Audio Production for ELT in Bangladesh
Contextualization: Challenges and Practices

NELTA Conference 2013

Ahmed Orko Nur
England
China
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tea and biscuits in England</th>
<th>Tea and biscuits in Bangladesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tea:</strong> Comes in many flavors</td>
<td><strong>Tea:</strong> Raw tea, Chai tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk:</strong> Powder, Liquid</td>
<td><strong>Milk:</strong> Condensed milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sugar:</strong> Cane, Beet, Maple – sugar cube, granulated, brown, powder, icing etc.</td>
<td><strong>Sugar:</strong> Granulated cane sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biscuits:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Biscuits:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be bought, can be baked at home. Can be served with jam, toppings. Personal.</td>
<td>Always bought. Eaten straight or dipped in tea. Less personal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**England**
- “I am having tea and biscuits at my grandmother’s place.”
- “Enjoying yourself?”

**Bangladesh**
- “I am having tea and biscuits at my grandmother’s place.”
- “Just biscuits?”
Contextualization

• Different interpretation of the same situation or discourse by different people. Primarily due to different backgrounds.

• John Gumperz (1980) defines contextualization as the process that sets the proper context of language for a given situation or discourse.
Contextualizing Audio

• Audio materials that can relate to the needs of a set of learners with a particular socio-cultural background.

• In this case:
Audio materials that can relate to the needs of a Bangladeshi primary or secondary school learner.

• Advantages
  ▪ Removes learning barriers
  ▪ Readily accepted and adopted
  ▪ Helps to create a natural learning environment, which is conducive to second language learning
Need for Contextualized Audio Materials in Bangladesh

• Lack of contextualization in the present audio content in Bangladesh

• Necessity
  ▪ Speaking and listening improvement in general
  ▪ Introduction of speaking and listening assessment in national curricula
English in Action

- Intro Video
English in Action (EIA)

- **English in Action (EIA)** is a **UK Aid** funded, nine-year English language development programme in Bangladesh. It is managed by **BMB-Mott Macdonald**, supported by **Open University-UK, BBC Media Action, FIVDB, UCEP** and implemented by the **Government of Bangladesh**.

- It works to reach **25 million** primary and secondary students and adult learners.

- By **2014**, EIA will reach **12,500** school teachers.
EIA Materials

• EIA has developed a large range of printed and audio-visual materials for teacher training and classroom usage.

• The materials are used for:
  – Classroom usage
  – Teacher training
Application of audio content in EIA

• Audio is a key component of the EIA materials. It is used primarily for classroom usage, played by the teachers on the EIA provided playback equipment.

• These interactive audio materials deliver language points and engage students in an immersive communicative language learning environment.

• EIA also uses audio materials for teacher training.
Steps of Audio Production for ELT

• Pre-Production:
  – Identifying target audience
  – Setting the desired level of language
  – Script writing

• Production:
  – Voice recording
  – Music composition
  – Quality Assurance

• Post-Production:
  – Sound design (Ambience, Sound effects, Mixing, Mastering etc.)
Contextualization in EIA Audio: Pre-Production

• Target Audience:
  – Primary and secondary school students and teachers

• Contextualization:
  – Language: ‘Bangladeshi’ version
    • Rationale:
      1. Learners can pick it up and reproduce the language easily.
      2. If there is a large gap in the teacher’s level of English and the level of English in the audio, classroom practices will be disrupted.

  – Script development:
    • The textbook is the central material
    • Ensure that the script is sensitive to the Bangladeshi social landscape.
    • Bring in situations that the learners can easily relate to.
    • Design audio script that can be easily integrated with ELT activities.
Contextualization in EIA Audio: Production

• Voice recording:
  – Language: Clarity, pace, stress, intonation, removal of accent, avoid tail drop
  – Voice acting: Friendly, engaging, appropriate emotion

• Music Composition:
  – Familiar composition
  – Engaging, rhythmic
  – Easily memorable

• QA:
  – Draft audio is reviewed by experts from EIA and OU-UK
  – Feedback is sent back to the studio for correction
Contextualization in EIA Audio Post-Production

• Sound design:
  – Proper Ambience/SFX for realism
  – Proper mixing for clarity (i.e. music/sfx shouldn’t dominate, the voice is highlighted)
  – Proper adaptation to hardware (i.e. file splitting for easy management, hardware appropriate sound design and compression, hardware appropriate file naming)
Challenges

• New language style
• Bangla stress, intonation patterns often conflict with English stress intonation patterns (i.e. Bangla questions almost always follow a rising intonation.)
• Music composition is challenging: Bangladeshi musical patterns conflict with English voice stress and intonation pattern.
• Lack of voice artists with the necessary acting and English skills.
• Lack of infrastructural support in the schools.
Music composition and sound designing for Bangladeshi audience

• Interview: Ripon Nath
Demonstration

• Audio file 1
Demonstration

• Audio file 2
Experience Sharing/Feedback