

BIHAR LANGUAGE INITIATIVE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS (BLISS)

PROJECT SNAPSHOT 2016

www.britishcouncil.in



AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

'Teachers need exposure to simple methods of using the physical space to promote interactive and activity based learning, and to provide monitoring and effective support to learners the teachers find difficult to reach: for example, turning around on benches to face students in the row behind, utilising peer correction techniques or promoting self-learning – key learning objectives stated in the Bihar Curriculum Framework.' British Council needs analysis report recommendation (2011)



BLISS aims

- To develop the capacity of over two hundred selected classroom practitioners as teacher educators
- To expand the language proficiency of these teacher educators
- To enable teacher educators to deliver training to 3,200 teachers across the state of Bihar
- To support teacher educators through a process of continuing professional development and to develop materials for that process

Seven BLISS principles

- Learning English is a question of developing communicative ability
- Learning is an active process
- People who learn in a group construct meaning together
- Everyone learns in different ways
- Motivation is a factor in learning
- Learner-centred classrooms support learning
- Thinking stimulates intake



BIHAR BASELINE

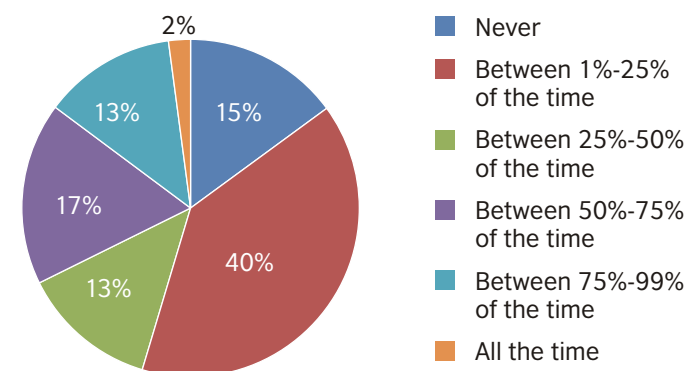
'We have to acknowledge, whether we like it or not, that English plays an important role in the domains of education, administration, business and political relations, judiciary, industry etc and is therefore a passport to social mobility, higher education and better job opportunities.' Bihar Curriculum Framework (2008)



Education in Bihar

- Planned expansion in provision of teacher training
- Over two million students at Grade 9 and Grade 10
- Pupil teacher ratio across all schools in Bihar 54:1
- Around 3,200 English teachers
- English not an integral part of school exit examination
- Significant rate of reform: 16,000 new schools with 100,000 new classrooms
- 96.7 per cent of children now enrolled in school
- Over two thousand new English teachers to be employed each year 2015–2017

Extent to which English is used by secondary school English teachers: observers' estimate BLISS Baseline study (2014)



Knowing English will mean that no one will be able to trick us or behave badly with us.

Comment from Bihar parent



BLISS: MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

English for All (EfA)

Block 1

Primary focus on supporting teachers in developing skills and techniques for integrating more active learning methodology into their classrooms

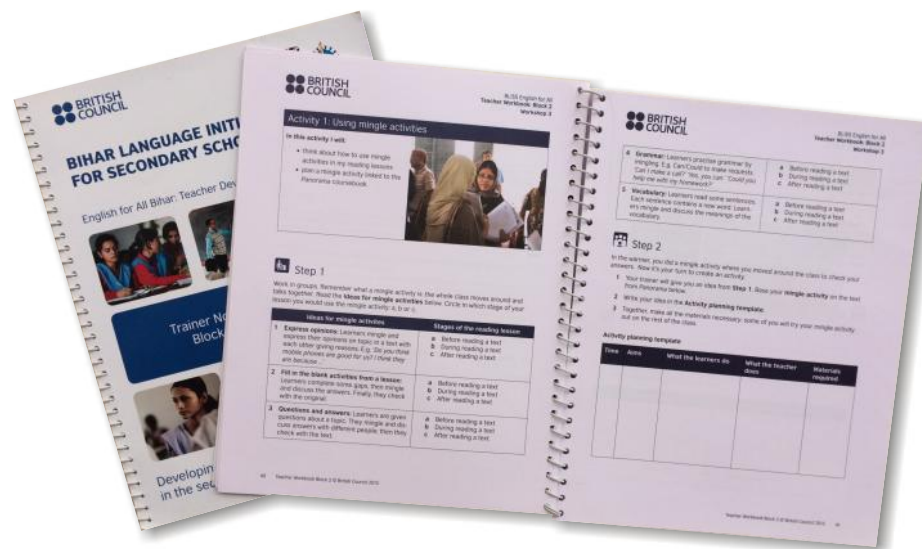
Block 2

Primary focus on supporting teachers in developing skills and techniques for integrating more active reading methodology into their classrooms

Block 3

Primary focus on supporting teachers in developing skills and techniques for integrating more active speaking methodology into their classrooms

The transfer of training to classroom practice is more likely if sufficient time is allocated to reflective interaction and group work during training and classroom transaction.'
S.K. Yadav, (2012) Impact of In-Service Teacher Training on Classroom Transaction, Department of Teacher Training. NCERT. Delhi



English for All (EfA)

Each workshop includes:



a summary of learning and key ideas



clear aims and objectives



interactive activities with direct classroom application

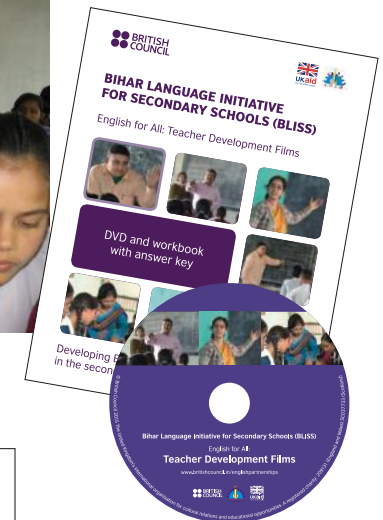


activities which encourage reflection and extension

BLISS: ENCOURAGING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BLISS Teacher Development Films

- support both self-access and face-to-face training
- focus on reading skills and activities appropriate for large, low resource classrooms
- show English secondary school teachers at work in different locations in Bihar
- provide encouragement for peer observation
- include an accompanying workbook
- are available as an open access resource



Support for BLISS English clubs

- autonomous Teacher Educator initiatives
- language development in a less formal setting
- encouragement for both learners and teachers to get involved

Encouraging CPD

The 2015 BLISS poster competition engaged entrants from all over the state to present ways of developing speaking and reading skills. The posters have been distributed to teachers for display in schools.



BLISS: THE STORY SO FAR

- 162 teacher educators (cohort 1) supported in developing language proficiency and pedagogic and training skills
- 59 teacher educators (cohort 2) selected and trained
- Participation by teacher educators at international conferences in India and the United Kingdom and Hornby Schools in Nepal
- Over 2000 teachers to date have participated in training delivered by teacher educators, with reach aimed at 3,200 teachers
- Orientation workshops provided for District Programme Officers (DPOs) and District Education Officers (DEOs)
- Extensive monitoring and evaluation including language observation of classroom delivery by teacher educators and teachers and assessment of training skills of teacher educators
- Pilot scheme to integrate digital learning into schools via the British Council LearnEnglish DVD resource



The BLISS project has given us wings to fly.

Shobha Kumari, Teacher Educator, BLISS TD Film Launch, July 2015

BLISS: MEASURING CHANGE

Monitoring and evaluation are essential to the project: we aim to identify and document each measurable change leading towards the achievement of the project's outcomes and objectives. Our data is collected through observations, language testing and analysis of results of focus groups and feedback.

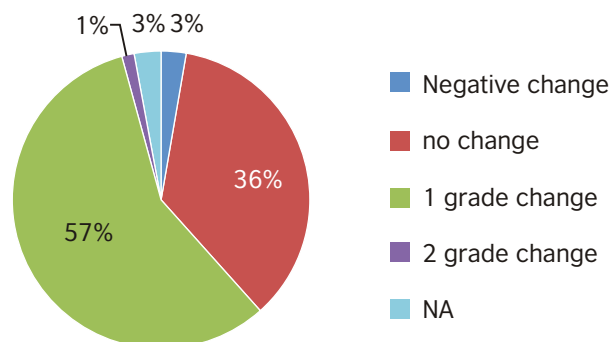
Baseline data showed that low numbers of teachers engaged in learner-centred approaches. However, following training, observations with a sample of Teacher Educators showed clear differences in their practice. While a direct comparison between the two groups is not possible, it is anticipated that we will see significant development in the endline study for the teacher group, and further development for the Teacher Educators.

% of practitioners who ...	Teachers (n=155)
regularly use a lesson plan	15%
talk less than 75% of the time	18%
use English at least 75% of the time	32%
encourage learner interaction	1%

% of practitioners who ...	Following training: 55 Teacher Educators 2014–2015
regularly use a lesson plan	57%
talk less than 75% of the time	46%
use English at least 75% of the time	75%
encourage learner interaction	72%

Language proficiency of Teacher Educators – change as a result of training

Overall language test performance



Language testing in process for Teacher Educators

BLISS: WHERE NEXT?

2016–2017

- Further delivery of professional development courses to all teachers by cohort 1 and cohort 2
- Participation by teachers in English for All Block 3, focusing on speaking skills
- Development of a team of mentors to support less experienced teachers and teacher educators
- Further monitoring and evaluation to assess impact and training in observation and giving feedback for mentors
- Continued collaboration with the Department of Education, Bihar and RMSA to ensure that the project is sustainable for the future
- Project handover in March 2017



You can find more about the BLISS project, including the teacher development films and other resources at:

www.britishcouncil.in/programmes/english-partnerships/english-state-partnership-projects/bihar-language-initiative