur wants to go to high school and then to the college in which his mother works. He wants to be a doctor, and thinks that English is more important than Bangla for this. So he wants to go to medical college after school and the local college (Nur: SIA).

His mother wants him to continue his studies, and the family will try to give him the support he needs to do well. She says that their expectations depend very much on what happens in the future and on his performance. Sometimes Nur says he wants to be an engineer, sometimes a doctor. Whatever he chooses to be, she wants him to continue his studies. Although at present they can support him financially, she cannot say whether this will be possible in the future (Nur: PI).

The English teacher also says that he is not sure whether Nur will be able to go on to higher education as his family have economic problems and depend on the mother to a large extent. So despite his parents' aspirations to educate him, economic problems may be a barrier (Nur: ETI). The other teacher thinks the same. If his family can continue giving him support, the other teacher thinks he will be able to acquire a degree (Nur: OTI).

### *English language competence*

Nur says that he is good at schoolwork because he can answer the teachers' questions, and he thinks he is a good student (Nur: SIA). His mother and her husband are very pleased and proud of their son, as his results are very good. She describes him as enthusiastic, even though sometimes he does not read willingly and she has to push him (Nur: PI).

As noted earlier, his English teacher says that he catches on quickly, has a good level of understanding and that he is doing well in English. He uses greetings such as 'How are you', and when he asks the students questions in English, Nur tries to answer in English. Nur even tries to speak English with other students. The details provided earlier show that Nur participates well in the classroom, indicating his capability in English. The teacher thinks that Nur can improve his performance, if he gets more support at home with English (although this is a problem as the family do not speak English at home) (Nur: ETI).

## 4.6 Tapan

### *Background*

Tapan attends Bakul Primary School and is in Class 4. The school is located in the heart of Laxmipur (Chittagong). The school has two buildings with 14 classrooms, one teachers' room and a collapsed building, which is unused. There is a playground and a small pond. There are 11 teachers in the school. The classrooms are large enough for the students to sit comfortably and are also well ventilated, spacious, bright and sunny (Tapan: OO; EO; photographs).

### *At school*

#### *Views on school*

Tapan feels good about his school: he likes going and thinks his school is a good one, with teachers who are competent and good. His parents also consider the school to be good and his father says this is because the teachers teach well (Tapan: SIA; PI). Tapan thinks all the teachers are understanding and help solve problems related to his studies. He mentions his English teacher in particular (Tapan: SIB).

#### *Attendance/ motivation*

Both teachers say Tapan does not attend school regularly. As reasons for his absence, they mention his indifference to studies, lack of awareness from his parents and his tendency to truant, particularly lessons after the holiday period (Tapan: ETI; OTI). But the student says that he attends school on most days and that he is absent only when he is sick or on an outing (Tapan: SIA). Tapan's father says Tapan is in good health (Tapan: PI).

#### *Views as a learner/ subject ranking/peer relationships*

Tapan is not considered to be a good student by his Bangla teacher. According to her, he is 'very naughty' and inattentive. She considers him to be a disruptive influence in the class (Tapan: OTI). However, the English teacher thinks that he is 'not that bad a student', but he is 'timid' and 'does not respond much' (Tapan: ETI). Both the teachers say he is not regular in doing his homework (Tapan: ETI; OTI). Tapan himself thinks that he is a good student because he responds well in the class (Tapan: SI). Tapan's father says Tapan is enthusiastic about his studies (Tapan: PI). His father is pleased with Tapan's progress at school and thinks that he is doing well (Tapan: PI), although his opinion is at odds with his teachers' view (see above). He says that his son is good at Bangla and 'not so good' at English; he thinks Bangla and English are important for his son to do well.

Tapan likes English most and ranks this at the top of his subject list (Tapan: SRS). He likes it because of the way his English teacher teaches them. He also likes to read English. He considers religious studies to be the easiest subject and therefore thinks he has to make less effort. He does not like environmental sociology because the subject teacher gives a lot of handwriting activities, which he does not like (Tapan: SIA).

Tapan thinks that he is asked questions by his teacher because he is good at his studies, although the teachers are less positive (as stated above). When asked, Tapan said he sometimes needed help from his teacher when he could not answer a question or problem (Tapan: SIB). Tapan said that he is appreciated for his school work by both his teachers and parents (Tapan: SIA).

His best friend is in the same class as him; his best friend is cordial, a constant companion and a helping hand (Tapan: SIB). Both of his teachers say Tapan has good relationships with his classmates, although the names of the friends they mention do not match the names given by Tapan himself (Tapan: SIA & B; ETI; OTI).

Tapan prefers to work with others than on his own, because the others help him where necessary (Tapan: SIB). This was evident to the English teacher (Tapan: ETI).

### ***At home***

#### *Parental/family background*

Tapan lives with his family in a rural area. His family have no education: Tapan's father is illiterate and works as a driver. Tapan is the eldest of two brothers: he is 12 years old and in Class 4, while his younger brother is nine years old and in Class 1. They both attend the same school. Neither are involved in any family work (Tapan: PI).

#### *Resources for learning*

Tapan thinks he has, overall, the resources to study at home (Tapan: SIA). He thinks he gets sufficient help with his homework; if he has problem, he gets help from either his cousin or a home tutor. (His father confirmed this. (Tapan: PI)). There are no English books at home, apart from school textbooks (Tapan: PI).

#### *Views on learning English*

He thinks English is particularly important for his son's future (Tapan: PI). Tapan also thinks this. He wants to be a teacher and thinks that English is important for this (Tapan: SIA). Though both he and his father consider English to be important, no English is spoken at home and, as stated above, there are no English books, apart from school textbooks (Tapan: PI).

#### *Teacher-parent relationship*

His father visits the school 'very often' (as the school is on the way to the bazaar); he attends when invited by the teachers or to inquire about Tapan's studies, to see if he is attending school, or to take him 'foods and snacks' (Tapan: PI; SIB). He feels welcome at school as teachers 'behave cordially' towards him (Tapan: PI).

#### ***Aspirations***

Tapan and his father have high aspirations for his future, with Tapan wanting to be a teacher (Tapan: SIA; PI), although both of his teachers are doubtful whether he can achieve the required level of education. They are afraid that he 'may not go a long way and will not receive much support from the family' (Tapan: OTI; ETI).

## *English language competence*

The English teacher says that Tapan 'tries to speak but is not yet confident'. His use of English in class is limited and the teacher has not seen him use English with his friends. As mentioned above, there is no English spoken at home, further limiting his development of competence. The English teacher said that 'more care' and concern from his parents would help him to do better (Tapan: ETI).

### **4.7 Shahina**

#### *Background*

Shahina goes to Shurma High School in Dumuria, Khulna and is in Class 7. The school is in a rural area; there are a lot of trees within the school boundary and the view of the surroundings is pleasant. Though the school is in a rural/natural setting, there is a road at the back of the school which is busy and noisy. Noise from the road affects the teaching and learning in the school. There is also a wholesale market near the school and the noise from this also disturbs the classes. The school is in a tin-shed building. The partitions which separate the rooms are not good, and as a result, noise from one room travels to the next. Some of the classrooms are in good condition and have sufficient space for students to sit, but some are not.

#### *At school*

##### *Views on school*

Shahina feels good about her school: she likes the school environment/grounds and enjoys going there because the school staff love and care for her, and the teachers are very good at teaching. Her father is also pleased with the school for its good results and management. The school is not far from her house - it takes five minutes for her to reach the school on foot.

##### *Attendance/ motivation*

Shahina goes to school regularly, except for unavoidable circumstances such as illness. Her father and teachers report the same. In the last two months she was absent from the school for a few days because of a headache.

##### *Views as a learner/ peer relationships/ co-curricular activities*

According to Shahina, her teachers are positive about her schoolwork. Both of the teachers think that she has the capacity to understand the content taught. The English teacher says that Shahina is becoming more confident in speaking English to him and to her friends (Shahina: ETI). She does her homework regularly (Shahina: SI)

She prefers to get help from her friends if she does not understand something. When her friends are unable to help her, she gets help from her teachers. Shahina likes maths the most and is very good at it. English 2nd paper is her second favourite (Shahina: SRS). Her father thinks that she is doing well in English but less well in Bangla.

Shahina likes working with her friends. She enjoys working in a group and has little interest in working alone. If her group performs well, she feels happy. She helps her best friend with her mistakes.

Shahina's father said that his daughter is very reluctant at sports. On the other hand, her English teacher said that she does take part in sports such as running (Shahina: ETI). The other teacher said that she takes part in extempore speech (Shahina: OTI).

#### *Parent-school relationship*

Shahina's father visits the school frequently to find out about his daughter's progress. Mostly he visits the school of his own accord, but sometimes the school invites him when there is a parent meeting. The school also arranges meetings with parents when the examination results are published. He feels cordially received by the school.

#### *At home*

##### *Parental/family background*

Shahina lives in a rural area with her family. Her father has had some education: he studied up to Class 10. He has a fish farming business and a seasonal agricultural business growing jute and rice, etc. Shahina has two brothers: the eldest is working in the Middle East and the other is doing a diploma in engineering at a university.

##### *Resources for learning*

If Shahina faces any difficulty with her homework, she gets help from her mother. One teacher says that she does her homework without any help. The other teacher says that if she cannot do something herself she gets help from him in the following class. Her father says that she has a private tutor and if she needs help she can get it from him. Shahina watches TV programmes like BBC Janala (*Mojay Mojay Shekha*) to learn English.

##### *Views on learning English*

Shahina's father thinks that both Bangla and English are important. English is important for communicating with foreigners, and getting a good job.

#### *Aspirations*

Shahina and her parents have high aspirations for the future. She wants to be a doctor, and the English teacher also has mentioned this. The other subject teacher thinks that she would be able to do a bachelor degree (which indicates a high aspiration). Her father will try his best to ensure she studies at higher levels. Shahina thinks that to be a doctor she needs to study hard and that English will be very important.

##### *English language competence*

Shahina's father is not completely pleased with her progress: he wants his daughter to try harder. The English teacher says that Shahina is becoming more confident in speaking English to him and to her friends, but not her family members.

## **4.8 Monimur**

### *Background*

Monimur goes to Rashmoni Primary School in Chougacha, Jessore (Khulna) and is in Class 3. The school is a two-storey building beside a river and a field; there is a mango orchard in the school ground. The

school has a separate library room, a tube well, latrines and playground rides, such as a cradle and a balance, for students. There are two shaded areas beside the river. The school has a good reputation within the Upazila both in terms of academic and co-curricular activities. The schools' teachers are mostly from the local area and they are very friendly towards the students, parents and the villagers.

### *At school*

#### *Views on school*

Monimur thinks his school is better than any other in the area in terms of its results.

#### *Attendance/ motivation*

He is regular in attending school. Sometimes he is absent for specific reasons such as family problems, sickness, etc.; when he is absent he follows the schools procedures. Over the last few years his health and family problems have sometimes caused him to be absent from school.

#### *Views as a learner/ participation/peer relationships/ co-curricular activities/subject ranking.*

Monimur thinks he is doing well at school both in academic and co-curricular activities. He does his homework regularly but can be a little naughty outside of class. According to the English teacher, he is a bright student and he is good at English, but not so good at speaking it. He likes Islamic studies the most of all his subjects; English is one of his least favourite (Monimur: SRS).

Monimur is responsive to his teachers, listens to them, asks questions of them and follows their instructions. He listens to other students while they give answers. Monimur participates in all the class activities such as reading from the blackboard, chorusing, listening and singing with the audio, reading after the teacher, group work, clapping, etc. He showed his task to the teacher after completing it. He also discussed the task with other students. In class he normally sits on the second bench. His teacher tells him to sit there so he can answer questions. The seating arrangements are fixed for the students in the class.

He likes to work with his friends. He has a lot of friends in school and has good relationships with them. He likes friends who do not quarrel but are studious and helpful to each other.

In terms of co-curricular activities, he participates in singing and the cultural programme. If Monimur's singing talent was nurtured he could do well in this.

#### *Student-teacher relationships*

The teacher takes extra care of Monimur as he is from a poor family. The school provides a stipend and free examination fees as his family is unable to pay.

#### *Parent-school relationship*

His parents come to the school mostly for administrative, rather than academic, reasons. They also participate in the school programmes.



## *At home*

### *Parental/family background*

Monimur lives in a rural area with his family. He has two sisters: the elder sister is six and studies at a BRAC school. Monimur's mother does not have a formal education. According to the English teacher, his mother is sick and has financial problems (Monimur: ETI).

### *Resources for learning*

Monimur has the necessary resources at home for doing his study, such as books, a notebook, pens, pencils, and so on; however, he does not have additional support for English learning: his family do not have a radio or TV. He gets help with his homework from his uncle and aunt. According to his mother, if there is something he doesn't understand, he finds someone in their home to help (Monimur: PI).

### *Teacher-parent relationship*

The teacher often visits Monimur at home. He also sees his parents in the bazaar or around the village. When he meets his parents they ask about their son's progress.

### *Aspirations*

Monimur's mother wants her child to finish his primary education. Monimur wants to go to high school after finishing his primary education. What the student will do in the future or after leaving school will depend on the guidance of his teachers.

### *English language competence*

As stated above, the English teacher reports that Monimur is good in English class but not so good at speaking it. His mother thinks that he is interested in learning English.

## **4.9 Kazi**

### *Background*

Kazi is in Class 4 (2011) and goes to Joba Primary School. The school was established in 1927, and is located on the north-east side of Upazila Sadar, Rangamati. It takes him 10–15 minutes on foot to reach the school from home.

### *At school*

#### *Views on school*

Kazi thinks that his school is the best primary school in the area, and he likes everything about it. He likes to go to school as he can study there, but does not like to stay there too long. He thinks his school has very few vacations (Kazi: SI). Kazi's parents think that the school is very good (Kazi: PI).

#### *Attendance/ motivation*

Kazi's attendance is good: he says he is only absent from school if he is sick (Kazi: SI). He never misses school if he is in good health (Kazi: PI). His English and Bangla teachers confirm his regular attendance (Kazi: ETI; OTI).



### *Views as a learner/ participation/ peer relationships/ co-curricular activities/ subject ranking*

Kazi likes to work with others in the classroom rather than on his own, and particularly with friends. In group work, if one student does not know an answer to a question, then another student who knows the answer can help. This is why he thinks the students like working in groups (Kazi: SI).

He is responsive in class and his pronunciation is also good (Kazi: ETI). In both classes observed the teachers asked him questions and brought him to the front of the class (Kazi: OE; OO). The student is a member of a local tribe and he is not fluent in speaking Bangla (though his writing skill is good). His teacher tries to bring him to the front of the class to make him confident in speaking English (Kazi: ETI). Kazi thinks he is best at mathematics, and says this is his favourite subject; English is his second favourite (Kazi: SRS). His family think that he is good at mathematics, but they think he does less well in English (Kazi: PI), despite Kazi rating English his second favourite (Kazi: SRS).

He has some friends in the class. His best friend helps him most with his studies (Kazi: SI). Kazi is introvert and is not very interested in co-curricular activities, but he will take part if asked by the teacher (Kazi: OTI; ETI).

### *Parent-school relationship*

Kazi's parents think that the school is very good; not only the environment /school grounds, but also the teachers. They think that the teachers treat the students like they would their own children and take proper care of them (Kazi: PI).

### *At home*

#### *Parental/family background*

Kazi's is a member of a local tribe. His parents have relatively low levels of education: his father was educated to Class 7, his mother to Class 10. He has an elder sister who is in Class 6. His father is a small farmer who cultivates his own land (Kazi: PI). He lives in an urban area.

#### *Resources for learning*

Kazi thinks he generally has the resources needed to study at home(Kazi: SI). He gets help with his homework from one of his cousins who reads with him in his class. Sometimes his elder sister also helps him to do his homework (Kazi: SI). His father does not have enough time to help Kazi with his homework, and his mother said she tries to help, but sometimes she is not able to if she is busy (Kazi: PI). The teachers have noticed that Kazi sometimes brings his homework back to school incomplete (Kazi: ETI; OTI).

#### *Views on learning English*

Kazi thinks education is necessary to be a doctor (his aim) but is not sure what level of education he needs to pursue this. He thinks that spoken English is not essential for being a doctor.

#### *Teacher-parent relationship*

His father said that he goes to Kazi's school to be informed about his educational progress. The teachers are very cordial and behave very well when he goes there (Kazi: PI). Kazi's parents go to school once a month to talk with the teachers. Kazi does not know what his parents talk about with his teachers (Kazi: SI).

## *Aspirations*

Kazi and his father have high aspirations for his future. Kazi wants to be a doctor and his parents have same desire (Kazi: SI; PI). The English teacher believes that he is capable of this and that he has sufficient family support to pass the HSC (Kazi: ETI).

## *English language competence*

The English teacher thinks Kazi is one of the most confident students in the class when it comes to speaking English (Kazi: ETI). Kazi's mother says he tries to speak in English at home, with one his cousins who lives in his house and is in the same class as him (Kazi: PI).

## **4.10 Khaleda**

### *Background*

Like Kazi, Khaleda is a student of Class 4 (2011) at Joba Primary School. She lives at her aunt's house, which is near to the school. It takes less than 10 minutes to reach the school from her house.

### *At school*

#### *Views on school*

Khaleda thinks that her school is the best primary school in her locality, as the students sing and draw pictures in class. She likes going to school because she can play with her friends, and feels good when she can prepare for the lessons (Khaleda: SI). Her aunt (who is her guardian) thinks the school is good (Khaleda: PI).

#### *Attendance/motivation*

She regularly goes to school; she was only absent for one day when in Class 3 (she was late returning from her village home after spending the vacation there; Khaleda: SI). Her English teacher confirms that she is seldom absent from school. The teacher thinks this is because she has little to do where she lives; the teacher's view is that school is her only place of recreation (Khaleda: ETI).

#### *Views as a learner/participation/peer relationships/co-curricular activities/subject ranking*

Khaleda likes to work with others in class, rather than individually, and particularly with friends. She likes working in groups because if one student does not know an answer to a question then another student can help. She does not enjoy school when students quarrel and make a noise in class. She also feels bad when teachers hit her for not preparing lessons (Khaleda: SI).

Khaleda is best at science, though she ranked it fifth on the subject ranking sheet. She likes Bangla most and English as well (second best). However, she is less skilled in Bangla (Khaleda: SI; PI; SRS).

Khaleda participates in classroom activities less than the other students because she is not fluent in Bangla. But she does participate actively if the teacher calls her and makes the instructions clear (Khaleda: ETI). Khaleda is not doing well at school because of her limited Bangla capability and it takes her time to do well. She has the potential to do better if she tries, and one teacher thinks to do so she will need better family support. She does not live with her immediate family, so she has less family support than some of the other students (Khaleda: OTI). She does her homework regularly and brings this back to school (Khaleda: ETI; OTI).

Usually she does not ask for help from the teachers in class because she is afraid of them (Khaleda: SI). Because of the language barrier, the English teacher does not often call on her to answer questions or to work on the board. Khaleda always tries to sit beside another tribal student, but her English teacher tries to make her sit beside a Bengali-speaking student to help her with the language (Khaleda: ETI). On the other hand, the other subject teacher always calls Khaleda to answer questions for the same reason (because she has limited Bangla); Khaleda hardly speaks, so the teacher wants to encourage her to speak (Khaleda: OTI). Although there was evidence during the classroom observation (English lesson) of Khaleda being asked questions, there was no evidence of this in the other subject class (Khaleda: OE).

Khaleda says she has friends and that her best friend helps her with studying and walks to school with her (Khaleda: SI). But both of her teachers said she has only one friend (the best friend that Khaleda mentioned) (Khaleda: ETI; OTI). Khaleda feels it is hard to catch up with the school work after she has not been at school, and she says she does not get any help with this (Khaleda: SI).

Khaleda is less interested in co-curricular activities, but does them straight away when her teacher asks her to. (Khaleda: OTI).

#### *Parent-school relationship*

Khaleda's father has only come to the school once to admit her to the school. He has not been there since. If the teacher calls her parents, her aunt, who is her guardian, goes to the school (Khaleda: SI). However, her aunt is not always able to go the school because of work (Khaleda: PI).

#### *At home*

##### *Parental/family background*

Khaleda does not live with her parents; she lives with her aunt (who is her guardian) in an urban area. Her parents are illiterate and live in a rural village in the remote hills of Rangamati, where good quality education is not available. (Khaleda: PI; SI; ETI). Khaleda is a member of a tribe. She has a younger sister and a younger brother who are in Class 2 and Class 3 respectively, in a school local to her village.

##### *Resources for learning*

Overall, Khaleda thinks she has the resources at home to study (Khaleda: SI). She says she gets help with her homework from her aunt (Khaleda: SI). She also has a private tutor who helps her (Khaleda: PI). When she has difficulties with her homework she asks others for help.

##### *Views on learning English*

She likes English class the most because she can sing songs and listen to stories (Khaleda: SI). She wants to be an English teacher and thinks fluency in spoken English is necessary for this (Khaleda: SI).

##### *Teacher-parent relationship*

Her aunt thinks the school is good and she is pleased with the behaviour of the teachers. She thinks the teachers always take care of their students. They also welcome guardians to their school (Khaleda: PI).

### *Aspirations*

Khaleda has high aspirations for her future: she wants to be an English teacher. She says that when she becomes an English teacher she will get her students to sing songs and will encourage them to prepare the lessons without hitting them. She thinks that she needs a BA degree to be an English teacher, and that fluency in spoken English is also necessary for this profession (Khaleda: SI).

Her aunt is not so hopeful about her future. Considering the financial situation at home, her aunt is not sure whether she will graduate successfully from primary school. The aunt thinks she may instead be engaged in agricultural work in her family's village (Khaleda: PI). Khaleda's English teacher is afraid Khaleda will not complete the SSC (Khaleda: ETI). The other subject teacher expects her to pass Class 7 or 8 (Khaleda: OTI).

### *English language competence*

Khaleda struggles to say sentences properly in Bangla, and her spoken English is worse. She has difficulties with her spelling and there are also issues with her writing and speaking (Khaleda: ETI).

## 5. Looking to the future

### 5.1 Progressive focusing

Obviously, these studies are at an early stage and it is evident, for example, that there are issues for individuals that need to be further explored. In addition, what seem like issues now may or may not turn out to be significant in the future. For example, how will Khaleda's Bangla develop, and what will be the impact on her English learning? Will Tapan continue to be 'naughty' and will his self-image change as he gets older (will his view of himself as a good student be maintained)? There are some straightforward issues of conflicting data, or different views of situations among the informants, that could be clarified or investigated further. All of these issues will be part of the individual stories and learning journeys. They will constitute the familiar progressive focusing of qualitative research, not only probing more as issues arise, but probing them over time to provide the narrative of the students' journeys. This progressive focusing has been the subject of the training in preparation for the fieldwork in 2012, when the students were studied again a year on.

### 5.2 A further level of analysis

But there may also be more conceptual issues to be explored, which were alluded to earlier, such as teaching and learning experience/preferred approach to learning (see Section 2.6). These will constitute another level of analysis and, as indicated earlier, will be considered as a cross-case analysis.

As noted earlier, the conceptual themes are:

- teaching and learning experience/preferred approach to learning;
- parental involvement/home-school partnership;
- effectiveness of the school;
- motivation;
- engagement;
- resources available;
- social skills development;
- support with homework;
- perceived importance of speaking English/opportunity to speak in English.

There was evidence related to all the themes above in each case study. For the purpose of a cross-case analysis, these themes will be treated as 'open codes' (as they emerge from the data) and used for 'axial coding' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) in order to derive insights from a combination of open and selective codes. This type of analysis will help to see patterns (and correlations) between different factors that influence the 'learning journeys'. For example, there might be visible evidence of parental awareness and support contributing directly to developing student's EL competence, but, over time, a lack of resources or a poor home-school partnership may become a barrier to accomplishing career aspirations. Or, conflicting parental values and beliefs about career aspirations for girls (already noted in some cases) may become a challenge to achieving a career such as a doctor, for which it is essential to develop English language competence from an early age. Other examples might include particular students' attitudes to

learning in general, such as enthusiasm for in-depth learning. The enjoyment of active English lessons in EIA classrooms could, in time, raise the level of a student's motivation to enrol for higher education or seek a profession requiring EL competence. If EIA continues to succeed in developing an active English learning environment in the classroom, it will be interesting to see if there is any link between the development of social skills among students and their level of engagement with activities during the English lessons.

Increasing EL competence and confidence in speaking English is an ambitious target. A number of factors interact and influence any learning environment which may or may not fully support individual English language learning journeys. The cross-case analysis intends to derive an in-depth understanding of these experiences by exploring features evident in the datasets.

### **5.3 Publications**

This report on the *Student Lives Study* is the first of a number that will endeavour to trace the learning journeys. As such, this initial picture is not only static, but it reflects almost exclusively the content of the instruments rather than the particularities of the individual students. Future reports will reflect the students' development and also explore the themes noted above. It is envisaged that further reports will be published in three years' time, to record the first transitions that students will make (when those who were in Class 4 in 2011 will have left primary school and those in Class 7 will have left secondary school). There may be transitions for individual students before this (e.g. if a student leaves at Class 8), and this may prompt a report either to capture the issues surrounding this or to mark the student's exit from the study. The conceptual themes that constitute the cross-case analysis may also prompt publications to explore individual themes or their interrelationships. Finally, and more ambitiously, it may be possible to create online cases that can be updated each year and enable anyone to follow the progress of students. This opens up the exciting possibilities of exploiting social media to generate discussion and the recounting of parallel journeys, perhaps only initially by EIA teachers, and then by EIA students.

## References

EIA [English in Action] (2009) 'Project partners – research, monitoring and evaluation action plan – 2008-2011'. Internal EIA document.

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Strauss, A.L. and Corbin, J.M. (1998) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yin, R.K. (2003) *Case Study Research: design and methods*, (3<sup>rd</sup>edn). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

## Appendix 1: Student interview schedule

The interview questions are organised into several categories that will be focused on during in the training. In each category there are key questions to ask, as well as some prompts and probes. These will be discussed and agreed at the training.

### Attitudes to school

- Do you enjoy going to school?
- What is good about it? Can you give me an example from today's lesson or a lesson last week?
- Is there anything you do not enjoy? Can you give me an example from today's lesson or a lesson last week?
- Do you think it is a good school?
- Why do you think this?
- Do your parents agree with you?

### Travelling to school and attendance

- How do you get to school?
- Do you have brothers and sisters – how old are they?
- Do they go to school? If so, which school? This school? (If it applies: how long were they at/have they been at school?)
- Do you manage to go to school most days? Some days? Not many days?
- When you cannot go to school, what are the reasons for this? Can you give me an example of when you were last away from school?
- Does it make it hard for you to catch up with schoolwork when you cannot come to school some days? Do you get help to catch up (if yes, who from)?

### Aspirations

- What would you like to do when you finish school? Why is that?
- What do you think you will need to do to get such a job? Is being able to speak English important?
- What further education/examinations will you need?

### Resources for learning

- Do you have all the things you need to do your work at school?
- Do you have homework? Do you have all you need at home to do your homework?
- Do you get any help with your homework?
- Who helps you and how do they do this?



### **Views of themselves as learners**

- How good are you at your schoolwork? How do you know this?
- Which subjects are you best at?

Using the Subject Ranking Sheet, complete the column indicating which subjects the student studies. Then discuss with the student how he or she would rank them. Number 1 is his or her favourite subject. Record the student's favourite down to the least favourite subject. Allow students to list some subjects as equal if they want to.

After creating the list, go through it, naming the subject and its ranking for the audio recorder and asking the student his or her reasons for liking or not liking it.

- What does your teacher think of your work?
- What do your parents think? Are they pleased with you?

### **Participation in lessons**

Go to the list of the student's favourite subjects (i.e. the Subject Ranking Sheet) to see how he or she rated English and the other subject you observed. Remind the student of the list and then, using your observations, probe his or her experiences of the teaching in these two subjects.

#### **Examples of questions:**

- I noticed you sat ... why do you sit there?
- I noticed the teacher did/did not ask you questions. Does he/she normally do this? Why is that?
- I noticed you asked did/did not ask for help. Do you often need help in this class? Why is that do you think?
- Do you like working on your own and/or working with your friends? What are your reasons for this?

### **Students relationships in school**

- Have you made friends in school? Are they in your class?
- Tell me a little about your best friends and why you like them.
- Are the teachers in the school all helpful? In what ways do they help you? [You might connect this back to the discussion of their favourite subjects.]

### **Parents' relationships with the school**

- Do your parents come to the school?
- If yes, how often do they come to the school?
- For what reasons do they come to school?
- Does the school invite your parents to come to the school?

## Appendix 2: Teacher interview schedule

### About their practice

- How do you know when a lesson is going well?
- Do you think it is important for students to talk together about their work? Why do you think this?
- How do you choose the students to ask questions of or to do work on the board in front of the class?
- Can you give some examples from your lessons this week of how you get your students to participate in activities?
- When students make errors or have difficulties with their learning, what kind of things do you do to help? Do you have an example of this from this week's lessons?
- Do you have information about students' family backgrounds? Do you think this information is important for your teaching? Can you give an example?

### For each of the selected/target students

The focus here is on the teacher's perception of the students.

Can we talk about student .....

- How would you describe him/her as a student?
- Is this a student whom you call on to answer questions or to do work on the board? Why is this?

[Teachers may want to consult their mark books and /or student work books for the next few questions.]

- How well is the student doing in school? Are there subjects he/she is particularly good/poor at? Can you give some examples?
- **[This question is for the EiA teacher only]** How well is the student doing in English? Are they confident in speaking English to:
  - you;
  - the class;
  - their friends;
  - their family?
- Could the student do better in school? If so, what does he/she need to do to improve his/her work?
- Does this student get on well with other students – do they have friends at school? Can you name one?
- Does the student engage in other aspects of the school curriculum – assembly, sports day etc.? Can you give any examples?
- Does he/she regularly do his/her homework? Do you expect the student to be able to get help with this?
- What level of education do you expect this student to achieve? Do you think the student will get the support from his/her family to achieve this?
- Does he/she attend school regularly? If he/she is absent, do you know what the reasons are for this?
- Have you met his/her parents? What was the reason for the meeting? How regularly have you met them?
- Have you ever visited the student at home? What was the reason for this.

## Appendix 3: Parent interview schedule

At the beginning of the interview, record the name and gender of the parent being interviewed. For example, 'Mother of Student 1-6' (record the specific student ID if known).

### Views on the school

- How many children do you have and what are their ages?
- Which ones go to the ... school?
- Are you pleased with the school? Can you give an example of what the school does that makes you think this?

### Parental background

- Can you say a little about your own education: when did you start and finish school?
- What do you, and your family, do for a living? Is your child involved in this? If so, in what ways?
- How would you describe **your** experience of school? What helped you to get an education? What made it difficult?
- Is it you who normally goes to your child's school? How often do you (or the other parent) visit the school? Can you give me some examples of when you would go to the school?
- Does the school make you feel welcome as a parent? Can you give me an example of this?
- What other ways does the school involve parents?

### General views on their son/daughter as a student

- Is your child usually in good health?
- Would you describe your child as an enthusiastic or reluctant student?
- If he/she is absent from school, what are the usual reasons for this? Can you recall the last time she/he was absent and the reason for that?
- Are you pleased with your child's progress at the school? In your view do they do well at school?
- Which subjects does he/she do well in?
- Which subjects does he/she do less well in?
- Which subjects do you think are important for him/her to do well in? Why is that?
- If your child needs help with his/her homework, who does he/she usually go to for help?
- What kinds of help does he/she normally need – can you give an example?
- How easy/hard is it for your child to get the help needed? What are the reasons for this?

### Views on learning English

- You mentioned that your child was ... (refer to previous response) at English. Is your child interested in learning English? How important does he/she think it is for the future?
- How important do you think being able to communicate in English is? Why do you think this?
- Do you speak in English to your child, or have English-language TV, books etc. in your home?

### Aspirations

- Do you expect your child to complete (primary/secondary) education?
- What do you expect your child will do after leaving school?
- What is the usual destination after school for young people in this area?

## Appendix 4: Observation schedule

Researcher ID:

### General information

Primary/Secondary:			
Class:			
Date:			
Students ID Numbers:			
Upazila:			
School name:			
Teacher name:			
Observer name:			
Time of lesson start:			
Time of lesson finish:			
No. in class and absent			
No. of girls and boys			

### Notes on the context:

**Observation Notes:**

Start of Lesson:

Time	Observed critical incidences and timed observations (Should be in 5 minute intervals)	Comments

Middle of Lesson:

Time	Observed critical incidences and timed observations (Should be in 5 minute intervals)	Comments

End of Lesson:

Time	Observed critical incidences and timed observations (Should be in 5 minute intervals)	Comments

**After the observation:**

In general, the teacher:	Circle one
Seems motivated	YES/NO
Engaged the students	YES/NO
Mostly spoke in English	YES/NO
Seemed prepared	YES/NO
Moved around the classroom	YES/NO
Seems in control of class	YES/NO

Comments:

In general, the students:	Circle one
Seemed to enjoy the lesson	YES/NO
Were willing to participate in activities	YES/NO
Mostly spoke in English	YES/NO
Seemed to be following the lesson	YES/NO

Comments:

## Appendix 5: Subject Ranking Sheet – Primary

School Subject (English name)	School Subject (Bangla name)	Subject studied YES/NO	Ranking (1= most liked)
Mathematics			
Bangla/Bengali			
Religion/Buddha/Islam			
Science			
English			
Handwriting (English)			
Fine Arts			
Social Science			
Leisure time			
Environmental Sociology			

## Appendix 6: Subject Ranking Sheet – Secondary

School Subject (English name)	School Subject (Bangla name)	Subject studied YES/NO	Ranking (1= most like)





## Appendix 7: Students' Information Sheet

Researcher's ID:

School Name:

Class:

Teacher's Name:

SL	Class Roll Number	Name of student	Parents' Name	Address	Phone Number (if any)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

## Appendix 8: Interview Guidance Notes for the IER Researchers

### Organising the interviews

You will have to interview two teachers and six students as well as students' parents. We suggest interviewing the EIA teacher and the other subject teacher, and then the three observed students **after** the observations on Day 1 and Day 2. All students will be taken out of their classes for this: this may be more difficult to arrange in the two primary schools that work a double shift. *The student interviews are a critical part of the study and each must be interviewed during the fieldwork period.*

The purpose of the interviews with students is to establish the students' background, views and experiences.

Each interview should be a maximum of 30 minutes in length.

### Students

#### *Conducting the student interview*

Get the verbal informed consent from the student before starting the interview.

Students must be put at ease, particularly the younger ones. They must understand that the researcher is interested in finding out what they think about school, how they experience school and how it might be improved for them, especially in terms of learning English. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions; what you are interested in is getting to know them and their views, experiences and ideas. Always check that the student has understood the question and give them time to answer.

- Remember to build a good rapport with the students and put them at ease during the interview. The tone of the interview should be one of giving the interviewee your full, undivided attention, and really wanting to understand what they want to share with you.
- Explain that there is no risk or danger linked to the study as what they say is confidential and will not be shared with anyone. The information that you are collecting is only for the purpose of the study and will not be shared within the school or with their parents.
- Ensure that your recording device is working and batteries charged.
- Seat the interviewee appropriately where there is less/no noise.
- This interview should be audio-recorded on a voice recorder, but if you want to, or your voice recorder is not working, then you can use the Flip video camera for this recording. You do not need to worry about what the picture is like. It's only important to capture the audio.

#### *During the interview*

- Use the questions on the interview schedule as your guide.
- If an interviewee brings up topics out of sequence, be flexible and adapt to this.
- The last part of the interview will build on what you saw in the classroom. So you may pick up on particular points that arose during the lesson.

- To encourage the students to talk more about a subject, you may want to use some of the following techniques:
  - Repeating the last word or phrase spoken by the student to prompt further information;
  - Paraphrasing and reflecting back to check understanding: e.g. 'So, it sounds to me like you are saying... ..is that right?'
  - Clarifying: If the student says things that appear to contradict or conflict with earlier statements, raise this for further discussion; e.g. 'Can I just check? Earlier in the interview, I think you said... but now it sounds like you are saying....'
  - Empathy: respond to emotional cues (verbal or non-verbal) e.g. 'How did that make you feel?', 'That sounds like it was....'

### *After the interview*

- Thank the student for his or her time and let him or her know that it went well.
- Thank the head teacher and the other two teachers whose lesson(s) were observed for their support.
- Type up the Subject Ranking Sheet on the electronic version provided to store and return during the data handover session.
- Make sure that you have labelled the interview file properly so that it is ready to store and return during the data handover session.

### **Teachers**

You will be familiar with the EIA teachers by now, but you should also recognise that the project is making many demands on their time. Let them know how much the project appreciates their participation in the *Student Lives Study*. The teachers will be interviewed on Day 1 and Day 2.

The aim of the teacher interviews is to establish for each of the six students:

- their perception of the students as learners;
- how well they are doing generally;
- how well they are doing in English;
- their wider participation in school;
- the support for their learning they get from their family.

### *Conducting the interview*

Let them know in advance (but **not** before the classroom observations) which three students you want to discuss so that they can get their mark books and the student's work books etc., to help them to answer the questions.

Explain that you will ask a few questions about their general practice, but most of the interview is about some of their students who you have picked at random from their class.

Remind them that the usual ethical guidelines will be adhered to and that their comments are treated as confidential and they will only be known by their ID. All student-specific data will be kept in a secure place.

Interviews should be a maximum of 30 minutes. However, you need to discuss each of the three students at both interviews, so this may take longer.

### *After the interview*

- Thank the teacher for his or her time and let them know that it went well.
- Make sure that you have labelled the interview file properly so that it is ready to store and return.

### **Parents**

The interviews with parents are to establish:

- their family, work and educational background;
- their views of the school;
- their relationship with the school;
- their child's progress;
- their aspirations for their child.

Interviews should be a maximum of 30 minutes.

### *Conducting the interview*

All the advice about good interview techniques for students is equally relevant for parents and teachers. Get the verbal informed consent from the parents before starting the interview. The ethical ground rules stated earlier must also be shared with parents before the interview begins.

Parents will rarely have been interviewed so you need to be very careful in establishing rapport and making clear why their views are crucial to understanding their child's experience of school. Although your main interest is their child and how they get on at school, ask them if they give their permission to talk about their own educational experience. They must understand that you are interested in finding out what they think about their child's schooling and progress, and how school-parent relationships might be improved for them, especially for learning English. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions; what you are interested in is getting to know them, their views and experiences.

Always check that they have understood the question and give them time to answer.

- Remember to build a good rapport with the parents and put them at ease during the interview. The tone of the interview should be one of giving the interviewee your full, undivided attention, and really wanting to understand what they want to share with you.
- Explain that there is no risk or danger linked to the study as what they say is confidential and will not be shared with anyone. The information that you are collecting is only for the purpose of the study and will not be shared within the school.

- You may have to take extra care to ensure that dialogue is facilitated. Asking ‘for examples’ is a useful strategy, as is giving encouragement, so that they know that what they are saying is of interest to you.
- If you are interviewing in the home, express your appreciation that they have found the time to be interviewed and granted you access to their home – this is no small matter. If they have come to the school, thank them for taking the time and trouble to travel etc.
- Reassure them that their child has been selected at random because students of his or her age are of particular interest to the project. Make sure they understand that the intention is to follow their child’s progress through schooling and to return each year to talk to them.

*After the interview*

- Thank the parent/s for their time and let them know that it went well.
- Make sure that you have labelled the interview file properly so that it is ready to store and return.

## Appendix 9: Observer's instructions

### Introduction

This study is to examine the experience, changing attitudes and beliefs, and English competence of students as they move through their school life and out into the world of employment. It will consider them as speakers of English, learners of English, and community members, including their role in the home and in employment. All this will be done in the context of their experience of EIA and its impact on these aspects of their lives. Students will be chosen to enable the different phases of experience of: primary school, the transition to secondary, secondary school, and the transition into employment or other destinations (e.g. higher education).

The students will be studied as cases as they progress through primary and secondary schools and beyond, with cohorts drawn from the first two years of EIA (2010–2011) to enable the different models of the project to be studied, with students being chosen to cover the student experience in the phases described above. Students will be interviewed and observed annually for up to seven years to understand their progress, and include interviews with others who are connected with their experience of EIA and its impact (e.g. teachers, family, local community, employers).

### Your role as a researcher

Remember you are a researcher, and in this classroom observation task you are required to **focus on six students** who you have selected in advance. You will observe three students on Day 1 and three on Day 2. You need to identify the grades being taught English on that day and prioritise these classes when selecting your students and from the first shift in the two schools who operate a double shift. These should be Grade 3/4 in primary, if possible, and Grade 6/7 in high school. **Grades 3 and 6 are the preferred grades.** If you need to choose another grade in primary, then choose a higher grade, not a lower one.

You will have to negotiate the selection, and interview the students later. **Select three girls and three boys in primary schools.** The oversampling of girls cannot be avoided in the secondary sample because there are a number of girls' schools in the sample. **If you are in a mixed high school, select two girls and four boys.**

**Select students whose experience of school may be different.** So do not focus only on those students at the front or those who the teacher considers 'good' – of course you should not exclude these students either! As it is possible that girls and boys may be seated in different areas of the classroom, if you are in a mixed primary school choose three students of the same gender to focus on in Day 1 and three of the opposite gender in Day 2. **Do not** select students who sit together.

Students will be given a number assigned by you from 1 to 6. Pseudonyms will be arranged after data collection. You need to keep a record of the number assigned next to the actual name of the student. **It will be important to keep the identities of the students to yourself until after the observations so that it does not influence the teachers' behaviour towards them.** You will see that observations are planned before interviews to allow for this.

### Organising the observations

In the two primary schools where there is a double shift, observe in the morning if possible. You will observe the students in one English class **and** in one other subject class. In selecting the other subject

class, if there is not a class teacher for the selected students you will need to negotiate this with another teacher. This teacher will have to agree to your presence in his or her classroom and to being interviewed.

The purpose of the observation is to focus on the students and to provide an account of their involvement in classroom activity and talk. Any comments you make on the observation record must help to expand on how you understand the student is getting on and participating:

- in the activity;
- with the teacher;
- with other students.

### **Meeting the head teacher and teacher**

You are expected to introduce yourself to the head teacher if he or she is available, and explain what you are doing and your role (as above) in this particular study. If the head teacher asks you to see him or her again after the observations in the school, and asks you for an opinion of the teachers' performances, remind him or her that you were focusing on the students in this study. If asked about the students, say you were very pleased with what you saw.

Similarly introduce yourself to the teacher/s of the classes to be observed before you start observing, and explain what you are doing and your role:

- You are not there to judge the teacher (or his or her students) at all, and it is not like a normal classroom observation (an inspection).
- You are simply there to record what particular students are doing and how they are engaging in the activities.
- The form that you are filling in is only for the use of the EIA project and will not be seen or used by anyone in authority over the students or teachers (including the head teacher).
- The lesson should go ahead as if you are not in the classroom at all.
- You are not judging the content of the lesson – just systematically recording how the students are participating.

It is also, of course, important to be polite and respectful to the teacher, recognising that you are a guest in his or her classroom. Agree with the teacher where you should sit to be as unobtrusive as possible, but so that you are able to see the selected students and to position the video appropriately. Also agree with the teacher what to say to the students about your presence: essentially conveying the information above.

### **Setting up in the classroom**

Sit where you will not get in the way. The main data collection is your written observations supported by the audio and video recording. You will be focused on the three students selected. You do not need to move about during the lesson (though if students are doing group or pair work, you might need to move closer to them to hear what they say). The observations will take two approaches. The first approach recording **all critical incidences** that involve the selected students takes priority. Critical incidences will include:

- interaction with the teacher;
- interaction with another student;
- work on the board;
- answering questions;
- asking questions;
- disruptive behaviour etc.

Note this recording is a form of event sampling.

A second approach to try out requires **timed observations** of all three students every five minutes. At each five-minute interval, record against the student's number:

- his or her activity;
- the resources he or she is using;
- his or her engagement level – on task/off task;
- who the student is working with and how he or she is working, e.g. alone, in pairs collaborating in a group, with the teacher alone, in a whole-class situation listening to the teacher etc.;
- if there is period of silence, e.g. when students are reading, then note this.

Note the record is made of behaviour at the instant of the five-minute interval and is therefore *instantaneous sampling*, not interval recording.

## Data collection

### Observing in the classroom

Complete the first page of the observation sheet; you should complete the student's home address details before the observation or after.

Make a note of anything written on the board by the teacher at the start of the lesson (or before the lesson started) about the lesson activity.

When the lesson starts, start the video recorder with the time code set at zero, along with the timer provided and use the latter to complete the 'Time' column in the observation sheet.

### Recording critical incidences

You can write down the **activity** in either English or Bangla. Note when Bangla and English are spoken by either students or teacher. You must record any **English** exactly as spoken (i.e. in English).

Where there is an interaction, its nature and purpose should be noted and the actual words involved in the exchange, particularly for the teacher-student interactions. If the teacher talks in Bangla, write it down in Bangla; if he or she talks in English, write it down in English. Use 'T' for teacher talk. If the interaction is with another student, note their gender using B or G and refer to the selected student clearly by their number. If questions are asked or answered by the students, the actual words should be



recorded, and responses to them, and translated after the observations.

(The write-up of your notes will require you to translate Bangla into English, but do not attempt to do this while you observe.)

### **Timed recordings**

In recording every five minutes, follow the guidance above. If you notice a critical incidence for one of the students, record this first and make a note of the time and comment on this in the comment column of the sheet.

In both types of observations:

- Record when materials are used and note down what these are.
- If the teacher writes on the board make sure you capture this and mark it in your notes.
- Mark clearly anything you are unsure about, including any materials, by, for example, using a '?' and check at the end of the lesson for these by asking the students or the teacher.

### **After the lesson**

You will have to interview the teacher and the students. See the separate schedule and guidance for the student and teacher interviews.

### **Typing up observation notes**

After you have done the observation, you will need to write up the notes in an electronic version (in Word or other program). Use the electronic version of the observation record (which is provided) to enter the notes you made on the hard copy of the record.

Enter all the general information, notes on context and then observed activity and talk, along with time codes.

If you are unsure how to translate anything accurately, then do write it as you think it should be and put the Bangla alongside it.

Use the video to check anything that is unclear in your notes.

## Appendix 10: Ethical considerations

The same codes of conduct will be employed as for the *Teacher Lives Study*. You will be obtaining personal information on students and it is important that you appreciate its sensitive nature and the strict confidentiality required. It will be explained to the student and to his or her parents how the data will be used and disseminated, and that they will not be identified in any publications, presentations or communications. The teacher interviews will, however, be specifically about the selected students; hence they will be aware of their identity. Students will be told that they have the right to ask you to delete their answers at any time they feel uncomfortable or to refuse to answer questions that similarly make them uncomfortable. In all documents, students will be referred to by an EIA student ID (this will need to be specifically established for this and other longitudinal cohort studies, and will not be available more generally in the project). The student data will need to include not only the school and teacher details for each year, but also the students' home addresses and telephone numbers to maximise the possibility of tracing students in later years. You need to use the student information sheet to record this.

As individuals are to be followed for a number of years, they will have to be approached individually to ensure that, firstly that they are willing be part of a longitudinal study and, secondly that they are happy for data to be held on them as individuals. Students and/or their parents will be asked to confirm that they are willing to be identified in any resultant publications. However, if any individual is willing to participate but unwilling to be identified, this should not rule them out from the study, to avoid the risk of reducing the sample.

There is a subject ranking sheet for each student. There are different sheets for primary and secondary school. As you are working either in a primary or a high school, you just need to print the appropriate sheet and make six copies. Record the student identifier on the sheet before the interview, and check that you have added any subjects that are taught that were not on the list.

## Appendix 11: Fieldwork and File Management Guidance

### Fieldwork schedule

Ideally your fieldwork schedule will be as follows:

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select six children for the study (as per <i>Observation Guidance</i> – see section on ‘Your role as a researcher’) – three from Grade 3/4; three from grade 6/7. Do not let the teachers know who you are observing until after the observations.</li><li>• Negotiate interviews with the parents of all the selected children.</li><li>• Observe three of the children selected (either those from grade 3/4 or those from grade 6/7) in <b>one</b> English lesson and <b>one</b> other subject lesson.</li><li>• Interview <b>both</b> the teacher of the English lesson and the teacher from the other subject lesson.</li><li>• Conduct interviews with <b>all</b> of the three children you have observed that day. (Note you <b>must</b> conduct these student interviews.)</li></ul>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observe the other three children selected (those not observed on Day 1) in <b>one</b> English lesson and <b>one</b> other subject lesson. <u>Do not let the teachers know who you are observing until after the observations.</u></li><li>• Interview <b>both</b> the teacher of the English lesson and the teacher from the other subject lesson.</li><li>• Conduct interviews with <b>all</b> of the three children you have observed that day. (Note you <b>must</b> conduct these student interviews.)</li></ul>
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct interviews with the parents (negotiated on Day 1) – ideally one parent of each of the six children.</li></ul>

### Data collected

At the end of the fieldwork (Day 3) you will have a number of electronic data files. You will have collected data on one grade 3/4 class and one grade 6/7 class. You will have done:

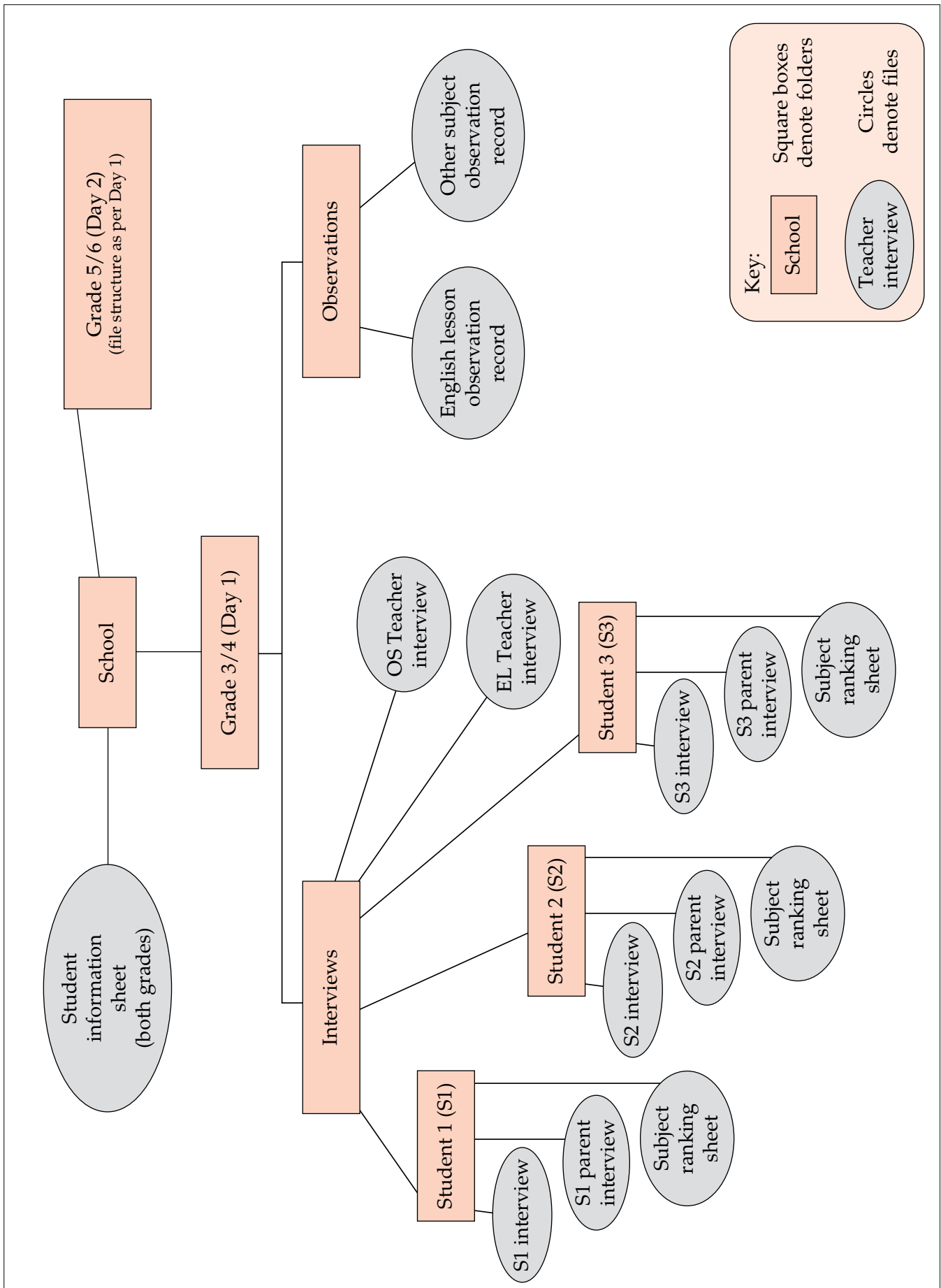
1. six interviews with students
2. one to six interviews with the students’ parents (ideally try to aim for six!)
3. four teacher interviews (one English teacher and one teaching another subject on Days 1 and 2)
4. four observations of classroom activity (one for the English class and one for the other subject on Days 1 and 2).

## Data files

In terms of the **data files**, you will have:

1. The files from the interviews:
  - an audio or video file from each student interview (six in total, one for each student) [File name, for example: Schoolname\_ClassNo\_studentID\_StuInt.mp3]
  - a subject ranking sheet for each student (six in total, one for each student) [File name, for example: Schoolname\_ClassNo\_studentID\_SRS.doc]
  - an audio or video file from each parent interview (between one and six files, ideally one for each student's parent [File name, for example: Schoolname\_ClassNo\_studentID\_ParInt.mp3]
  - an audio or video file from the teacher interview (four in total, one for each class observed i.e. two English, two other subject) [File name, for example: Schoolname\_ClassNo\_TeacInt\_ELorOL.mp3] (EL or OL for 'English lesson' or 'other lesson').
2. The files from the observation:
  - four observation records in Word or other program. [File name, for example: Schoolname\_GradeNo\_Day1\_Obs\_EL\_OR.doc]
3. You will also have one student information sheet containing name and contact details of six students from Grades 3/4 or 6/7.

**Please organise these files into folders on your Netbook, as shown in the diagram on the following page:**



## Appendix 12: Fieldwork schedule

### *Student Lives Study*: Fieldwork schedule

Ideally your fieldwork schedule will be as follows:

Day 1 (9 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One classroom observation (EIA teacher)</li><li>• EIA teacher's interview</li><li>• Three student interviews (Q. Set A)</li></ul>
Day 2 (10 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One classroom observation (non-EIA teacher)</li><li>• Non-EIA teacher's interview</li><li>• Three student interviews (Q. Set B)</li><li>• One parent's interview</li></ul>
Day 3 (12 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One classroom observation (EIA teacher)</li><li>• EIA teacher's interview</li><li>• Three student interviews (Q. Set A)</li></ul>
Day 4 (13 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One classroom observation (non-EIA teacher)</li><li>• Non-EIA teacher's interview</li><li>• Three student interviews (Q. Set B)</li><li>• One parent's interview</li></ul>
Day 5 (14 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Four parent interviews</li></ul>

## Appendix 13: Training notes

### Rationale and focus of the study

This study is to examine the experience, attitudes and beliefs, and English competence of, a selected cohort of students as they move through their school life and out into the world of employment. It will consider them as speakers of English, learners of English, and community members including their role in the home. All this will be done in the context of their experience of EIA and schooling more broadly and its impact on these aspects of their lives. Students will be chosen to enable the different phases of experience of: primary school, the transition to secondary, secondary school, and the transition into employment or other destinations (e.g. higher education) to be monitored and reported on.

The students will be studied as cases as they progress through primary and secondary schools and beyond, with two initial cohorts (Grades 3/4 in primary; Grades 6/7 in high school) drawn from the first two years of EIA (2010–2011). Students will be interviewed and observed annually for up to seven years to understand their progress, and the study will include interviews with others who are connected with their experience of EIA and of schooling and their impact (e.g. teachers, family, local community, employers).

### Training agenda: February 2011

- Check equipment needed, availability and back-up supplies, batteries etc.
- Back-up plans to address problems experienced in the field, including contact names and numbers for researchers.
- Arrangements for training (power supply, screen and equipment availability etc.).

### Sampling

- Go through guidance in observation and interview notes re: sampling.
- Negotiating and selecting the sample of students, what range of students, discuss gender balance and the need for some diversity. Direct the researchers to the specific guidance notes.
- Assigning Student ID numbers, collecting home addresses, look at front sheet of observation record sheets.
- Negotiating the parent sample, checking permissions and location of interviews. Travel issues and timings.
- Selecting and negotiating second subject and teacher and what lessons to observe.
- Checking subjects covered and amending the subject ranking sheet.

### The plan for the fieldwork

#### Day 1

Selection of students negotiated and parents identified and contacted.

Observations of three students in EIA lesson and in another subject lesson.

Interview both teachers and the three students.

Day 2

Observations of three additional students in EIA lesson. Observations of the sample continued in another subject.

Individual interviews with students and other subject teacher.

Day 3

Interviews with parents wherever they are comfortable to talk to the researcher.

### *Reviewing equipment needs and use in data collection*

- Check equipment – whether it is working properly.

### *Observation*

- Go through the guidance and the observation sheets. Explain the shift in focus away from the teacher to the selected students.
- Question and answer session (whole group).
- Observe the video and identify students to be observed.

### *Observing critical incidences*

In groups of three:

- try out a critical incidence recording using the video;
- discuss what a critical incidence means and any difficulties in recording these.

Group presentations

Present views and examples of critical incidences. Questions to be answered.

Plenary

Question and answer session.

Summarising the discussion of what constitutes a critical incidence.

### *Timed observations*

In groups of three revisit the video and observe.

Record for a 15-minute period, every five minutes, observations of selected students. If a critical incidence occurs, note that in preference.

In groups discuss observations. Are the notes capturing something about the students' engagement?

What difficulties were experienced?

Group presentations

Discuss the process and what it is important to take notice of. Questions to be answered.



## *Interviews*

### Student interviews

The researchers need to have a good understanding of the categories of interest. Go through the interview guidance.

### Question and answer session

In groups of three, discuss the categories of questions. Consider:

*Why are these interesting for EIA?*

*Which categories focus particularly on learning English?*

### Conducting the interviews

Go through the ethical issues and the guidance on how to put young people at their ease. Discuss the introduction to the interview.

Look at the subject ranking sheet and discuss in groups how it might be used as a record and as a prompt. Alert researchers to the location of the electronic version, and the need to complete this as part of their report and to submit it with the audio file.

Get them to do mock interviews and think about difficulties, useful prompts and good probes.

### *Group presentations*

Discuss the process and what it is important to take notice of. Questions to be answered.

### Researching the research process

In this pilot, researchers will be asked to collect data on how the research process went, what were the difficulties, what went well, not so well and why. These reflections should be recorded at the end of each day and included in the researcher's report. Researchers' views on what might have been done differently and what other support they needed etc. should be included.

## Appendix 14: Training programme

*Student Lives Study*: Training Schedule 19–20 February 2011

**Day One: Saturday 19 February 2011**

Time	Topic
10.00 am – 10.45 am	<p>Introduction to the <i>Student Lives Study</i></p> <p>Give out guidance and instruments and talk through what is involved</p> <p>Plan for fieldwork (Slide)</p> <p>Discussion on guidance notes and plan</p>
10:45 am - 11:30 am	<p><b>Sampling</b></p> <p>Negotiating with school and teachers</p> <p>Selecting students and another teacher</p> <p>Negotiating parent sample</p> <p>Ethical considerations</p>
11.30 am – 12.00 pm	Refreshment
12.00 pm – 1.00 pm	<p>Researchers' experience of observation and interviewing students – reflection and discussion</p> <p>Go through guidance on observation: shift from T to S; critical incident (CI) and timed observation.</p> <p>Q&amp;A</p>
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch break
2.00 pm - 3.00 pm	<p>Critical incidence observation (view ½-hour video)</p> <p>Discuss in threes and compare what chosen (who missed what)</p> <p>Plenary discussion with list of CIs noting what likely to be missed and why</p> <p>Summary of what constitutes a CI</p>
3.00 pm - 3.30 pm	<p>Timed observation (view 15 min of same video)</p> <p>Discuss in threes and compare what chosen (who missed what)</p>
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Refreshment
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm	<p>Plenary discussion with list of CIs noting what likely to be missed and why</p> <p>Summary of what constitutes instantaneous sampling</p> <p>CI and individual student (IS) observation together (second 15 min of same video)</p> <p>Discussion of doing both kinds of observation</p>

## Day Two: Sunday 20 February 2011

Time	Topic
10.00 am – 11.30 am	<p>Go through student interview schedule plus Q&amp;A</p> <p>Introducing student information sheet</p> <p>Introducing Subject Ranking sheet</p> <p>Discussion of student interview schedule and other documents in threes</p>
11.30 am – 12.00 pm	Refreshments
12.00 pm – 1.00 pm	<p>Role play of interviewing students by researchers (in threes one observes other two, swap round so each try interviewing)</p> <p>Feedback and discussion on role play of interviewing students</p>
1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch break
2.00 pm – 3.00 pm	<p>Role play of interviewing parents (in threes, one observes other two, swap round so each try interviewing)</p> <p>Feedback and discussion on role play of interviewing parents</p> <p>Role play of interviewing teachers (in threes, one observes other two, swap round so each try interviewing)</p> <p>Feedback and discussion on role play of interviewing teachers</p>
3.00 pm – 3.30 pm	Refreshments
3.30 pm – 4.00 pm	Data collection and storage process and reviewing equipment needs
4.00 pm – 4.30 pm	<p>Distributing final documents for the <i>Student Lives Study</i></p> <p>Discussion, questions and queries on everything</p>

## Appendix 15: Analysis template

Template for writing narratives and quotes from actual transcripts

Researcher Name:

Researcher No.:

Student No.:

Narratives	Quotes
AT SCHOOL:	
<p>Student 1 at AUKGH School felt good about her school.</p> <p>Although Student 1 ranked Bangla as her favourite subject she said that she enjoyed English class most. There wasn't any specific reason for that except the teaching method in English class.</p>	<p><i>Here we all friends stay together. Classes are held regularly here and also the teaching is good. (R2S1IA)</i></p> <p><i>He writes in black board in wrong sequence and tells us to write. Then he tells us to exchange khata (R2S1B)</i></p>
AT HOME:	
ASPIRATIONS:	
EL COMPETENCE:	

Instructions:

1. In the **Narratives** section, put a narrative account of what was found in the interview for the corresponding broad heading.
2. In the **Quotes** section, put the actual excerpts from the interviews that correspond to the broad heading.

**Key points**

## Appendix 16: Analysis workshop training material

### Student lives analysis

#### *Rationale and focus of study*

This study is to examine the experience, changing attitudes and beliefs, and English competence of students as they move through their school life and out into the world of employment. It will consider them as speakers of English, learners of English, and community members including their role in the home and in employment. All this will be done in the context of their experience of EIA and its impact on these aspects of their lives. Students will be chosen to enable the different phases of experience of: primary school, the transition to secondary, secondary school, and the transition into employment or other destinations (e.g. higher education).

#### *Sample analysis*

#### *Procedure*

##### *Step 1 Checking data*

Look through all the documents to check all are there:

- Student interview (Day 1 and 2)
- Subject ranking sheet
- Observation notes (English and other subject)
- Teacher interviews (English and other subject)
- Parent interview

##### *Step 2 Reading and grouping data*

Read through each document and take notes under the following headings:

#### **At school**

This will include what the student is like as a learner of English and in general (as gleaned from observation and the interviews). The data will be the student's and other people's views of studying and learning English and other subjects, and their participation in lessons (and other information from observations).

#### **At home**

This will focus on the home as a support for learning in general and English in particular, and will include physical conditions and parental support (the parental view of the student as a learner is part of the previous heading).

#### **Aspirations**

These will include the student's, teachers' and parental views on these aspirations.

## English language competence

As yet we do not have these data, but we will try to trace some information either on the student's school, class or teacher (from the Trinity testing in 2010 and 2011).

(During the training this procedure was aided by using a template to organise the quotes under each of the headings on one half of the page and enabling the narrative around each of them to be constructed on the other half of the page. See Appendix 5.)

### *Step 3 Writing the narrative case*

This will use the above headings to combine the data from the various sources into a coherent account that notes differences in perceptions among the respondents, or between behaviour and perceptions etc. Added to this will be the background information on the school or the area. The data source should in all cases be noted in parenthesis, where there is a direct use of data (even if not a quote). (These references may be removed in a final report, but they are necessary for checking purposes.)

## Case studies

### *Example 1 S1.1*

## Abbreviations

SI = student interview

PI = parent interview

ETI = English teacher interview

EOI = Teacher of other subject interview

OE = observation notes of English lesson

OO = observation notes of other subject

SRS = Subject ranking sheet completed by student

All these will be prefixed by student name (S1.1)

## Background

S1.1 goes to \*\*\* high school and is in Class 7 (2011). The school is [complete 'conditions' and general information on school size etc., when we have TL information].

## At school

S1.1 likes going to school and thinks his school is good, with the teachers being good and inspiring (S1.1:SI1). When teachers do not teach (when they 'gossip'), he does not enjoy school (S1.1:SI1). He also likes the school environment [physical conditions], and thinks his parents like the school (S1.1:SI1). His father also thinks it is a good school, though his reasons also include it being close to home and posing no risk to his child (S1.1:PI). The student's attendance is good and he and his father say absenteeism is only because of sickness. The student sometimes suffers from asthma and colds, but is otherwise in good health (S1.1: PI).

He likes English, thinks he is best at it, and rates it top of his subject list (English 1<sup>st</sup> paper and 2<sup>nd</sup> paper are first and second rankings respectively on his SRS). Although he is not very specific about his reasons for liking English, he says that he likes to read stories (S1.1: SI1). He does not spontaneously respond to teacher questions because he feels nervous, but implies that he is sometimes asked by the teachers (S1.1:

SI1; there is one observation of him raising his hand to answer in the other subject class S1.1:OO. He generally seems to be attentive and his other subject teacher agrees with this, though, like his father, sees him as 'restless and active... and can't always concentrate' (S1.1: OTI), nevertheless the student thinks he understands the lessons. His father also thinks he is restless, and thinks he is very interested in sports and reluctant to study (S1.1: PI). The student has quite a different view of the role of sport, ranking it second last out of 11 subjects (S1.1: SRS). Indeed, his father thinks he is not doing well at school, with his best subjects being English, maths and science, and doing less well in Bangla (S1.1: PI). The student's English teacher thinks that he is 'very simple' and needs more guidance from his guardian (S1.1: ETI). This relates to what the father says about his ability to support his son's study (see next section). Despite the father saying that he has an interest in sport, the teachers do not mention his participation in sport out of lessons (the teacher of the other subject says that he does take part in sports day; S1.1: OTI).

The student likes to work in the classroom with others, rather than individually, particularly with friends, and he listed two who he works with (S1.1: SI1). Group work seems to be familiar. His English teacher confirms that in general the students (targeted) are friendly and cooperate (S1.1: ETI).

### **At home**

S1.1's father has a low educational level (primary Class 4), having left school because of poverty. He is a tea stall holder and also is involved in 'fish farming' [it may be he simply fishes on his land and sells it at market] (S1.1: PI). The student has a younger sister (nine years old) who is in primary class 4. The children do not help with the father's work (S1.1: PI). The student thinks he has the resources at home to study, although this is just a general expression of having all the things needed for schoolwork and homework (S1.1: SI1).

As indicated earlier, the father is not pleased with his son's progress at school, but is unable to help him (because of his own educational level), and that is why he employs a private tutor for him (S1.1: PI). (There is no information about just how much time this involves or for what subjects.) The student says he does not need help with his homework (S1.1: SI1).

The student's father thinks English is important though the reasons he gives are related to reading (apparently in Bangla with English words) and meeting people who use English (not necessarily native speakers who do not speak Bangla; S1.1: PI). The student also thinks English is important for a job: 'it is very much essential everywhere' (S1.1: SI1). The student watches BBC Janala, but otherwise there is no English in the home environment (there are no English books apart from school texts), and the father cannot speak English (S1.1: PI). The English teacher says that there is no English spoken in the home, though this is likely to be an assumption as he has not visited the student's home, and has made no specific reference to having met the student's father when he came to the school (S1.1: ETI).

The father has visited the school 'now and then' to pay the school fees (the market is next to the school, so convenient), though he had not visited that year (2011). The student says he comes weekly to find out about his study (S1.1: SI1). He feels welcome as a parent and he has been called to a parents' meeting (S1.1: PI), though again the student says they are not invited by the school (S1.1:SI1).

### **Aspirations**

The student and his father have high aspirations for the future with the student wanting to go to college to get a bachelor degree (S1.1:SI1), and his father wanting him to get an master's degree.

## **EL competence**

His father is not entirely pleased with his son's progress in school (S1.1: PI). The English teacher thinks he is doing well in English (though he says he is doing 'so, so' at school), with a little confidence to speak English in class and with friends, but not in the home. He would do better if his father was more 'conscious' and supported him more (S1.1: ETI). The other subject teacher thinks the student is getting on well to 'some extent' (S1.1: OTI).

## **IER analysis of cases**

### *Documents*

*Data files:* although students may have these we should issue them to them, with appropriate document labels and headers.

*Sample analyses:* done by Bob

*Analysis procedure:* notes on how the analyst did the analysis.

*Workshop agenda*

## **Workshop agenda**

### *Day 1 (7 August) morning*

Session 1 (1 hour)

Introduction to session, brief discussion of purposes and IER researchers' experience of carrying out the data collection (and how that relates to the analysis).

Talk through the sample analysis and the procedure used.

Session 2 (2 hours)

IER researchers carry out one analysis (not the ones done as samples).

Session 3 (30 mins)

Working in pairs, IER researchers exchange their analyses, read them, then discuss with each other points they noted (keep a list of these).

Session 4 (30 mins)

Two or three groups are formed to discuss the list of points from the previous session and to come up with any questions and additions to the guidance procedure (or points to note when doing analysis).

Session 5 (30 mins–1 hour)

Plenary session to discuss the questions and additions to guidance.

### *Day 1 afternoon*

Session 5 (continued)

Session 6 (1.5 hours)



Students work on their own individual analysis with EIA team around to support them with further queries (keep list of these).

## **Day 2**

Session 7 (30 mins)

Discussion of general points raised on previous day (from list kept by EIA team) and clarify any points on procedure.

Session 8 (4 hours)

Continue analysis by individual IER researchers.

Session 9 (1 hour)

Final discussion of the analysis from a methodological point of view. It is assumed that at this point IER researchers should be able to hand in their analyses, but there is scope for the following morning to be an opportunity to finalise these, based on any discussion in this final session of Day 2. In total they have nine hours for six cases, so that is 1½ hours per case. Those IER researchers whose students were part of the sample analyses should look over the sample, check it and add anything following the discussions at the workshop.

## **Outcomes**

There should be 90 student lives case studies.

## **Reporting**

There is then a task for there to be checks on these analyses (one case checked per IER researcher), but that when we are happy with these, the case studies are part of the reports for the *Student Lives Study*. There has to be an overview analysis done and then a write-up of the methodology etc. (It will parallel the 2b2 Case Study report; Report 3).







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