

Teachers' Awareness, Opportunities and Challenges of Adapting EFL Materials in Bangladeshi Universities

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Abstract: Choosing a coursebook for a particular group of students involves adapting the material against the context in which it is going to be used because it is easy to understand that most text books are produced for large-scale, commercial use, and therefore are not always suitable for the needs of one's local, particular group. The teacher then, according to Hutchinson and Tones, "becomes little more than a cipher for a prepared text" (Hutchinson and Tones, 1994, in Tomlinson, 2003, p.347). This statement very well refers to Bangladeshi university teachers as most of them have become familiar with using Western textbooks like New Headway, Cutting Age, English for Life, etc. Be that as it may, we should remember that in this case the teachers might not feel comfortable about using these texts because of the mismatch of the global material and local needs of the learners. Therefore, the situation implies that, as teachers, it is important for us to evaluate teaching materials and then adapt them as tools to help our teachers. But the question is how far our teachers are aware of the need for adaptation of these EFL materials in order to make it context specific and student friendly. This paper presents EFL teachers' awareness of adapting ELT coursebooks at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. In addition, it focuses on teachers' opportunities and challenges of adapting ELT coursebooks. It is based on a criterion driven questionnaire.

1. Introduction

Despite the range and variety of published materials on the market, it is difficult to find a perfect fit between learner needs and course requirements on the one hand, and what the course book contains on the other. Teachers often think of themselves as being dependent on prepared materials and they often do not believe that they are capable of writing good materials themselves. Interestingly, materials adaptation seems to be something teachers do a lot, but which is rarely researched or included in training courses (Renandya and Richards, 2004). Consequently, teachers simply rely on their own personal beliefs, experience and intuition in adapting materials.

However, all teachers are materials developers in that they are involved every day in matching materials to the needs and wants of their learners. In order to do this, they select, adapt and supplement materials when preparing their lessons and they make decisions about their materials throughout their lessons in response to their learners' reactions. They add, they delete, they lengthen, they shorten, they modify. They make use of their experience of teaching and their beliefs about language learning to "develop" materials of optimum use to their learners. We believe that all teachers have their own intuitive theories of language learning and that helping them to develop and articulate these theories in principled and coherent ways can help them to develop and use effective language learning materials. Why do teachers adapt materials? It all starts

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with the teacher intuitively feeling that something is not quite right. Teachers may feel uncomfortable because of a mismatch with their teaching environment (national, regional, institutional, cultural, etc.), their learners (age, language level, prior learning experience, etc.), their own preferences (personality, teaching styles, etc.), the course objectives (syllabus, institutional targets, etc.), and so on.

The hope, of course, lies with local, non-commercial materials which are not driven by the profit imperative and which are driven rather by consideration of the needs and wants of their target learners and by principles of language acquisition. According to Tomlinson (2011), “imported course books” and “foreign course books” are common terms used among millions of teachers and learners in Southeast Asia to refer to what elsewhere is known as “global course books.” They are introduced and distributed in Southeast Asia even if they are not written for this particular market. When a free-size shirt is designed for everyone, it has the potential to suit some and is likely to be rejected by others. This is exactly how imported course books operate in the region: they contain both helpful and unhelpful instructional ingredients.

As far as teaching in Bangladesh is concerned, it has been observed that despite several teaching practices being tried out so far after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, we are not in a very good position regarding our teachers’ teaching and teaching materials, and their success in the classroom. The most common difficulties comprise lack of proper training opportunities and limited access to materials (“Education in Bangladesh,” 2008). Still, we do not have any teacher produced English language teaching materials based on functions and integrated skills. However, although it is the responsibility of the government or the universities to provide opportunities for teachers to develop longer-term career goals and effective teaching skills, develop and adapt materials, and in-service teacher education, the assumption is that we do not have proper training and support from the government or from the institution itself. Although for teacher professional development, the teacher herself/himself has to perceive it positively, it is expected that universities are responsible for providing financial support, training, conducting research and providing need-based materials to support teachers. This paper addresses whether Bangladeshi EFL teachers are aware of materials adaptation. More precisely, the research will investigate the potential opportunities and challenges of materials adaptation in tertiary education in Bangladesh.

2. Literature Review

It can be assumed that ELT materials should be driven by principles of language acquisition and that ideally all units of material should be principled, relevant and coherent. The reality seems to be rather different, with commercial materials being driven by considerations of what the buyers (i.e. administrators and teachers) are likely to want rather than of what the learners are likely to benefit from, and with most materials developers driven more by intuitions about what is likely to “work” rather than by their beliefs about what facilitates language acquisition (Tomlinson, 2003).

From a survey of twelve countries throughout the world, Tomlinson found that about 85 percent of ELT textbooks were selected by administrators, 15 percent by teachers and 0 per cent by learners. The results of this situation are obvious: colorful photographs placed in the top right-hand corner of the right-hand page attract potential buyers flicking through a new book, with as many words as possible crammed on to a

page to achieve optimal coverage at an acceptable price. Each unit of the books maintains the same length and follows a uniform format to make timetabling, teacher allocation and teacher preparation easier and most tasks of the books replicate conventional test types so as to facilitate examination preparation (Tomlinson, 2003).

None of these characteristics are likely to add pedagogic value to a textbook, but all are likely to promote sales. This is not, of course, an attack on commercial publishers. Many of them try to add as much educational value to their products as possible, but for all of them the main objective is to make money. What this situation means for writers of commercial ELT materials is that they can at best try to achieve a compromise between their principles and the requirements of the publisher. In Bangladesh, we still lack an effective English language textbook comprising all integrated skills. What we have on the market is based on grammar which leads to rote learning.

Some of the things which many ELT materials are currently doing are likely to inhibit language acquisition and development. Obviously there are exceptions to these generalizations and there are some materials which are actually and commendably doing the opposite. But most are underestimating learners both in terms of language level and cognitive ability. In particular, they are treating linguistically low level learners as intellectually low level learners. They are impoverishing the learning experience in a misguided attempt to make learning easier by simplifying their presentation of language. They are creating an illusion of language learning by using a Presentation/ Practice /Production (PPP) approach which simplifies language use and results in shallow processing. They are also creating an illusion of language learning by ensuring that most activities are easily accomplished as a result of involving little more than memorization, repetition of a script or simple substitution or transformation. They are confusing language learning and skills development by trying to teach language features during listening and reading activities. They are preventing learners from achieving effective engagement by presenting them with bland, safe, harmonious texts (Wajnryb, 1996, in Tomlinson, 2011) and requiring them to participate in activities which do not stimulate them to think and feel. They are providing learners with far too much de-contextualized experience of language exemplification and not nearly enough experience of language in fully contextualized use. They are focusing on activities which require different listening or reading for detailed and literal comprehension and are providing very little opportunity for the sort of aesthetic listening and reading which stimulates the total engagement so useful for promoting both enjoyment of the language and acquisition of it (Rosenblatt 1978). They are failing to help the learners make the full expertise of the language experience available to them outside the classroom. They are focusing on uni-dimensional processing of language through activities requiring only the decoding and/or encoding of language rather than on multi-dimensional representation of language through activities involving the use of the full resources of the brain (Arnold 1999; Masuhara 2007; Tomlinson 2000c, 2001b, in Tomlinson, 2003).

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Since the present study aims to respond to the research questions of a qualitative nature, data collection and analysis techniques from qualitative methodology were implemented.

Qualitative research entails collecting primary textual data and examining it using interpretive analysis. Qualitative research is a very useful research methodology because it is exploratory – its purpose is to discover new ideas and insights, or even generate new theories. That is, qualitative research mostly focuses on understanding the particular and the distinctive, and does not necessarily seek or claim to generalize findings in other contexts.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary research instrument. Here, the researchers themselves collect the data by directly observing or interviewing the participants, for example. The advantage of researchers doing this is that they can be responsive and adaptive to the participants and research setting and can quickly begin to explore unanticipated avenues of research. They can also collect a wide range of data and begin to think about it immediately, allowing them to clarify ideas promptly for accuracy of interpretation (Merriam, 2002, in Heigham, Juanita, and Robert A. Croker, 2009, p.11). In order to elicit data a written questionnaire administered to EFL teachers in Bangladesh was used as a main instrument.

3.2 Research Questions

The primary focus of this study is on teachers and their awareness of adapting EFL materials in Bangladeshi universities and the research questions for this study are:

1. How far are the teachers aware of materials adaptation?
2. What opportunities do they have for materials adaptation?
3. What challenges do they face regarding materials adaptation?

3.3 Written Questionnaires

The advantages of using questionnaires as data collection tools mainly come from the fact that with the help of questionnaires, large amounts of data can be collected quickly and economically from a large sample (Krathwohl, 1998). Questionnaires, as one of the most common forms of data collection tools, can easily be assessed in terms of reliability.

The written survey questionnaire used in this study was designed for Bangladeshi EFL teachers teaching mainly in private universities in Bangladesh. Questionnaires were given to twenty-five participants to explore the difficulties and the challenges that EFL teachers in Bangladesh have and might encounter in adapting EFL materials, as well as to investigate their awareness of materials adaptation. The questionnaire included 17 questions with fixed alternatives along with comments. (See Appendix-1)

3.4 Participants and Rationale for Selecting the Universities

All the participants in this study are university-level EFL teachers and a total of 25 EFL teachers participated in the research. All the participants are between 26-60 years of age. They work in different universities located in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from where the data has been collected. The ten universities selected for the study are: North South University (NSU), American International University Bangladesh (AIUB), University

of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), Northern University Bangladesh (NUB), The University of Asia Pacific (UAP), Stamford University, State University Bangladesh (SUB), Independent University Bangladesh (IUB), Jagannath University (JNU) and Eastern University (EU). In my opinion, these universities can be considered as model institutions for teaching methods and materials in Bangladesh.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

Let us begin by looking at the questions of section A relating to use of commercial textbooks and a particular view about materials adaptation. There are two basic questions in section A:

Section A

1. Which EFL/ESL course book(s) do you use to teach Foundation English Courses at your university?

Coursebook	Frequency	Course book	Frequency	Coursebook	Frequency
New Headway	22	Cutting Age		English for life	1
Inspiration		Just right		Exploration	1
Face to Face		Natural English		Inside out	
Language to go		New English file		Opportunity	
Step forward	1	Total English		Intermediate English Grammar	20
Others (please specify):					
Coursebook					Frequency
1. Business Objective					1
2. English for Law					1
3. Internet (English Page, Ego4u)					3
4. John Langan's Writing skill books					1
5. Website pages					2
6. Reading Comprehension by Tibbits					1
7. Reading Comprehension by Dixon					1
8. Read and Understand by Betty Kirkpatrick and Rebecca Mok.					1

Table: 1

The result indicates that the use of western coursebooks in the EFL classroom for Foundation English courses has become a common practice among Bangladeshi EFL teachers with *New Headway* and *Intermediate English Grammar* being the most commonly used textbook. Therefore, a question may generally arise as to why EFL teachers in Bangladesh are used to using these textbooks in the classroom and the answer is that, even today, Bangladesh lacks teacher-produced context-specific English language coursebooks. As we do not have our own materials, so our teachers need to depend on western commercial coursebooks because they may find these to be useful

for its ready-made activities and lessons which help them to prepare for the class easily and confidently.

Dimitrios Thanasoulas (1999) in his article "Coursebook, Take It or Leave It," presents a significant point of view when he says, "Personally, I find a coursebook extremely helpful, as it guides me on what and how to teach, giving me some useful advice on the best techniques for presenting the material." A coursebook can provide teachers with the structure and help they need when starting out. Bell and Gower (in Tomlinson, 2003), in their list of advantages for the use of coursebooks state, amongst other things, that: "By dealing with a certain amount of routine work for teachers, the coursebook frees them to attend to more important aspects of lesson planning (including materials supplementation), and to concentrate on using their creative skills" (p.117).

However, there are several reasons for which teachers need to adapt materials. These include unsuitable and ineffective instruction, uninteresting topics, unsuitable materials for learners' cognitive development, unsuitable activities for a particular level of learner, etc. This in turn may affect the student's learning attitude and motivation. It is expected that if we use EFL coursebooks, it is necessary for the teacher to prepare and adapt activities according to the local needs of the learner, especially all skills and functions to keep the classroom atmosphere interesting and free of anxiety.

2. "Interestingly, materials adaptation seem to be something teachers do a lot but which is rarely researched or included on training courses" (Tomlinson Masuhara, 2005).

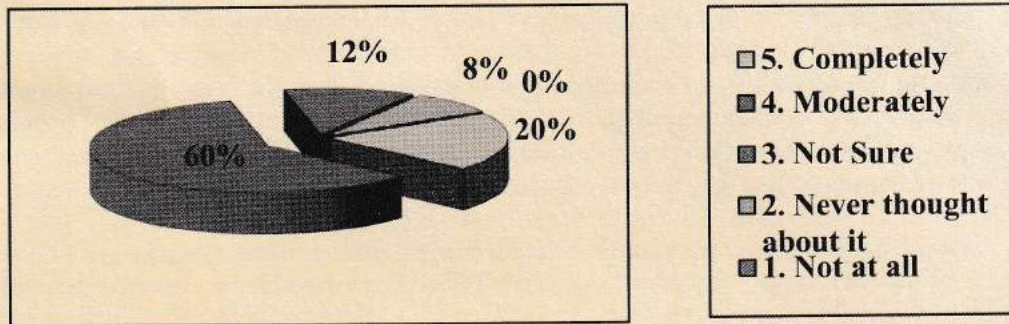
Please give your opinion about the above comment in relation to the Bangladeshi context?

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2	12	4	7	0

It appears from the data that there is a tendency among Bangladeshi teachers to adapt materials (*strongly agree*2/*agree*12) but they do not have any training on it which will lead them to professional development. It also shows that, even though it is an important part of ELT, we do not have much research on materials adaptation in our country. The data also shows that teachers are aware of the needs of the learners and are keen about preparing and developing materials accordingly. This really leads them to their professional development through self-reflection and, in order to speed it up, they need institutional support, although 7 participants agreed that they have institutional support.

Section B

3. Teachers are aware of materials adaptation to compensate for the lack of match between course aims and learner needs at tertiary level in Bangladesh.



The figures indicate that teachers are aware of bridging course aims and learner needs in tertiary level education in Bangladesh. It can also be inferred that the majority of the teachers (60%) are moderately aware of materials adaptation. Despite the variety of commercial material on the market, it is very difficult to find a perfect match between learner needs and course requirements and that is why many teachers continue to produce their own materials for classroom use. Indeed, most teachers spend considerable time finding, selecting, evaluating, adapting and making materials to use in their teaching.

4. Foreign coursebooks and learner needs

To what extent do you think foreign coursebooks are suitable for the needs of one's local, particular group?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
	22	2	1	

There are many reasons why English language teachers in Bangladesh may choose to develop their own teaching materials for Foundation English courses, despite the availability of commercially produced materials. An essential criticism of foreign coursebooks is that they are necessarily generic and not aimed at any specific group of learners. 22 out of 25 teacher respondents agreed that foreign coursebooks are moderately suitable for the needs of one's local, particular group which indicates that they feel that these coursebooks cannot meet the needs of local, particular groups of learners completely.

Again modern teaching methodology increasingly emphasizes the importance of identifying and teaching to the individual needs of learners which is usually difficult to implement if we use commercial textbooks for teaching local students where the needs of learners are very generic. It should be noted that English language classrooms are diverse places not only in terms of where they are situated, but also in terms of the individual learners within each context. Teacher produced materials can be responsive to the heterogeneity inherent in the classroom. This approach encompasses the learners' first languages and cultures, their learning needs and their experiences. Few coursebooks deliberately incorporate opportunities for learners to build on the first language skills already acquired, despite research suggesting that bilingual approaches

are most successful in developing second language competency (Thomas & Collier, 1997 in Howard, J. and Major, J, 2012). A teacher can develop materials that incorporate elements of the learners' first language and culture, or at least provide opportunities for acknowledgement and use alongside English. In addition, teacher-prepared materials provide the opportunity to select texts and activities at exactly the right level for particular learners, to ensure appropriate challenge and levels of success.

5. Adapting published materials to teach Foundation English Courses (FEC)

How far do you think you need to adapt published materials to teach Foundation English Courses at universities?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
6	17			2

Given the results for the question of adapting published materials, it is found that the majority (*completely*6/*moderately*17) of the teachers agreed on adapting published materials to teach Foundation English Courses at universities. However, surprisingly, two teacher respondents expressed that they need not adapt materials of FEC at all.

The Foundation English Course (FEC) in public and private universities in Bangladesh is introduced to provide students with a sound foundation in the skills and competencies required to use English in an academic context. Teachers on foundation courses have the task of preparing students to be familiar with English medium classroom instruction and more specifically, equipping these students with the skills to enable them to be successful in their particular subjects in undergraduate and other programs.

The objective of the FEC at the tertiary level in our country is to cover the skills required to study their degree courses effectively, and in my opinion, it is very challenging to bridge the gap between the objective and the achievement to make the courses successful. The reasons are that the learners are all foreign language speakers of English and almost all of them come from Bangla medium background except a very few from English medium. So, in order to make it suitable for the level of learners, the teachers might feel that they need to adapt commercial coursebooks to teach FEC at universities.

6. Coursebook materials and cultural and ethnic diversity of target learners

How far do you think the coursebook materials you use are suitable for the cultural and ethnic diversity of your target learners of FEC?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
	15	4		6

As majority teachers (*moderately* 15) opted for the option "moderate," it appears from the results that our teachers want to incorporate local culture in coursebooks. On closer inspection, however, it seems that, despite the wording of the question, many

teachers were choosing what they regarded as the more realistic, rather than the more desirable outcome.

An essential criticism of commercial materials, particularly those produced for the world-wide EFL market, is that they are necessarily generic and not aimed at any specific group of learners or any particular cultural or educational context. The possible lack of “fit” between teaching context and coursebook has been expressed thus: “Our modern coursebooks are full of speech acts and functions based on situations which most foreign-language students will never encounter... ‘Globally’ designed coursebooks have continued to be stubbornly Anglo-centric. Appealing to the world market as they do, they cannot by definition draw on local varieties of English and have not gone very far in recognizing English as an international language, either.” (Altan, 1995, p. 59, in Howard, J. and Major, J, 2012). For many teachers, designing or adapting their own teaching materials enables them to take into account their particular learning environment and to overcome the lack of “fit” of the coursebook. As it is clear that it is not possible to target any local culture in commercial materials, it is the language teachers’ responsibility to integrate local culture into their teaching after adapting materials.

7. Suitability of coursebook materials for language level, prior learning experience, learning styles of target learner

To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use are suitable for language level, prior learning experience, learning styles of your target learners?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
4	14	5		2

As far as language level, prior learning experience, learning styles of target learners are concerned, most of the teachers agreed that commercial coursebooks are moderately (*completely*5/*moderately*14) suitable for these learning elements. It is widely acknowledged that textbooks are the common materials used in language classes. They may be the teacher, the trainer, the authority, the resource, and the ideology in the foreign language classroom. (Hinkel,1999 in Turkan, Sultan, and Servet Celik,2007). Such textbooks are mass produced for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) purposes all over the world. These global materials aim to meet the needs of language learners, so that they can function well linguistically. Thus, it is extremely important that these textbooks include the vital components to teach the language and are appropriate for learners’ needs, language level, prior learning experience, and learning styles. Yet regrettably, the commercial coursebook materials we use are not always suitable for the language level, prior learning experience, and learning styles of our target learners whereas textbooks produced at a national level for particular countries suit the students’ local cultures, language level, prior learning experience, and learning styles.

8. Suitability of coursebook materials with teachers’ personalities, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching

To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use suit your personality, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
4	15	2	1	2

Majority of the teachers (*moderately 15*) agreed that these commercial coursebooks that we use suit moderately teachers' personalities, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching. Only 4 teachers chose the option "completely." Teachers may feel uncomfortable with a commercial textbook because of a mismatch with their own preferences (personality, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching), e.g., the materials offer a lot of communicative activities but a teacher fears he or she will lose control of the class by doing them. It appears from the results that teacher produced materials can overcome this mismatch. Therefore, initially, teachers can adapt the existing coursebook materials in order to suit their personalities, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching, and gradually move towards writing their own materials.

Arguably a teacher represents the most significant factor in any language teaching operation. Their personalities, teaching styles and beliefs about language learning and teaching play an important role in the throughput of different students in the institution. So it can be assumed that the commercial coursebooks cannot suit a teacher's personality, teaching style, beliefs about language learning and teaching.

Again in designing their own materials, teachers can also make decisions about the most appropriate organizing principle or focus for the materials and activities. And this can be changed over the course of the program if necessary. Most coursebooks remain organized around grammar elements and the PPP (presentation, practice, production) model of teaching, often with an "unrelenting format" which can be "deeply unengaging" (Harmer, 2001, p. 6). The teacher is typically a "constant" in the throughput of different students in the institution, and works in different ways at the interface of several systems – the classroom, the school, the educational environment – all of which affect a teacher's professional attitude and behavior. Personalization is another advantage of teacher-designed materials. In his 1991 article, Block argues in favor of "home-made" materials saying that they add a personal touch to teaching that students appreciate. Tapping into the interests and taking account the learning styles of students is likely to increase motivation and engagement in learning. Podromou (2002) further suggests that there is also greater choice, freedom and scope for spontaneity when teachers develop their own materials.

9. Coursebook materials and the Foundation English course objectives (syllabus, institutional targets)

To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use match with the Foundation English course objectives (syllabus, institutional targets)?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all
1	17	5		1

As majority of the teachers (42%) opted for “moderately,” it appears that they believe in local materials or adapting commercial coursebooks which can reduce the gap between the objectives of coursebook materials and the Foundation English courses. It is perhaps surprising that 5 teachers chose “not sure,” which may mean that they are not very aware of the issue. It is needless to say that global aims usually cannot match with local aims and consequently teachers may feel uncomfortable with a commercial textbook because of a mismatch with materials (texts, tasks, activities), e.g., the text is interesting but the activities are boring and do not seem to fully exploit the text. Even the content of the local syllabus may vary a lot with that of a published material.

Section C

Questions pertaining to teachers’ opportunities and challenges of adapting ELT coursebooks

You are given choices from 1-5. In each case 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=not sure 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

		5	4	3	2	1
10	Tertiary level teachers have sufficient training on materials adaptation		3	5	11	6
11	Teachers have easy access to a variety of EFL materials for evaluation and adaptation of published materials	3	9	3	6	4
12	Teachers are able to afford sufficient time for adapting appropriate EFL classroom materials for the students of FEC	3	9	1	5	7
13	Teachers have sufficient authentic teaching materials (newspaper, pamphlet, leaflet, magazine, etc.) available to adapt coursebook materials.	7	13		2	1
14	Students’ level of English proficiency at FEC encourages teachers to adapt coursebook materials.	3	7	5	5	5
15	Materials adaptation requires teachers to have better knowledge of target culture which is a challenge for them	9	12	3	1	
16	Teaching workload at own institutions gives enough opportunity to adapt materials for FEC	3	12		4	5
17	Teachers’ universities provide opportunities and financial support for adapting and developing materials	3	8	1	6	6

10. Training on material adaptation

None of the teachers strongly agreed to the idea that “teachers have sufficient training on materials adaptation” and only 12.5% of the participants agreed to the idea. On the other hand, 43% agreed that teachers lack sufficient training on materials adaptation. Therefore, lack of sufficient training on materials adaptation is reported by Bangladeshi EFL teachers as a major difficulty in adapting EFL materials in FEC in Bangladeshi tertiary level education.

11. Teachers' easy access to a variety of EFL materials

The teacher respondents are almost divided (*agree 12/disagree 10*) about their opinion. At present, most of the private universities have a rich library and the resources and facilities available to the teacher-designer can be considered as an element of context. Clearly, teachers must be realistic about what they can achieve in terms of materials design and production within the limitations of available resources and facilities. Access to resources such as computers (with or without Internet access), a video player and TV, radio, cassette recorder, CD player, photocopier, language lab., digital camera, whiteboard, OHP, scissors, cardboard, laminator, etc. will impact on decisions in materials writing and adapting.

12. Teachers' time for adapting appropriate EFL classroom materials for the students of FEC

On closer inspection, it seems that the teachers are equally divided about their opinion as 12 teachers responded in favor of the statement and the other 12 responded against it. A key disadvantage of adapting materials, and perhaps the key factor inhibiting many teachers from producing their own teaching materials, is time. To adapt any material, teachers need to think of the needs and interests of their learners, their own teaching capabilities and constraints such as time. The aim of any adaptation should be to maximize effective learning within the given time and context and to make both teaching and learning much more interesting. These involve a lot of time.

13. Availability of sufficient authentic teaching materials

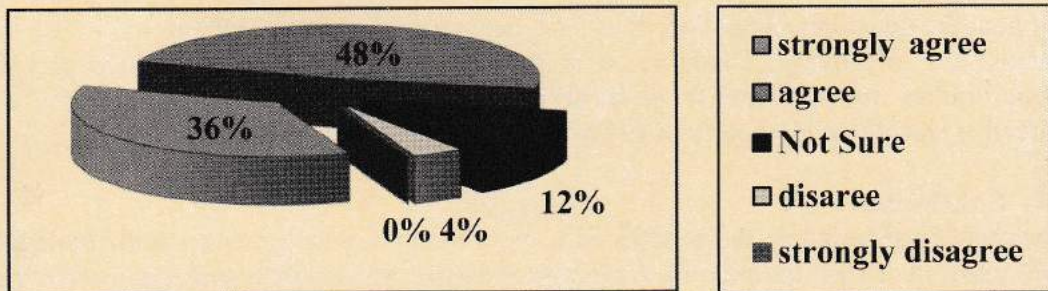
The majority of teachers (*strongly agree 7/agree 13*) reported that they have sufficient authentic teaching materials available to adapt the coursebook material in Bangladeshi universities which can be considered as a big opportunity for them to adapt materials. There is almost an unlimited supply of materials available online that come directly from the target cultures of the languages we teach. These resources provide "real life" linguistic input as well as valuable cultural information for our students. As far as logistic support is concerned, most Bangladeshi private universities have online facilities and resourceful libraries for the teachers and students. Teachers can collect literature, including poetry, folktales, short stories, fiction, non-fiction, novels, etc., from the university library and can access different websites to collect authentic materials to adapt coursebooks. According to Tomlinson (2011), materials for learners at all levels must provide exposure to the authentic use of English through spoken and written texts with the potential to engage the learners cognitively and affectively. If they don't provide such texts and they don't stimulate the learners to think and feel whilst experiencing them, there is very little chance of the materials facilitating any durable language acquisition at all.

14. Students' level of English proficiency

Here, again, the teachers in this study were divided about their opinion almost equally. 25% teacher respondents agreed that the students' level of English proficiency at FEC encourages teachers to adapt coursebook materials, but on the other hand, 25% teacher respondents disagreed on this point whereas 12.5% were unsure about it. In Bangladesh, students are usually familiar with traditional grammar based teaching in their secondary and higher secondary education, and consequently, when they enroll in

post-secondary level in universities, their acquired system of rote learning bars them from adapting to communicative classroom learning (Report of the English Teaching Task Force, 2004). This might discourage some teachers from adapting materials. But the situation varies according to the background and level of learners in different universities. However, this is usually the case with beginner level students for whom CLT or other methods (Task based approach, Lexical approach, etc.) are really something new to be familiar with.

15. Materials adaptation requires teacher's better knowledge of target culture



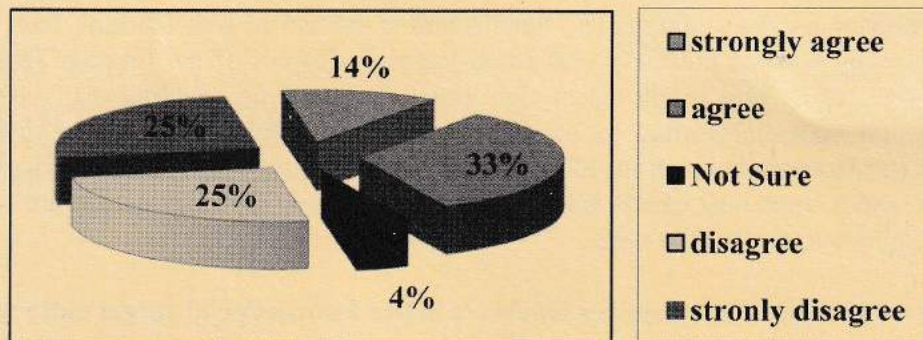
There is clearly a feeling among most of the teachers (*strongly agree 9/agree 12*) that materials adaptation in Bangladesh requires our teachers to have better knowledge of the target culture which is a challenge for them. As an EFL teacher in Bangladesh, my classroom experience says that teachers' lack of target culture (English) knowledge may work as a barrier to adapting EFL coursebooks. Proper teacher training, however, can build confidence among teachers.

16. Teaching workload and adapting materials for FEC

Here, majority of the participants (32.5%) agreed that, apart from their teaching, they get enough time to adapt materials for FEC which is an opportunity for them whereas 25.5% showed their disappointment about workload. It also appears to show that the teachers who opted for "teachers' insufficient time for adapting materials" (*disagree 4/strongly disagree 5*) believe that some universities put heavy workload on teachers which is directly related to the lack of efficient English teachers in Bangladesh. Given that their income is not encouraging for demonstrating hard work, many teachers tend to lose their motivation to teach English in most effective ways.

17. Financial support from university for adapting and developing materials

Here again, it seems that the teachers are almost equally divided about their opinion as 11 (*strongly agree 3/agree 8*) teachers responded in favor of the statement and the other 12 (*disagree 6/strongly disagree 6*) responded against it. At present, English language teaching at universities provides a career for a lot of teachers in Bangladesh, and



without the development and effort of such teachers; it would be difficult to operate the institutions effectively. Therefore, it is the responsibility of universities to provide opportunities for teachers to develop longer-term career goals, opportunities for effective teaching and opportunities for in-service teacher education.

18. Conclusion

Teachers must weigh up the benefits and costs of adapting their own teaching materials and make their own decision as to whether it is worth the time and effort. As Harmer (2001) puts it, "The good DIY (Do-It-Yourself) teacher, with time on his or her hands, with unlimited resources, and the confidence to marshal those resources into a clear and coherent language program, is probably about as good as it gets for the average language learner" (p. 9). Materials may vary in quality, quantity and level. The activities in a coursebook may be problematic in terms of skills and sub-skills, order of the activities, timing, learning styles, etc. Since we are still very dependent on commercial coursebooks, it should be the teacher's responsibility to be aware of the materials if they fit into the objectives of the class. The teacher should evaluate the level, communicative activities, the balance of skills, learning style, any audio-visual materials needed, the timing, culture, authenticity of input. Inevitably, there will be numerous constraints on any materials designer and compromises will be necessary.

The findings of this study indicate that the use of western coursebooks in the EFL classroom has become a common practice among Bangladeshi EFL teachers. It also appears from the study that there is a tendency among Bangladeshi teachers to adapt materials, although they do not have any training on it. The majority of the teachers believe that foreign coursebooks cannot meet the needs of local, particular groups of learners completely. One of the major findings of the study is that the majority of the teachers agreed on adapting published materials to teach Foundation English Courses at Bangladeshi universities.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Dear respondents, below is a survey relating to adapting EFL materials at tertiary level in Bangladesh. The aim of my research is to discuss EFL teachers' awareness of adapting ELT coursebooks at tertiary level in Bangladesh. In addition, it focuses on teachers' opportunities and challenges of adapting ELT coursebooks.

This survey is anonymous and if there are some parts you would rather not fill in, please leave it blank. If you want to explain or qualify your answers, please use the comment boxes, but don't feel obliged to fill them if you are short of time. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Key words/Phrases: a. FEC=Foundation English Course
b. Materials adaptation: involves changing existing materials so that they become more suitable for specific learners, teachers or situations.

Section A

For the following question, please type an "X" against the name of the coursebook(s) in the appropriate box. You can check more than one box.

1. Which EFL/ESL coursebook(s) do you use to teach Foundation English Courses at your university?

New Headway		Cutting Age		English for life	
Inspiration		Just right		Exploration	
Face to Face		Natural English		Inside out	
Language to go		New English file		Opportunity	
Step forward		Total English		Intermediate English Grammar	

Others (please specify).....

You are given a choice of 1-5. In each case 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=not sure 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree (Question: 2-3)

For the following comment please type an "X" in the appropriate box.

2. "Interestingly, materials adaptation seem to be something teachers do a lot but which is rarely researched or included on training courses." (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2005)

Please give your opinion about the above comment in relation to Bangladeshi context?

5	4	3	2	1

Comment:

Section B

3. Teachers are aware of materials adaptation to compensate for the lack of match between course aims and learner needs at tertiary level in Bangladesh.

5	4	3	2	1

Comment:

Questions pertaining to teachers' awareness of adapting ELT coursebooks

For the following questions please type an "X" in the appropriate box. (Question: 4-13)

4. To what extent do you think foreign coursebooks are suitable for the needs of one's local, particular group?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

5. How far do you think you need to adapt published materials to teach Foundation English Courses at universities?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

6. How far do you think the coursebook materials you use are suitable for the cultural and ethnic diversity of your target learners of FEC?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

7. To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use are suitable for language level, prior learning experience, learning styles of your target learner?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

8. To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use suit your personality, teaching styles, beliefs about language learning and teaching?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

9. To what extent do you think the coursebook materials you use match with the Foundation English course objectives (syllabus, institutional targets)?

Completely	Moderately	Not sure	Never thought about it	Not at all

Comment:

Section C

Questions pertaining to teachers' opportunities and challenges of adapting ELT course books

You are given choice of 1-5. In each case 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=not sure 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

For the following statements please type an "X" in the appropriate box.

		5	4	3	2	1
10	Tertiary level teachers have sufficient training on materials adaptation					
11	Teachers' have easy access to a variety of EFL materials for evaluation and adaptation of published materials					

12	Teachers' are able to afford sufficient time for adapting appropriate EFL classroom materials for the students of FEC				
13	Teachers have sufficient authentic teaching materials (newspaper, pamphlet, leaflet, magazine, etc.) available to adapt coursebook materials.				
14	Students' level of English proficiency at FEC encourages teachers to adapt coursebook materials.				
15	Materials adaptation requires teachers better knowledge of target culture which is a challenge for them				
16	Your teaching work load at your institution gives you enough opportunity to adapt materials for FEC				
17	Your university provides opportunities and financial support for adapting and developing materials				

Section D

Personal Information

1. How many years have you been a teacher of English at tertiary level?

.....year(s).....month(s).....

Please type an "X" in the appropriate box. You can choose more than one option.

2. What type(s) of course(s) have you taught in past 3 years?

a) Remedial English		b) Spoken English	
c) Writing		d) Listening	
e) English for Specific Purposes (ESP)		f) English literature	
g) FEC (Foundation English Course)		h) Reading	
i) EAP (English for Academic Purposes)			
j) Other English courses (please specify).....			

3. For your appropriate age group, please type an "X" in the appropriate box.

Under 26	27-35	36-40	Above 40

Please use this space to make other comments or suggestions regarding adapting ELT coursebooks if there is any: [Comments]