

Challenges of Teaching Productive Language Skills: A Case  
Study of an English Medium School in Bangladesh

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities  
Brac University  
31 December, 2019

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

**Student's Full Name & Signature:**

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## Approval

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## **Ethics Statement**

This is my own study and there are no plagiarized materials in this thesis. I ensure that all the ethical issues are followed properly. I did not force any participants to participate in the study and I used their pseudonyms to protect their identity. To the best of my knowledge, I report the results based on what I have found in the study.

## **Abstract**

Enhancing speaking and writing abilities in English now a days has become a mandatory part for a student. In almost every sector including jobs, higher education, travel and tourism, science and international communication good speaking and writing abilities in English are essential. This study investigates an English medium school teachers' and students' approaches approach to complete this research and I used interviews and observation extensively to collect data. The results reveal some significant findings and conclusions. Teachers of this school use various techniques so that students can develop their writing skills. Students also adopted various strategies to improve their speaking and writing skills. Finally, this study provides some suggestions to improve students' overall English skills and what steps school and other stakeholders can take to improve students' overall language skills.

**Keywords:** Secondary level; Teaching Techniques; Writing skills; Speaking skills.

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate my study to my mother Zakia Islam and my father Saiful Islam.

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all, by the grace of almighty Allah, I am able to continue my study and being able to utilize my potential towards my study. Next, I would like to thank my parents, as without their support I may not able to fulfil my dreams and academic life. Then I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Al Amin, who always support me to complete my thesis. I would also like to thank many of my friends and classmates who always extended their helpful hand whenever I needed. I would also like to thank all the participants of my study for their valuable time and willingness to share their experiences.

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## **List of Acronyms**

GTM	Grammar Translation method
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This study explores teaching and learning English in an English medium schools in Bangladesh. The specific focus is on how teachers teach to develop students speaking and writing abilities and what students do to improve their speaking and writing skills.

In this whole world, almost 360 million people's first language is English and almost every other country's official language as well as second language is English. So, it becomes the dominated language of the world. Because of this reason, most of the countries adopted English as the medium of higher studies. English as a medium of secondary education is also very popular in various parts of the world and this trend is increasing day by day. In Bangladesh most of the schools are Bangla medium, but there are a lot schools offer education in English medium. Majority of these schools are in the city area and students from affluent family usually study in these school as the cost of studying in these schools are very high. One of the attractions of studying in these schools is that these schools use English as a medium of instruction and students of these schools become fluent by the time, they finish their high schools. They also become a good English speaker and writer.

However, there is a question of whether these schools develop students' other skills such as Bangla language skills, knowledge about Bangladesh, liberation war and culture and civilization of Bangladesh. Often teachers of these schools are fresh graduates of various universities and they started teaching without any prior teaching experiences. They are not very committed often as many of them try for various other jobs while they are teaching in those institutions. The salary, apart from some of the renowned school, is not very attractive. Moreover, teachers in those schools usually do not receive any formal teacher training. Curriculum of these schools varies. Some of them follow American, some of them Australian

and others follow British curricula. Ahmed (2001) in this regard says that though the curriculum was designed and approved by Bangladesh government and also by NCTB, but there are some lacking and because of these students have to suffer in future. Despite the criticism it is widely accepted that students from English medium schools possess better English skills and they usually become fluent in speaking and writings.

This thesis will explore what are the strategies teachers of an English medium school use to make their students fluent and what are the strategies students adopt to develop their speaking and writing skills.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

In this chapter, I will provide a summary of the studies that I reviewed for this study. While searching for literature, I reviewed literature from Bangladesh as well as from other countries. I have only included literature that are closely related to my study.

### **2.1: Productive Skills**

Mainly speaking and writing skills are considered as productive skill as learner need to produce words before writing or speaking. According to McDonough and Shaw (2003), a learner needs to produce words in case of communicating with his/her surrounding as well as to cope up with the society. Similarly, in case of writing, a learner first thinks and produce a proper word before writing any personal or institutional writings.

### **2.2: What is ESL:**

English is recognized as an international language in al over the world. As we are Bangladeshi, our first language is Bangla. But English is considered as a second language in our country. English is also considered as an official language in almost every country in the world including Bangladesh. English is called second language where English is not spoken by common people. Kachru famous circle divided English in three sections- English as a native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreing language(EFL) (Kachru, 2006). There is a debate where Bangladesh should be placed. However in some areas specially in city areas English in Bangladesh English is spoken as a second language but in the rural areas of Bangladesh there is hardly any use of English. English in that case is obviously a foreign language. In the city where most of the English medium schools of Bangladesh situated, English there plays an important role. In the context of this study English is considered there as a second language.

### **2.3: Role of a teacher:**

In developing students' language skills, a teacher plays a big role. However, the techniques differ from teacher to teacher, as different teachers use different techniques for their students. Noyer (1938) says that almost more than half of the learning depends on a teacher or instructor. He also says if an instructor is able to give good and proper instruction to his students as well as use proper teaching technique, then it will be easy for a student to catchup the learning points easily. Similarly, Brown (2000) states that a teacher must use some interesting techniques in case of teaching second language so that students cannot feel boring while learning second language. Though students or learners play the main role of adapting English as a second language because if they do not have intense desire to learn English, they cannot learn it. In that case English seems as a burden to them. This situation will not happen if teachers use interesting technique while teaching second language. It will also help a student to learn second language easily. Bygate (1987) pointed out that a success of teaching as well as learning depends on how an instructor takes teaching seriously as his aim and prepare himself for it.

### **2.4: Use of English in Bangla medium as a subject:**

English is a global language. Day by day the importance of English is becoming high in form of ESL. Almost in every single country English becomes an official language as well as another way of communication. According to Mahu (2012), almost 300 million people use English as a second language out of 380 native speakers. Moreover, the number is increasing in a huge rate. But the problem arose when people take it as a subject and consider it as a burden and they learn it because they have to. They do not think that if they do not consider English language as a burden and learn it willingly, it will help them to acquire it more effectively and easily.

According to Imam (2007), 98% people of Bangladesh use Bangla as their native language. As Bengali people fought for their own Bangla language in 1952, so almost all the Educational sectors provide Bangla for basic education. But as the English language recognizes as a second language globally, and so every educational sector gives emphasis on English language as a subject rather than in purpose of knowing an international or second language.

Before 1971, only elite class people got the opportunity to get secondary education as well as higher education. Educational sectors also give more emphasize on English. So, the common people consider English language as a language of elite class people. They consider English as a tough language. One of the reasons for considering it was that at that time only few people get that opportunity to read and write because getting educated was costly at that time. Though a long time have been passed away, but the same scenario still exists in the educational sector of Bangladesh.

As English is considered as a second language and 'The National Curriculum and Textbook Board' in 1990 give more emphasis to reestablish the syllabus of English subject and they try to switch the curriculum from Grammar translational method to communicative language teaching (Haidar,2012), it is mandatory to have a good knowledge in English for both Bangla medium and English medium school's student specially from the secondary level. Manzoor (2013) says that most of the students of secondary level Bangla medium schools fail in English subject. According to Manzoor (2013), the reason is they consider it as a tough subject. So, they lose their interest to learn it. Moreover, as Bangla is their mother tongue so before uttering or writing anything in English, first they think that particular thing in Bangla then translate it and use English language. That's why they make a huge mistake in English. According to Parvin and Haidar (2012), teachers used to give instruction in Bangla while teaching English in English classroom. Ahmed (2005) mention in his journal that the role of a



teacher in teaching ESL is also important and there are huge lacking of skilled English teacher who can teach English in an effective way. Teachers themselves are suffering from lingua franca.

### **2.5: Use of English in English medium schools as a way of communication:**

From the British colonial rule, English medium schools exist in Bangladesh. Though Bangladesh is an independent country now, but still there are many popular English medium schools exist in Bangladesh who follow the British curriculum or international curriculum. Based on several researches and after many experiences Mahmood (2010) stated that no other literature is given the same importance as English literature in English medium schools of Bangladesh, not even Bangla literature. Even teachers themselves always try to speak in English inside the class as well as outside the class. As student's native language is Bangla, so teachers use to follow some techniques to improve student's productive and receptive skill. Some notable activities that are used by teacher in language classroom are:

#### **2.5.1: Information gap:**

This activity will happen between two persons. It will work when a person has lack of particular information about the opposite person. They both have to use target language to share their information. For example, A does not know about the hobby of B. For knowing about his/her hobby, A need to ask B about it using English language and B will give the answer using the same language. It can help them to improve their speaking (Nunan,2003).

#### **2.5.2: Role Play:**

According to Nunan (2003), This is one of the interesting techniques that a teacher can use in his/her class to improve a student's writing skill as well as speaking skill. For example, teacher select some students and give them a particular role in a chit. Students need to prepare their speeches in English by themselves instantly and act according to that given role.

The other students have to guess which role the particular student is playing. This will help a student's instant writing, speaking skill as well as guessing power.

### **2.5.3: Instant comment:**

Harmer (2007) says that instant comment is one of the ways to grab the attention of every student in class lecture. Because they always be conscious that teacher may ask them to summarise the lecture. At that time teacher cannot check their fluency or accuracy rather than responses about that topic.

### **2.5.4: Presentation:**

According to Harmer (2007), Presentation is one of the ways to overcome with the stage frightening. For giving presentation, a student will choose a topic and prepare speech. He/she will get a significant time for preparing the presentation. Teacher have to give him a time limit to finish his presentation. It will help the student to improve his fluency.

### **2.5.5: Instant writing:**

According to McDonough and Shaw (2003), instant writing can help a student to improve his/her vocabulary as well as sentence structure and grammar. As our native language is Bangla, so before writing it is quite normal that a student will think about what he wants to write. But if teacher give a time limit, then he has to write it in a short time and he cannot get the time to think much. That always help a teacher to know about the proficiency level about a particular student.

### **2.5.6: Give more priority on free writing:**

Scott (1996) says that teachers need to emphasize more on free writing without pointing out the error at a very first time. Ignoring the quality of writing, they must focus first on quantity of writing. When a student become used to it, then teachers can point out the errors like

grammatical mistakes, syntax and the quality of writing. It will motivate students to write new things.

### **2.5.7: Writing is a path way of memorizing:**

Graham & Harris (2013) says that by writing any sentence, word, paragraph or any stanza again and again, students can memorize any complicated things easily. It will help them to understand it better way.

### **2.5.8: Writing in second language and Spelling:**

Harmer (2007) says that as English is their second language, and their native language is Bangla, so it is an important duty for a teacher to encourage students to study more so that in future they could be a skilled writer. Otherwise they might face problems in future regarding their further educational sectors.

### **2.6: Motivation of a teacher:**

Motivation from a teacher work like a magic while learning or using ESL in language classroom. A teacher can motivate a student in many ways. Brown (2000) in his article "*Principle of Language Learning and Teaching*" he mentions some of techniques or methods by which a student can be motivated. The 1<sup>st</sup> technique that he talks about is The Anticipation of Reward. Human beings are universally driven to act or behave by the anticipation of some sort of reward tangible or intangible, short term or long term that will ensure as a result of the behavior. In this term Brown explain that a teacher can motivate a student by both verbally or by giving something as reward. For example, if a student is weak in any subject and suddenly, he or she shows improvement on that particular subject, then the teacher can motivate him or her by saying that "very good, you are improving or you can do more better in future". By hearing this the student will try to do better in future can which help him or her to become a good student in future. A verbal praise immediately encourages a student to

go further but a teacher needs to keep in mind that too much praise also works in a negative way. Additionally, a teacher can motivate his or her student by showing the long-term benefits for any matter or any subject. For example, he can help to show the long-term benefits of learning English by pointing out what they can do with English where they live and around the world, the prestige in being able to use English, the academic benefits of knowing English in job sectors that require English.

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

In this chapter, I will discuss the methodology of this research. This includes the nature of the research, the reason behind choosing qualitative approach, participants of this study, data collection and data analysis, problems I encounter while collecting the data and the presentation techniques. I will also discuss the ethical issues that are taken into account while I was conducting this research.

### **3.1: Nature of research:**

This is a qualitative research. I choose qualitative research as I wanted to explore the phenomena in depth. The nature of the research questions of this research seems more compatible with the qualitative research paradigm. Choosing a quantitative approach may be suitable to generalize, and to see what is the trend with a large number of participants. However, it may not be possible to explore the phenomena in details. Thus, the researcher adopted for qualitative approach. I have chosen case study method (Yin, 2018) as I wanted to see what happens in a particular school. Rather than focusing on large number of participants I focused mainly on one specific case. This is a single case study as it focuses on one particular case and it is bounded by time and place. I collected various forms of data and wanted to explore the phenomena in details. Thus case study seems to more appropriate for this research. Moreover, I am conducting this research within a short period of time and within this time it would be difficult to collect data from the large number participants. Qualitative approach seems also appropriate for this reason as I opted to work with small number of participants but I interviewed them in details.

### **3.2 Research question:**

This research is guided by the following research questions:

- What strategies do English medium school teachers use to develop their students’

Speaking and writing skills?

- What strategies do English medium students use to develop their speaking and writing skills?

### **3.3: Instruments:**

As I follow qualitative method, I used individual and in depths interviews extensively. I had a list of questions that prepared in advance to ask my participants. I also brought a tape recorder so that I could record full interviews. In addition to that, I observed classrooms. As human minds are forgetful, so because of my own convenience I brought pen and paper with me so that I could note down each and every useful information during the class observation. Moreover, as I observe four classes, two class is for writing and two class is for checking their speaking, so it may quite obvious to mix-up things. As I am focusing on their writing too, so I bought a topic and gave them to write something about that topic to check their writing skill as well.

### **3.4: Limitations:**

As it is a qualitative research, I had to take direct interviews from students and teachers as well as the principle of the school. As it was an English medium school, so students were involved not only with classes but also with various extra-curricular activities. Thus, I had to convince them for answering my questions. I also had to keep my questions as short as possible. Some were willingly did it and some were feeling awkward. Most of them do not want to publish their name as it was a little bit about their study system. I used pseudonym to protect their identity. Moreover, teachers also feel a little bit awkward to answer some questions and they were busy too.

### **3.5: Language:**

As I personally interviewed all the participants and observed an English medium school, so I tried to talk in English with both teachers and students. Moreover, I had to be careful about my body language and I was quite polite with them as they were giving their valuable time for me. I took maximum care not to disrupt their day to day activities.

### **3.6: Context:**

Basically, to conduct this research I went to a renowned English medium school. I took interviews students of 2 different classes. I also interviewed four teachers. One of them is newly graduated from a renowned university, and the other teacher is an experienced one and she is also studied in one of the famous universities of our country. I also took interview of the principal of the School and she willingly gave it.

### **3.7: Obstacles:**

As I adopted qualitative method, so I had to visit that place several times and it was very time consuming. Moreover, I had to find slots when they are free to talk. Moreover, getting appointment from the principle was also a tough one. Additionally, I had to conduct my research in a very short time so I could not include many participants. Even though, one specific institution cannot define the whole scenario of Dhaka city, I tried to provide a detailed picture. Some teachers were hesitant as I wanted to enter their classes and wanted to observe them. So, I had to convinced them for it. As I was observing the class, teachers tried to follow all the techniques that are supposed to follow in English language classroom, so it was difficult for me to analyze the real scenario. Students are required to attend quite a number of classes and managing time to interview them was a big challenge. Sometime I had to ask group questions because of shortage of time. For writing part, I had to give them chocolates and manage them for helping me in my research through their writing. The

female students were more helpful than the male one. I had to manage the parents as well because I took the writing test after finishing their school time.

### 3.8: Ethical Issue:

I ensure that all the ethical issues are maintained properly. I did not force anyone to participate rather all the participants participated willingly. I used pseudonym for all the participants to protect their identity.

### 3.9 Selecting the participants:

These are the basic information about my participants who helped me to conduct my thesis. As most of them do not want to publish their name, so I use pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. In the first table I give the information about the teachers and in the second table I give the information about the students.

Teacher's profile

No.	Name	Age	Gender	Experience of teaching profession	Academic background
1.	Imtiaz	34	Male	9 year	B.A and M.A in English linguistics.
2.	Zaima	25	Female	1 year	B.A in English. Started doing her M.A



Student participants' profiles

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Class</b>
1	Nafi	Male	6
2	Saima	Female	6
3	Rudro	Male	6
4	Rosean	Male	6
5	Zenith	Male	6
6	Rahma	Female	6
7	Seher	Female	6
8	Sadman	Male	6
9	Azmainur	Male	6
10	Meghla	Female	6
11	Nafisa	Female	6
12	Fahim	Male	6
13	Nobonita	Female	6
14	Mahira	Female	6

Moreover, researcher also asked question to the principle of the school to add more reliable information in her thesis. The principal of International Bangladesh Hope School is a very humble person. She bears a strong personality within her. The best thing was she gave her valuable time to researcher. She helped researcher by giving some important information about her school.

### **3.10 Data Collection Procedure:**

In this part I will discuss how I collected data from the students and teachers. I used interviews extensively. I asked open-ended questions to the students and teachers. While taking interviews, I had to speak in English as students are from English medium background. While asking questions to the students of standard 6 I had to make questions easier because as I took their interview for two times. When first time I took their interview, I noticed that many of them could not understand the questions properly and some words are unknown to them. So, when I again took their interview for the second time, I had to make questions easier and understandable so that I can get the proper information from them. As I observed four classes, so one of the teachers was feeling uncomfortable when I asked to record his lectures. So, I had to borrow a pen and paper from a student to take notes of the activities of his class. I kept some close ended questions to get the proper and specific information. In case of writing part, I had to keep the topic simple and easy so that they can understand it properly. I gave them 10 minutes to write instantly on that given topic. I asked the subject teacher to help me by showing some of their exam script and homework's as well as class work for understanding their ability.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

The results of this thesis are presented in this chapter. Results are presented in a thematic way. From the data I came up with some common themes and based on that.

### **4.1 Motivation is an important factor in developing language skills:**

Most of the participating students mentioned that motivation is a big factor in developing language skills. There are different types of motivation and students are motivated for various reasons to develop their language skills. However, as I focused only on how they develop productive skills, I limit the discussion only in these two skills. I asked same questions to 4-5 students and almost all of them agreed with each other that teachers always motivate them to do better. All of them said that teachers always try to communicate in English with them from the beginning of the class. Some of the students said that after entering into class teachers first ask them about how they are and what is going on in their daily life. After that, teachers do not introduce any topic directly. Before starting any topic for teaching, first teacher uses some synonyms or gives some hints about the topic and asks them to guess the topic. If someone is able to guess the topic, then the teacher praises him/her. Then the teacher starts teaching them about the topic which shows that teachers try their best to enhance student's speaking ability. One key point to note that teachers always encourage to develop language skills and they always talk about the importance of developing language skills. They highlight why it is important to develop language skills and what could be the difficulties if the students fail to develop their language skills. Students agree that it motivates them to develop their language skills.

### **4.2 Prior learning experiences:**

Students' prior learning experiences and the previous institutions where they studied also play a big role in developing their English skills. The school where I carried out this research has Bangladeshi students and also some foreign students. I noticed that the foreign students, even though they are not native speakers of English, possess better fluency in speaking and writing than the Bangladeshi students. My discussion with them revealed that they studied in a well reputed institution from their childhood. There were no exam pressure and they got lots of opportunities to develop their language skills. They shared the similarities and differences between their previous school and current school. One of them was Zenith. She completed her elementary level and half of her secondary level from a famous English medium school of Edinburgh, UK. Though her parents are Bengali but they use English language while talking with Zenith and her siblings. Zenith shared some of her positive experiences as well as some barriers that she faced in her new school. First of all, she said there are some differences between the syllabus of her previous and present school. She said that when she entered into new class, teacher welcomed her very warmly than her fellow mates. As Zenith was born and raised in abroad, the proficiency level of her speaking and the writing appears to be better than the other students. While making the conversation with her fellow mates, sometime her fellow mates cannot understand her words properly because of her fluency and native like pronunciation while speaking in English and the use of different vocabulary. So many of the students do not want to talk with her at the very beginning. It used to make her sad. On the other hand, teachers used to praise her which helped her to feel comfortable. In the English literature class teachers use different techniques for improving their writing skill which is quite similar to her previous school. She added that day by day she is becoming more comfortable with the help of her friends and respected teachers. Another student named Saima who also lived and studied abroad before she joined this school, also expressed almost similar kind of experiences.

Thus, it appears that surroundings and curriculum play an important role to develop a student's speaking and writing ability. Foreign country's English medium school's curriculum and Bangladeshi English medium school's curriculum and teaching techniques are different from each other which create a barrier for students to match the same quality with foreign country's students.

#### **4.3 Role of student-centered teaching:**

Student-centered teaching is also another important factor in developing students' productive language skills. Usually in a student-centered classroom it is expected that students' talking time (STT) will be more than teachers' talking time (TTT). In traditional classrooms, it is a common scenario to see that in class hour while teaching the students, only teachers are talking and sharing their ideas. They even do not give any opportunity to the students to share their own ideas regarding the teaching topic. Sometimes teacher scolds those students who wanted to share their ideas. This thing hampers a student's learning process as well as they lose their confidence. On the other hand, in a student-centered classroom student can share their ideas in the classroom and that helps to become fluent in speaking. While observing the classroom, I found that teachers were encouraging students to share their ideas in class and appreciate them for this. While taking interview, students also stated that teachers always try to listen their ideas and opinion about the topic that they are going to learn at that certain classroom. Moreover, they also said that teachers encourage those students more to share their ideas who talk and participate less in classroom for enhancing their confidence level.

#### **4.4 Teaching within the existing curriculum**

Curriculum plays a big role in teaching and learning. Teachers mentioned that the curriculum that the school authority asked them to follow does not allow teaching using communicative language teaching. Another major problem is the time limitation. One of the teachers Rahma

said that she knows about the CLT methods but cannot apply it properly because of time limitation. Only 30 to 35 minutes are allowed for each class. First 5-7 minutes were gone while taking the attendance. After that few minutes were gone while introducing the topic. So, it became difficult for her to conduct some of the activities suggested in CLT. Other teachers shared that even sitting arrangements are not perfect. The surroundings also do not support sometimes. Another teacher named Imtiaz shared that when he tried to apply different CLT techniques in class, he could not finish the syllabus for the examination because of time limitation as well as another teacher shared that he was rebuked and became the victim of sarcasm by a senior teacher as he always try to push students to share their ideas and use different techniques in classroom. After that incident, he did not attempt various innovative activities that he would like to use. Additionally, that particular school could not arrange any extra classes for students to practice their free writing and speaking. A student named Rudro said that though the teachers do not arrange any extra classes but teachers arrange some extra-curricular activities which help them to improve their speaking skill. Those extracurricular activities are: debate competition, role play in different dramas that they read in English literature, face to face conversation regarding any recent topic, instant writing and presentation. She said teachers always encourage them to read English newspaper every day. Sometimes they ask them(students) to tell about any recent issues. He added that though teachers do not arrange any extra classes but they help those students who went to the teacher regarding any problem. Moreover, if a teacher finds that a student is having difficulties regarding anything, teacher willingly helps that student to solve the problem. Because of time limitation, teachers could not give detailed feedback individually but they always give overall feedback to the students.

#### **4.5 Struggling with instant writings:**

To check the writing skills of the students of standard Six, I chose eight students from two classes. I gave similar topic to all the students which was “Traffic jam” and ask them to write on it. I gave 15 minutes to each of the participant. I also gave them a sample paragraph on a different topic. So that they could not lose the track. After 15 minutes I collected all the writings from the participants. As I gave them the topic instantly, so it took time for them to start writing. But one thing that I found was, before writing anything about the topic, some of them brainstorm the main ideas and then started writing. While checking script, I found that Sami did a lot of mistakes in case of using punctuation though the ideas that he gave was correct. While checking homework and classwork of Sami, I found that most of the time he did the same mistake. He could not understand his mistake properly because sometime teachers used to correct them and sometime not. So, it made him confused about the proper use of punctuation.

I was quite surprised to see the performance of a student called Sadman. His vocabulary level was impressive and high comparing with his other classmates. When I asked him that how he improved his vocabulary level, he answered that he used to read newspapers and used English to English dictionary when he could not understand the meaning of any new word. He added that he started doing this following the idea suggested by his class teacher.

Many of the participants faced problem to construct a sentence properly. They did not have any proper idea about the three parts of paragraph which is introduction, body and conclusion. But what I noticed while observing the classroom was, when teacher asked them to write a summary of a video clip, they wrote it in a proper way.

A student named Seher was stuck and could not writing anything. Researcher asked her why she was not writing anything! Then she replied that she always faces difficulties in instant

writing. She shared that she is good in memorization and she earned good marks in English literature course.

The above data shows that writing is a common problem and most of the students struggle to write instantly. Teacher seems to neglect this area although in the school I conducted this study, teachers suggested various activities to their students so that they could improve their writing. Still I think more steps need to take to improve students' writing skills.

#### **4.6 Effectiveness of participating in speaking activities:**

While taking interview, I asked five students whether the activities that teachers conduct in the speaking class were helpful to develop their speaking skills. Three students stated that activities like instant presentation, role play, asking synonym, antonym etc. help them to enrich their vocabulary knowledge and their confident level in case of speaking. It also helps them to recover the fear of speaking in front of audiences.

On the other hand, researcher noticed that after doing those activities such as role play, drama, debate, presentation, group work though the students were fully satisfied with their performance although teachers want better performance from their students. Teachers are satisfied about that matter that they were following the CLT techniques in classroom while teaching students. In some points, I have the same kind of idea that the teachers have as researcher could not get much time to see the scenario of other schools.

Regardless, I have noticed that teachers are concerned with developing students' speaking skills. Parents also want that their children should develop their speaking skills. In the Bangla medium school, it is not so common as the common scenario here is that everyone is concerned about exam result and there is hardly any emphasis on developing language skills. The exam-stress starts from the very beginning of the class and it continues until their higher



education. In contrast to that English medium seems a better option to develop students' English skills particularly speaking and writing.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

This chapter will provide some further discussion based on the data presented in the Chapter Four. In light of the data I will also highlight some of the problems that need to be addressed.

### **5.1: Use of CLT method rather than GTM method:**

My observations reveal that the classroom settings and layout are convenient for conducting activities suggested in CLT. During the observation, I noticed that teachers were emphasizing various communicative activities including group work, pair work, helping each other acquiring English language, inspiring them using English outside the classroom. These kinds of activities are very helpful to develop students speaking and writing. Moreover, the medium of instruction and the classroom language is English. That is also helpful for the students to develop their speaking skills.

In case of English medium school, I find that teachers use parameter of particularity. That means teachers teach students to keep in mind the demand of that particular situation. As only English is required for communication and the way of teaching, so teachers try to use it as much as possible. While taking interviews, one teacher said that she knows all the terms of ELT and CLT methods very well as she was a linguistics major student in her undergraduate life but she could not apply it in her class because of the shortage of time as well as sometime the environment does not support it.

### **5.2: The effectiveness of group work and pair work:**

While taking interviews of the students, some students said that almost in every class teacher used to make groups and pairs among them and ask them to do group work and pair work and then ask them to share their opinion with the whole class. Some students said that it is helpful

to them as they can share their own point of view with their classmates. But some students were doubtful about this process. Some of the students stated that teacher mixed up students who do well in class and who are struggling in class. Students who always do well in class always get chance to talk to the class. Teachers also ask these students to talk about anything when it comes to share their opinion. Thus, students who are struggling, did not want to share their ideas and they contribute less in group work or pair works. They remain behind and their speaking skills are not develop in a way like the other students who are very active.

Teachers role here is very important and it appears that teachers fail to address all the student's problem. Rather they are helping certain students to develop their English skills and some other students remain behind.

### **5.3: Students' views about instant presentation:**

In case of instant presentation, teachers first show some video clip or introduce a topic with examples. After that, teachers ask them to share their own opinion or ask them to summarize that video clip or audio clip and present in front of the class. Almost every single student considers it as helpful to develop their speaking skills. One of the students share the benefit of this activity. She said that she was an introvert girl and she was very shy to talk in the class or share anything in group work. However, one teacher identified her problem and from the next time she used to call her first and asked her to share her opinion instantly which help her to overcome her fear of speaking in front of the others. However not all teachers are like this. As mentioned in the previous section, many of the teachers only favor good students and ignore the less confident or introvert students. If every teacher could give chance to every student equally then it would be easier to overcome the problems of students.

Debate can also be an effective activity to develop students' speaking skills. In that case, teacher divide the whole class into two groups and give them the same topic and a topic

which is debatable. One group have to talk the positive things about the issue and another group opposed it. When I asked them to share their opinion about it, one of the students was very happy to share her experience as she said that she was selected for national debating competition and as in her school, teachers used to arrange debate in classroom, so it makes her more fluent and help to enhance her confident level. These kinds of classroom activities in the Bangla medium school are not very common. It is essential to think how the Bangla medium school can promote this kind of classroom activities so that students become fluent in speaking. Memorization may be helpful to pass the exam but in the long run these students suffer. Developing good English skills especially speaking and writing is very essential for every student.

#### **5.4: Students' view of giving feedback in speaking:**

Gower et al. (1995) said that "Students should not be corrected during fluency activities" (p.100). Giving feedback in case of speaking is very important part to make a student more fluent. Sometime in case of speaking, what I noticed that students mixed up American accent and British accent which is not acceptable at all at that point when they are in their secondary level. While observing a secondary class, I noticed that sometimes teacher interrupted student while giving presentation and sometime after the end of the presentation. When teacher interrupted in middle, students lose the fluency while speaking and they mixed things up. But when teacher used to give feedback after the presentation, they took it as a compliment and try to solve it later. Sometime teacher gave them the written feedback to them so that they look it up carefully and try to fix it up in future as Katayama (2007) noted "Self-correction was also favored by the students" (p.76).

Unfortunately, the problem occurs when students got feedback from their fellow mates. It is a problem because according to Cruttenden, when students are in their Cognitive stage, they

become very egoistic. As I took interview of class six and almost all the student's age was around 12/13, so they were also in their cognitive stage. When teachers correct their mistakes, they took it easily and in a comfortable way, but when any student makes any comment other students do not like it and they feel insulted.

### **5.5: Creative writing:**

Instant writing helps a student to enhance his/her writing skill. I noticed that teachers first introduce a topic by giving examples and share his/her point of view. After that teacher asked students to write a paragraph about any topic which is similar to that particular topic introduced by teacher and gave them a time limit. Students said it helped them to improve their writing and time management as sometime, because of shortage of time, they could not complete their answer paper in examination hall. I also found it helpful as when I asked them writing instantly and gave them only 15 minutes, most of the students were struggling while writing. So, if they practice it in a regular basis, they will do it better in future.

### **5.6: Students' view of giving feedback in writing:**

I noticed that every single student wants to have feedback in case of writing. They thought that It always help them in future to correct their mistakes in further writing. Macbeth (2004) stated that, "Correction in classrooms is an identifying task and achievement of classroom teaching" (p.705). I noticed that most of the students did the same mistake of using "s" or "es". They do not have any clear idea about cohesion. So, it would be better if teachers clear their confusion first and then ask them to write anything. Sometime students face difficulties in case of uttering or writing any tough words. It that case, a teacher can help them to break the words in some syllables. It will help to memorize the word easily and fast. The common mistake that most of the students did was using tense in a proper way.

### **5.7: Examination driven education:**

Our education system is dependent on exam syllabus and students are taught as much as the exam syllabus asked for. As a result, students become proficient in writing as students are tested on this. On the other hand, as speaking is not included in our syllabus and students are not tested on this so they are lacking behind this skill. Due to this, a shift in the national curriculum of our country is needed.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendation:**

In conclusion, though the native language of Bangladesh is Bangla, both teachers and students are encouraged to use English as the medium of communication in the English medium schools of our country. There may be debate about whether it is the right approach, but it certainly helps them to develop their English skills early in their school age. Thus, this could be a guideline for the whole country to think if we can develop an environment in every schools in Bangladesh where students have the opportunity to practice English. It can be done as part of the English class and it is also possible to form English club.

The concern is the exam pressure, lack of trained teachers, proper infrastructure, proper monitoring and more importantly if students will be rewarded when they develop their English skills.

At the same time, it is also a concern for the English medium students if they learn Bangla language, liberation war and the culture and traditions of our country.

Finally, to become a competent learner developing various skills including good English skills are very essential for the future. Based on this study I would like to make following recommendations:

1. Government need to improve the syllabus of English medium schools so that it becomes more suitable and adaptable to the students.
2. Teachers need to be more trained before starting teaching in the school
3. The time limitation of English classes need to be extended.
4. Parents can play an important role in case of learning English by talking with their child in English as much as possible.

5. Schools needs to create environment where students will have the chance to practice English.



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## **Appendix A: Interview questions (For the students)**

1. How are you?
2. Do teachers always used to talk in English with students?
3. How teachers usually start their classes?
4. Do teachers help you to learn English language properly?
5. Are teachers try to be friendly with students?
6. What kind of strategies teachers use while teaching English language?
7. Do teachers scold students if they give any wrong answer?
8. What kind of activities teachers use while teaching?
9. Are those activities helpful to you?
10. Do you use English language outside the classroom?
11. Do teachers focus on developing writing skill?
12. Do they give feedback to each and every student?
13. Are those feedbacks useful to them?
14. Do teachers focus on proper use of grammars?
15. Do you try free writing in home?
16. Can you give any suggestion improving speaking and writing skills?

## **Appendix B: Interview questions (Teacher)**

1. Please tell me about your daily routine.
2. Give me a brief overview of your teaching.
3. Do you know about productive skills?
4. Do you use English in English language classroom?
5. How do you start your classes?
6. Do you know about different kinds of teaching techniques?

7. What kind of activities do you use to make your classroom more interesting?
8. Do you focus on students' writing skills?
9. Do you encourage students for free writing and always communicating in English?
10. What kind of barriers do you face in English language class as well as while using different teaching techniques?
11. Do students cooperate with you to make a class more interesting?
12. Which techniques do you use to enhance students' fluency in speaking?
13. Do you want to give any suggestions to improve the regular curriculum?