The Problems of Virtual English Language Teaching in English Medium Schools of Dhaka: A study on secondary school students

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
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my 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.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

I hereby, declare that this thesis composed by me is a genuine innovative work and it has not been published anywhere else. This work has been done for the requirement of MA in English, BRAC University.

Abstract/ Executive Summary

The research paper aims to explore the problems of English language teaching in online teaching-learning classroom. The paper focuses on the problems that the teachers are facing while taking online classes and some of the strategies they follow to overcome the situation and make the best online teaching platform. For conducting the research, the researcher follows qualitative research method to analyze the data which is collected through taking one to one telephone interview of the participants. The participants are the language teachers of English medium schools who teach students of class five. Therefore, the research paper expressed online teaching problems and some strategies the teachers follow to design their online classes and teach accordingly. Moreover, the researcher used semi-structured interview and classroom observation for collecting data. The data is collected from six participants through taking interview and the researcher observed three online language classes to get authentic information. After collecting data, the researcher used deductive approach of thematic analysis for analyzing the collected data. Therefore, this study identifies some of the major problems in virtual teaching such as lack of communicative tasks, lack of technological expertise, ethical issues, new methods for engaging students. However, as the study is conducted during the pandemic, it has some limitations along with the scope of further studies.

Keywords: Online teaching; engaging activities; communicative tasks.

Dedication (Optional)

The dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty Allah and my beloved parents, and teachers.

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First of all, I would like to thank almighty Allah for giving me the patience and potentiality to accomplish the research.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

No table of figures entries found.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Virtual language teaching is already a very established concept in the world but it was introduced in Bangladesh when the Covid-19 pandemic started. Instead of closing the academic progress, institutions are asked to take online classes by using advanced technology. Krish and Wong (2006) specified that virtual language classroom needs to follow some specific materials, tasks, activities and methods through which students feel motivated to learn the language. Hence, language teachers should plan how to make the materials attractive and achieve students' attention in learning. Virtual platform is a very flexible platform which is strongly related to teaching strategies designed for the students. Teachers can use innovative strategies to make interaction with the students and use authentic materials, methods and tasks to teach them (Valencia, Villota&Agredo, 2017). Thus, virtual teaching plays a significant role in education which is undeniable for the current circumstance of the country. It helps students to get an opportunity of learning and the teachers to take a challenge of polishing their skills in teaching virtual classroom.

1.1 Context of the Study

The current educational progress of Bangladesh is continuing with the help of technology and the students are privileged as they can attend virtual classes and continue their learning. Since the pandemic started, the virtual classroom became the only medium of education. For taking virtual language classes all the teachers need to be prepared with different teaching techniques. The teachers must consider that virtual classes and face to face classes are different from each other. Therefore, virtual language classroom may demand different materials, methods, tools or different lesson plan as the students of Bangladeshi English medium schools are new with the system. In this study, it is focused that teachers of English

medium schools need to polish their teaching skills and choose effective materials which will be helpful for online teaching as there are some problems found out with this new virtual teaching learning system. Instead of using a particular method or material, they can use different methods and test which is best for online teaching and which material helps students learn effectively. Barrett (2010) stated that instructors should find out new methods for teaching which will be more effective for online classroom and they must try to implement their plans for virtual classroom. Therefore, a method or material that is suitable for one classroom may not be suitable for the other or sometimes it can be worse which should be identified by the instructor.

1.2 The Problem Defined

This study elaborately discusses about the procedure of taking virtual classes which includes the teachers' choice of teaching materials or tools, methods, tasks, activities, strategies to manage the class. As a virtual classroom is different from the face to face classroom and students and teachers are not so familiar with this system, it may create some problems while teaching online. Therefore, teachers need to use some techniques or strategies to upgrade the teaching system by observing which material, method or lesson plan is suitable for virtual classroom. Hence, this study explores the problems that the teachers are having while teaching online and the strategies they follow to make the best teaching-learning virtual classroom.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The research paper will explore the recent virtual English language teaching-learning situation with all its difficulties and solutions. This study will shed lights on recent online teaching problems of the teachers of English medium schools in Dhaka and the strategies

they use to make students learn effectively. Hence, the purpose of this research is to give the readers a brief idea about virtual teaching problems and strategies to overcome the situation.

1.4 Central Research Questions

This study tries to find out the answers of these research questions;

1. Which material and method do the teachers use for making the language class effective?
2. What are the problems that they face while teaching language in virtual classroom?

1.5 Significance of the Study

As Bangladesh is going through a pandemic situation, teachers are trying to get an outline of how they will be taking online classes and how it would be useful and beneficial for the students. The researcher, as a student, does the research for the betterment of the teachers who will get some ideas about the problems of virtual classroom and strategies to overcome it. Moreover, it will help the other researchers to do further research on this topic by using this study as a tool of their research.

1.6 Limitations

Educational institutions are closed due to the pandemic situation of Bangladesh which makes the research complicated to collect data from the participants and observe their attitude face to face. However, the problems and solutions of virtual language teaching is a vast area which is not possible to explore with a single research. Hence, this research addresses the key issues regarding the problems and strategies to make the best teaching learning classroom which may help the readers.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Virtual language teaching refers to a systematic procedure of instructions and evaluation through using the computer or other technologies for teaching and learning the language. As computers and other educational technologies work as communication media going beyond classroom size, reaching education to mass people is possible. There can be a certain number of students in physical classroom; in contrast, virtual language teaching can accommodate a considerable number of students since there is no physical classroom. It also works as vocational training to teach different skills in teaching-learning procedure. To provide such training successfully, the teachers and the authorities need to consider some essential aspects for instance, linguistics skills, materials, tasks and activities while designing the classes that play significant role to teach English in the virtual classes (Roblyer& Doering, 2012).

2.2 Teaching Language Skills

According to Hamouda (2020), teachers focus on a set of skills to teach a language through which students can increase their communication skills. While teaching through online classes, teachers focus on those skills and design the materials to make an effective language classroom for the students. It is highly believed that developing these skills may help learners in the journey of learning the language as native speakers. As a result, teachers of online classes target the skills to be practiced.

There are two types of language skills: receptive and productive. Listening and reading are considered receptive because language users must intake information and process it through listening or reading. Speaking and writing are regarded as productive skills because language

users must produce sounds, words, or sentences using these skills. Successful language learners are able to use all four skills in an integrative way according to different situations successful (Hinkel, 2006).

Therefore, Asoodar, Atai,Vaezi and Marandi (2014) stated that it is highly necessary to make sure that the language teachers focus on the linguistic features of all the four language skills and cultural aspects of the target language while teaching through online classes. It can be difficult to teach all the four skills through online classes but focusing them while teaching is crucial to make the language classes efficient.

2.2.1 Grammar Teaching in Online Classes

Garrett (2009) claimed that teaching grammar is one of the important parts of English language teaching because it allows students learning to use the target language flawlessly with its accurate form, rules and meaning which is why learners are often asked to perform grammar activities in English language classes. Nevertheless, learners get different experiences while learning grammar through online classes rather than learning in physical classes since there is less one to one connection among teachers and students. Less communication decreases the rate of learning and also lowers the confidence of learners.

In such circumstances, Abu Seileek (2009) suggests that grammar can be taught in the virtual English classes by following both deductive and inductive approach of language teaching. Whereas, it is mostly believed that teaching grammar seems to be more successful through inductive way of teaching because it can help students to understand the rules through self-learning rather than getting the rules directly in class.

Moreover, Barr (2008) added that different language skills can be integrated to develop the procedure of grammar teaching while designing tasks and materials for online English language classes. At the same time, the materials that contain meaningful real-life interaction

works better to teach the grammatical rules and forms. Tasks and materials that contain practical applications of the grammatical use in sentence level and also comprehension level could help the learners to improve other language skills as well. Therefore, communicative lessons, that have integrated skills, could help learners to learn the actual real-life use of the language instead of only memorizing the linguistics rules.

2.3 Teaching Materials for Online Classes

It can be assumed that focusing the language skills, teachers need computer-based materials to teach language online. Therefore, Blake (2011) claimed that online language learning classes need web facilitated virtual classes to use such materials to make the computer-assisted language teaching classes effective.

Besides, Blake (2011) also added that computer-friendly textbooks or other teaching aids must be chosen to be used in virtual courses to support teachers in reaching their goals and objectives related to language skills. A lot of visual examples, including pdfs, videos, and images may help engage students related to language skills. Audio recordings may also play significant roles in facilitating online students to develop their language skills.

2.3.1 Materials Using Technology

Materials designers or teachers prepare computer based or technology-based materials in the virtual classroom in a way that it increases the opportunity of proving activities with exposure of the target language. Supporting the idea, Demirand Tavil (2021) stated that this kind of materials also help to lower affective filters during task performance because studies demonstrate that enormous expressions in voice and regardless of the availability of images make students more flexible rather than using the given text book. Use of technology also

increases the quality of students' language production because it allows them to get real exposure and that is why they can develop their discourse while performing the given tasks.

Furthermore, according to Lai and Li (2011), materials using technology increases the opportunities of teaching language even outside the classroom because teachers can provide online tasks which can be done through using technology and teachers also get chances to send feedback according their performances. He added, as teachers need to facilitate students by raising learner awareness, making familiar with the target language's culture, designing appropriate tasks and monitoring their ability to participating in the tasks, they must be expert in using technology while doing these to get better outcome from the task's performance.

2.3.2 Student Centered Materials for Online Language Teaching

An online class could be more effective if it uses student-centered material because it focuses the necessity of students. As a result, Oberg and Daniels (2013) claimed that teachers play the role of facilitators by providing the opportunity of self learning in such classes. Student-centered classes offer students freedom for language production with proper guidance and monitoring by teachers. A framework has been proposed to design student centered language materials which can also be used for online classes.

According to Vieira (2017), there are four dimensions in the framework that provides idea regarding the conditions of student cantered language materials. First of all, such materials have context sensitivity which means the online teaching materials need to be learner friendly. To identify and at the same time, consider the contexts of learners, it is significant to know their age, English proficiency level, financial and social background, interests, needs, expectations and available time. Secondly, student centered materials are relevant to learning which promotes meaningful learning and also relevant to language learning. The third dimension is reflection that encourages learners to develop the skills of self-evaluation.

Finally, the last dimension is participation and social responsibility that refers to social factors of the language and therefore, learners learn through active participation in communicative activities. Thus, students centered materials could help to producing autonomous and confidence learners in online classes by following the framework.

2.4 Tasks and Activities in Online Classes

González-Lloret (2020) believes that a proper online class's planning can be a failure if the activities do not support the computer-based teaching-learning process and therefore, tasks and activities play the most significant role in online classes. Tasks are the significant devices that are used to elicit the production of learners' language and effective language classes contain exercises or drills to support the devices. The author also adds that interactive and meaningful tasks functions effectively for virtual classes since these types of activities engage students in actual language use.

2.4.1 Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002).

Tasks and activities are considered the key factors for a virtual language classroom as (Kastberg, 2003) claims that they can help learners in using the target language according to their mental capability. These factors also provide teachers the opportunities of evaluating learners. To continue the argument, Krathwohl (2002) demonstrated a frame work named Bloom's Taxonomy has been proposed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956, categorizing the cognitive ability on the basis of complexity and specificity.

The framework proposes a hierarchical order that demonstrates the specification and also the level of complexity. Krathwohl (2002) described that the framework includes a pyramid shaped hierarchical order which demonstrates major six categories of cognitive domain. The description of the six categories is given below.

Remember. Remember is at the bottom part of the pyramid and also the simplest domain to be performed because learners utilize their lower order thinking ability while practicing this cognitive efficiency. Remembering enhance learners to recall things such as events, terms, valuable information, basic concepts, principles and generalizations, theories and structures. Only memorizing and recalling specific information even without understanding might be helpful to practice this category.

Understand. This category refers understanding the concept of the lesson from classroom instructions. Students are able to grab the main ideas to utilize which is the core skill that is required to solve this level's activity.

Apply. This level refers the application of the knowledge that learners get from the class instructions. Students implement the knowledge, facts, techniques and rules while performing this level.

Analyze. According to this cognitive level, students make relation, show differences and organize themes by breaking down the ideas that they have already learnt from the class instruction.

Evaluate. At the stage of evaluate, higher order thinking abilities are developed and students practice to criticize, make opinions and also can judge on the basis of given criteria.

Create. This cognitive level is absolutely necessary because it helps learners to perform by following what they have learned so far and it includes their production of knowledge (Krathwohl, 2002).

Being agreed with Krathwohl (2002), Riha and Robles-Piña (2009) stated that the framework could be a guideline for teachers or the lesson designers in case of preparing tasks and activities for students of online classes which is why, teachers might consider the levels of cognitive abilities of the framework, while designing their tasks and activities to make the

online classroom effective and helpful for the English language learners. Practicing these cognitive abilities in online classes could help the learners to become successful English language users in terms of both social and academic use.

2.4.2 Theory of Multiple Intelligence (Gardner, 1989), in Designing Online Activities

As there are social aspects of a language to be learned, Shakouri, Behdani andTeimourtash (2017) suggest that it is necessary to focus on cognitive and technical skills to be practiced so that learners learn to cope with the modern world while using English in real life. As a consequence, some tasks and activities designers of online classes consider the theory of Multiple Intelligence proposed by Gardner (1989) since it discusses different skills and abilities through which human beings achieve things, remember and apply whenever they need.

According to Shakouri, Behdani and Teimourtash (2017), Howard Gardner first proposed the theory of Multiple Intelligence in 1983.They add that including the theory in language activities might develop individual intelligences with the development of language proficiency which again is needed to use the target language in practical life. The types of intelligences that have been demonstrated in the theory are discussed below.

Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence. Weber-Segler (2013) refers verbal intelligence as the ability of using language in terms of speaking, reading, writing and listening and also the ability of learning a new language. It means, we use this intelligence during verbal communication and also writing something for particular purposes. This intelligence utilizes the ability of manipulating students' sentence structure, their sense of phonology of the language, meaning and their ability to use a language practically.

Logical/Mathematical Intelligence. This intelligence allows students to analyze or criticize ideas scientifically through studying problems and carrying out mathematical operations logically. It helps students understand the category of things and its classifications. It also helps them to understand facts from inference and logical hypothesis. It has been found that people, who are good at Logical/Mathematical Intelligence, perform better in written language tests. Therefore, it is significant to develop and practice this intelligence in language classes (Shakouri, Behdani&Teimourtash, 2017).

Spatial/Visual Intelligence. Visual intelligence helps students to utilize their sensitivity to visual shapes for instance giving a shape of a thing instead of saying or writing. At the same time, it focuses on the ability to organize a model of something and create their form or shape in detail. People, who are good at visual or spatial intelligence, are able to create a shape of an article instead of writing. They are also better performer of Jigsaw puzzles solving, involving, filmmaking class, making a collage and analyzing television advertisement, films and videos (Weber-Segler, 2013).

Musical Intelligence. This intelligence refers to ones singing capability and it deals with some musical terms which can increase the students' interest in language learning and upgrade their accent like the native speakers. Musically intelligent people have the advantage of understanding music easily and adopt a song effortlessly. Listening different kinds of music such as English songs may help students upgrade their musical intelligences as well as it creates their language learning process effective (Weber-Segler, 2013).

Bodily kinesthetic Intelligence. Bodily kinesthetic intelligence refers to our ability to integrate physical responses with classroom activities. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method which creates a learning environment where language is taught by using the physical responses. However, playing sports, performing dance, drama or poetry,

cooking, gardening, outdoor visit could work to develop this intelligence (Maftoon&Sarem, 2012).

Interpersonal Intelligence Interpersonal intelligence helps people to communicate with others to build up a communicative relationship among them. People of all stages and professions including religious leaders use interpersonal intelligence for enduring relationships among people of the society. Interactive activities inside or outside classrooms may develop this intelligence (Weber-Segler, 2013).

Intrapersonal Intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence focuses on the learner's personal capabilities to make right decisions on right time by using this information. Intrapersonal intelligence allows students to be self-dependent, as well as self-reflective through self-monitoring. In terms of language learning, students may perform activities for instance, thinking about future goals, attending social, making list of their own areas of strengths and weakness in language use, may develop this intelligence and make them feel more confident about themselves (Shakouri, Behdani&Teimourtash, 2017).

Naturalistic Intelligence. People who contain good naturalistic intelligence usually are able to observe, understand, recognize and classify objects and their patterns. They are also capable to categorize objects of both physical environment and natural phenomena according to similarities and differences among them. This intelligence can be integrated in language classes by including activities for instance, studying environment, nature, plants and animals, analyzing nature related texts, movies or magazines, speaking about pets or natural places with their group mates (Maftoon&Sarem, 2012).

Existential Intelligence. The last part is existential intelligence which refers to the intelligence of understanding the purpose of human life such as the reasons for living, the cause of birth and death, roles and activities of people around the world etc. Existential

intelligence has the power to make the learners observe the world, feel their identity within it and apply those experiences in the classroom to learn effectively. It includes knowledge of aesthetic, philosophy, and religion which may help to develop existential intelligence and allows students to emphasize on their understanding of the real-world facts. Those, who have strong existential intelligence, are capable of understanding a concept broadly (Maftoon&Sarem, 2012).

Being a supporter of Shakouri, Behdani andTeimourtash (2017), Pikhart and Klimova, (2019) claimed that the lesson designers or teachers could emphasize Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence during designing tasks and activities for virtual language classes so that learners are able to develop the linguistic skills by applying these skills which might help them even beyond the classroom to use the language in real life.

2.5 Technological Integration

Only knowledge of technological devices and software cannot make the classes effective; teachers must know how to integrate technology. Therefore, Gilakjani (2017) stated that technological integration can be done in 5 stages. It starts with determining relative advantage, and the next steps are- deciding objectives and strategies. The second last stage is-preparing the instructional environment, and the integration finishes with evaluation. Following these stages, teachers can integrate technologies in online classes applying their subject knowledge and make the class effective.

The authorities need to arrange the necessary online teaching platforms and also train the teachers to make them expert users because Roblyer and Doering (2012) claimed, it is necessary to have proper knowledge of technology because teachers of online classes must know how to run and use the technological devices and platforms. There is a lot of Software which are using as a teaching-learning platform nowadays. They work as the media of

sharing tasks, activities, and other files and teaching materials. They are also playing a significant role in running successful live classes. Zoom, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Blackboard, Slack, and Floop are some of our country's popular software).

2.5.1 Garrison's Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison, 2010).

While designing computer-based and skill-focused online classes, Garrison's Community of Inquiry framework (Garrison, 2010) can be considered to make the classes more effective. The framework focuses on social presence in the teaching-learning process and also demonstrates the differences between cognitive presence, social presence and teaching presence.

According to the framework, cognitive presence refers to meaningful communication among communities, whereas social presence plays a significant role in establishing group cohesion through individuals' emotions and open communication. In fact, Cognitive presence is one of the dominant aspects of successful language learning because it is related to understanding supported by social presence. Social presence can assist cognitive presence because it allows learners to consider social aspects of the target language through meeting and dealing with people through conversations (Thomas, Reinders &Warschauer, 2013).

2.6 Teaching Methods

A combination of applying suitable materials and teaching methodologies could make the teaching-learning process fruitful and easier to achieve class objectives. Therefore, Colpaert (2006) suggested that the teachers need to remain careful as well as conscious while choosing teaching methods and they have to come with their teaching methods by selecting one or mix more than one method. For instance, Task-based language teaching can be followed in online language teaching classes because it facilitates learners through authentic tasks. Though all

14

the functions of face-to-face classes cannot be done in online courses, there are computer-friendly and web-based digital tasks that can help learners practice language skills. Considering these issues and usefulness, teachers need to find the best method for their online class.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This chapter gives a brief overview of the research methodology which is used for conducting the research. It brings to light the information about the nature of the research, data sampling, participants and research design including research instrument, data collection and data analysis process of the study. Furthermore, the researcher describes the whole research procedure in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a significant part for a research which includes the process of data collection and data analysis. It also contains research instruments which help the researcher to collect data properly through taking interview as well as observing the virtual classroom. The research design for this study is elaborately discussed in this chapter.

3.1.1 Process of Data collection

The data was collected from the teachers of English medium schools in Dhaka who teach student of class five. Additionally, the participants were those, who teach English language in virtual classroom. Firstly, the researcher found out some friends and family members who are connected and familiar with the participants. Then, they helped the researcher to get all the six participants who agreed to give interview about their experiences in virtual teaching. However, the researcher requested them to observe their virtual classroom to collect data and got permission to do so. The researcher got chance to observe three language classes and took interview from six participants. Above all, the researcher collected data through the interview and class observation.

3.1.2 Research Instruments

The researcher used two research instruments for collecting data; interview and class observation. These tools helped to get the best output from the participants and classroom which played a significant role for making an authentic research.

3.1.2.1 Class observation

The researcher collected the zoom class link from the participants who take classes online. Using those links, the researcher observed three classes out of six participants which helped to get a clear vision of a virtual language classroom. It also assisted to get more authentic data which may not be collected only through taking interview.

Moreover, Observation is a research instrument that is used in ethnographic or case study and sometimes in action research. It is a tool which helps the researcher to discover unseen elements of any circumstances which helps the readers to get a new segment on the topic (Cowie, 2009).

3.1.2.2 Interview

For this qualitative study, the researcher used semi-structured interview for collecting data from the participants. To select participants, the researcher was looking for the teachers who are willing to give interview to establish the paper. Most of them agreed to take part in the interview and then the researcher took their one-to-one telephone interview with a set of questions that were structured before the interview happened.

Moreover, semi structured interview provides the participants a set of open-ended questions that are organized before the interview take place (Jamshed, 2014). It also helps researchers to get authentic information through allowing the participants to response openly to the questions they are asked (Longhurst, 2003). Semi structured interview is flexible for the

participants and it can be recorded so that the researcher can analyze the data accurately if the answers were not written down (Noor, 2008).

3.1.3 Process of Data Analysis

The researcher use a deductive approach of thematic analysis for analyzing the data because deductive approach is more structure based and thematic analysis helps the researcher to express the findings thematically along with the discussions. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), thematic analysis is very common methodology using in qualitative research method and it refers to broadly analyze the data. It is more flexible than the other methods of data analysis. "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. It is unusual in the canon of qualitative analytic approaches, because it offers a method - a tool or technique, unbounded by theoretical commitments rather than a methodology" (Clarke & Braun, 2014, p. 1).

3.2 Nature of the Research

This research followed qualitative research method for establishing the data that are collected from the participants. Qualitative research method helped the researcher to get an in-depth idea on the topic and the researcher could include some unique information which might not be possible in other ways.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research method helps to represent all the invisible or unnoticed components that are found and observed throughout the research. Campbell (2014) stated that qualitative research method supports the researchers to collect open ended data from the participants and make an exploratory research on chosen topic. Consequently, this method refers to establish a

concept where the researcher can include participants' subjective opinion along with her personal observation.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two important factors that should be maintained in a research. Validity ensures that the procedures which are followed by the researchers for conducting a research is valid and reliability refers to the sources that are used to collect information are authentic. "A measure is valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure, and does so cleanly – without accidentally including other factors" and "measures are free from error" (Lakshmi&Mohideen, 2013). A research paper needs to contain valid and reliable elements to help the readers get proper information about the topic which is why the process of data collection and data analysis should follow the rules of reliability and validity. Moreover, the research instruments and the participants are valid and reliable as the researcher selected the actual language teachers to collect data in this research.

3.4 Sampling of the data

Sample refers to a unit that is created with some participants to collect data. So, the researcher has set a sample unit with the language teachers for collecting data. English language teachers, who teach students of class five, are selected as participants for taking the interview. Therefore, the researcher chose six participants from five English medium schools in Dhaka. The participants were willing to give interview and permit the researcher to observe their virtual language classroom so that they can help the researcher with their teaching procedures to establish the paper.

Detailed Sampling Plan for Interview:

Name of the Institutions	Number of Teachers (6)

School A	1
School B	1
School C	1
School D	2
School E	1

Table 1: List of Schools and Participants

Detailed Sampling Plan for Class Observation:

Name of the Institutions	Number of Classes (3)
School B	1
School D	1
School E	1

Table 2: List of Schools and Observed Classes

3.5 Obstacle Encountered

For taking the interview of the participants and observe classes the researcher had to ask for 11-13 participants. Some participants refused to give interview at the last moment. Hence, the researcher took interview of six participants.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes qualitative data that the researcher collected from the participants through conducting interview and class observation. The result is discussed in this chapter which addresses the central research questions of the study.

4.2 Findings

The researcher collected data from the answers of the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. At the same time, the researcher also observed some English language online classes which support and elaborate the data through practical examples. Themes and ideas are identified from the responses of the interviews and class observations. The results of the study that have been interpreted from the collected data are discussed below according to the themes and ideas.

4.2.1 English Teaching Focusing on the Skills

From the interpretation of the interview and class observation report, it has been seen that teachers of most schools focus on reading and writing skills most. Though it has been found in the previous study (Asoodar, Atai,Vaezi& Marandi, 2014) that successful language teachers focus on the linguistic features of all the four language skills, among the six English language teachers, four claimed that they focus on reading and writing mostly and provide limited lessons for listening and speaking in the online classes. Three teachers stated, though they have dedicated classes for speaking and listening classes, they are not being able to focus on those skills because of the remote setting of the classes. They need more one-to-one

communication for improving the skills. Therefore, teachers are letting learners practicing reading and writing more instead of focusing on all the four skills which could be an obstacle for becoming successful English language learners. However, teachers realize that learners need to focus on all the four skills and some of them already got instruction from school to change the traditional activities and provide the learners online friendly activities focusing on all the four skills. They have already started to provide more speaking and listening activities.

4.2.2 Grammar Teaching

Five teachers among six claim, it is more challenging to teach grammar in an online class rather than physical class because of less one-to-one communication. Most of them preferred inductive approach of teaching grammar where only one of them preferred deductive approach over inductive while teaching grammar through online classes. As it has found that providing examples before direct rules works better while teaching (AbuSeileek,2009), most teachers of English medium schools provide comprehensions first and then teach the grammar items accordingly. For instance, while observing one of the language classes, a grammar activity was noticed that was given from the book named 'Secondary English' which is followed by School D. According to the activity, A Plague of Locusts by Doris Lessing was given as a reading comprehension and after the types of nouns was taught including the following activity.

Identify nouns.

Rule up four columns, heading them as COMMON, PROPER, COLLECTIVE and ABSTRACT. Then place each of the following nouns into the right category.

Anxiety, woman, Volvo, purse, kindness, flock, banana, loneliness, choir, Thursday, swarm, dog, Shakespeare, army, amazement, congregation, Canada, cruelty fear, Mozart.

On the other hand, only one teacher of one school directly provided the rules first and then provides grammar activities. For instance, while teaching voice change, the teacher provided a list of rules. After discussing the rules, learners were given some sentences to change their voices.

4.2.3 Teaching Materials

The participants believe that designing or selecting appropriate teaching materials are important for conducting a successful English language class. For this reason, they always prepare materials before taking classes. Though online classes are going on, teachers are still using the hard copy of the books. Teachers follow the books that are given by the respective authorities of the schools. The books that are used by the participants are given in the following table.

Name of Schools	Books that are Followed
School A	New Expressway for English
School B	Grammar Builder
School C	Grammar Builder
School D	Secondary English
School E	Secondary English

Table 3: Name of Schools and Followed Books

However, as they teach through technological devices, virtual worksheets, YouTube video, PDF version of some textbooks are some of the mostly used materials for language classes. As also found in previous studies (Blake 2011), most of the participants also focus on authentic materials that are useful to demonstrate the learners the actual use of the English language. Animations, movie or drama parts are showed during the online classes since they

already use technological devices. The materials also provide the exposure of the target language, including the cultural aspects of the language.

Besides, teaching materials is one of the key factors of successful face to face language classes. Similarly, it plays significant role in distance teaching-learning classes. That is why, teachers use student friendly, context sensitive, relevant and meaningful materials for virtual English language classes. The materials also provide communicative activities sometimes and these features make the materials students centered.

4.2.4 Tasks and Activities

The participants share that selecting appropriate tasks and activities according to the proficiency level is another significant factor that needs to be considered for conducting English language classes. The activities facilitate with online meeting, group work or pair work that allow dealing with people to develop social presence through meaningful communication although two of the teachers admit that they do not provide such communicative activity. That is how, learners learn the social aspects of the target language but before that learners need to develop minimum English language proficiency which actually, English medium schools' students develop from the beginning.

Teachers put the cognitive and social knowledge together in the activities and facilitate learners through online teaching. One of the participants provide an example of an activity; role-play of placing order through telephone. This activity incorporates the Community of Inquiry framework and helps teaching-learning take place, including social and cognitive knowledge. As previous study states that including the Community of Inquiry framework in activities of online classes could make the online teaching-learning experience more useful(Thomas, Reinders &Warschauer, 2013), some of the English medium schools trying to incorporate this system.

Moreover, five participants among the six, admit that they face actual difficulties in class management as they are teaching non adult learners. It is also very difficult to motivate and engage them in classes. In such circumstances, the participants focus on different types of intelligence while designing the activities so that learners engage themselves in the online teaching learning process. Teachers make learners practice linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic and existential intelligence through the activities such as, group works, pair works, conducting interviews, role play, solving mysteries, map reading and so on.

Nevertheless, as cognitive abilities are closely related to actual use of language, the participants prefer to make the learners practice such skills. They also focus on cognitive levels demonstrated by Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002)that allow develop the overall English language communication competency. The online classes include activities which are least complex to solve for instance memorizing and remembering. Writing past and past participle forms of verbs is an example of such activity. Similarly, teachers include the other cognitive levels which are understanding, application, analysis, evaluation and finally, creating. To create writing piece or speech, learners need the most complex cognitive ability and narrating personal experiences is one example of such activity.

4.2.5 Teaching Methodology

To make the materials and activities useful, the participants follow certain teaching methodologies that help them to reach their lesson objectives. Five among the six participants follow task-based language teaching as they prefer to teach through different tasks and one teacher mixes task-based and grammar translation, but it has become difficult for them to continue this through online classes as the learners cannot perform face to face group activities. Teachers come up with different tasks like games, quizzes, and visual activities, for

instance, picture descriptions to engage and motivate the learners. However, two of the participants mentioned communicative language teaching, which is again difficult for them to continue in online classes. Quality technological support is necessary to make the learners communicate through computer-based language teaching classes. As the situation is new, teachers are taking time to come up with technology-friendly communicative tasks and activities that are not present in their usual textbooks. Considering the present situation, whether it is task-based or communicative, teachers of online English language classes fix the methodology while designing the course which is also found in the previous study (Colpaert, 2006) so that they can fulfill the goals and objectives of the course.

4.2.6 Technological Issues

All the preparation will be wasted if the teachers as well as students cannot access the online platform. That is why technological factors are essential to be considered for a successful virtual English language class. First of all, the parents and teachers need to have technological device such as laptop, tab or mobile phone, and the participants mention that they have self-funded devices and internet access, but they need training to run different platforms. According to the interview, most of the English medium schools utilize Zoom meeting, Skype, and Google Classroom for teaching. Teachers and students still face difficulties to operate those platforms. They share and receive teaching materials, assignments, and other activities using the applications, which has become a headache for the participants but gradually they are leaning as they are already working. Still, they need more support to handle the technological issues. That is why, if any institution plans to provide the service of English language teaching online, the authorities of that institution must consider the technological support for being successful.

4.2.7 Integrating Technology in Online Classes

After planning all the other aspects of language teaching, the participants integrate them into the classes to make the planning successful. To integrate technologies, they at first, identify the objectives and then find out relevant strategies to reach the goals. The strategies fit for the contexts and also help teachers to reach to the lesson objectives. However, it is not enough to design the technology integration rather, after designing including teaching materials, methods of instruction, and also tasks and activities, the integration needs to be evaluated and this is also stated in the previous study Gilakjani (2017). The participants mention that the responsible authorities evaluate and provide feedback or instructions to revise the outline of the technology integration plan. They also consider the experiences, opinions, and suggestions of the parents and students who are the most significant stakeholders of the schools. That is how the integrations are evaluated and also revised by the responsible authorities or mostly by the teachers after considering the feedback, suggestions, and also instructions so that learners can develop their linguistics and also social skills by participating in the online English language classes.

Furthermore, the participants mention that they need more budget for technological support so that they can provide sufficient facility to the learners. There are still some learners who cannot afford the necessary devices and internet access, and they all need the support of the institutions so that they do not become dropouts. Besides, they also need proper training as the online English language teaching is new for the teachers and also for the students and parents. Teachers need training to be able to operate the technological platforms and also integrate their teaching knowledge and experience with online teaching so that they can come up with new strategies that are able to adapt the curriculum and fulfill the goals and objectives of the curriculum.

4.2.8 Ethical Issues of Online English Language Classes

The participants also mention to consider the ethical issues for online classes. First of all, the authorities need to ensure the privacy of the information of both teachers and learners. One participant from the six shares that she faces the problem of hacking which is why confidential information regarding assessment got leaked. Hence, she believes that the authorities should hire expert technology operator to keep the information intact and safe from hacking.

Moreover, four participants among six, mentioned that they cannot monitor each student due to technological obstacles. The students may browse other unnecessary website which teachers cannot monitor and that is why teachers demand for software that can be used for monitoring student's computer. Sometimes parents participate in classes instead of the learners, which is again another ethical issue to be considered because teachers cannot monitor the performance of actual learners in this way.

Plagiarism is another ethical issue to consider because it could fake the performance of the learner. Sometimes learners cheat and plagiarize in English language classes, which prevent the learners from actual practice of the target language. Though there is some popular software to prevent plagiarism, one states that still the teachers are letting the learners to adopt the online teaching-learning process and later on, they will use the software to prevent plagiarism. The institutions need to arrange the paid software for the teachers to overcome such circumstances.

4.2.9 Other Drawbacks

Among the six participants, five state that learners face anxiety and depression due to the isolated teaching-learning process. As learners do not get the opportunities to practice the language through actual face to face communication, learners may not be able to develop confidence and learn to deal with real life situations. At the same time, the possibility of lack

of practice increases when the learners get the chance of cheating as the teachers cannot monitor them directly what is possible in face-to-face classroom. Moreover, online teaching sometimes cannot demonstrate the actual skills and ability to use the language because of the lack of technological expertise. It means, it can happen that a learner who was a better performer in face-to-face classes could not perform as before since the learner is not an expert in using the technological platforms.

4.3 Discussion

This section discusses the central research questions considering the responses and interpretation of interview questionnaire and observation checklist.

4.3.1 In Response to Central Research Question 1

The first central research question is about the tasks and materials of the online classes that are used by the teachers of English medium schools of Dhaka in English language classes. The question also deals with the methods teachers implement while using the materials. Responses of the participants reveal that teachers are gradually adopting technology friendly tasks and activities for online classes. As the contexts of online classes are different from usual physical classes, they need to design the tasks and activities in a way that they can engage themselves since the home environment distracts the learners. The traditional books are not enough anymore for online language learners rather teachers provide animation, recorded video, pdf and images as materials to grab the attention of learners that engage themselves to participate the following activities of the materials. Besides, teachers come up with possible methods to use such materials. Five teachers follow task-based language teaching approach and only one teacher among the participants claim that s/he mix task based and grammar translation method to use the materials in online classes.

4.3.2 In Response to Central Research Question 2

The second central question finds out the problems that the teachers are facing while teaching through virtual classrooms. In responses to the questionnaire, teachers share some of the significant challenges that they are struggling with since the very beginning. Moreover, while observing the classes, the researcher crosschecks the practicality of the teachers' claims regarding the difficulties which strengthen the findings. Some of the significant problems that are identified through the study are- difficulties in managing devices, utilizing online platform, engaging learners, class management, less communicative activities and managing unethical behavior of students.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The study demonstrates some of the significant problems that need to be considered for computer-based language teaching classes in English medium schools of Dhaka. From the study, it can be said that teachers design skill-focused and students' cantered materials, utilize technological platforms and apply suitable teaching methodologies to integrate technologies into the teaching process. However, teachers face the ethical issues that have been created for online classes. Finally, class management issue, lack of communicative activities and lack of expertise at using technological platforms are making the works of the teachers more difficult. Not only the teachers but also the students are sufferers because sometimes they excessively use technological devices which make them psychologically as well as physically sick.

5.1 Practical Implication

This research will help the reader to gather knowledge on virtual language teaching. The language teachers, who are teaching online during this pandemic, will get an overall idea on virtual classroom and its procedures. This study addressed the problems of virtual language teaching as it is a new teaching learning platform in Bangladesh. However, it also expressed the opinion of the language teachers that can help teachers to find out strategies and overcome the teaching problems in online classroom. Hence, this research will be beneficial for the teachers of English medium schools who can have some ideas and take precautions to use virtual platform for teaching language. Therefore, the government and the authorities of the educational institutions will be acknowledged that online teaching is a must and it may have some problems but it can prevent the gap of educational progress in unavoidable circumstances.

5.2 Recommendations

Though it is difficult to overcome all the problems of online English language classes and the research has some limitations while conducting it during the pandemic, the researcher thought of giving some possible suggestions to implement which would help the teachers while teaching online. The suggestions are as follows;

1. Teachers could use engaging tasks and activities to hold the attention of learners.

2. Teachers could use materials which help students to be interested and practice more.

3. Teachers could focus on four language skills simultaneously; especially in listening and speaking skills.

4. Authorities could arrange training programs for both teachers and learners to make them technologically expert.

5. Authorities should also include plagiarism software to control plagiarism and increase budget for technological issues.

5.3 Further Studies

This study explored the circumstances of virtual language classroom and the researcher experimented on the teachers of English medium schools in Dhaka. Moreover, further studies can use rural areas and assess the classroom through the opinion of the teachers on virtual teaching as technology is not much advanced in remote areas. It also can use other research instruments for collecting data and establish a new site on this topic. Consequently, further studies can shed lights on assessment of online teaching or the health issues for excessive use of electronic devices for learning. Hence, this research creates a path for further studies on the topic.

5.4 Conclusion

From this study, it is seemed that online teaching is a very important platform to continue education during this pandemic as face-to-face teaching is not possible. Hence, the teachers of English medium schools are getting advanced in using advanced technology along with their teaching skills and strategies. Sometimes, teachers face problems to control the classroom and teach the students properly which needs to be recovered and new strategies should be discovered to implement which helps them to make the best virtual teaching learning environment.

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Appendices

Appendix A.

Interview Questions for the Language Teachers

Name:

Institution:

Date:

1. For how many days are you conducting online classes? How is your relationship with the students? Do they have interest in virtual learning? If yes, please give an example.

2. Which teaching instrument do you use? What are the devices and technological knowledge do teachers and students need?

3. What type of teaching materials do you use in the online classes? Do you face problems in choosing materials?

4. How do you focus on the four language skills in classroom? Are the students communicative in classroom and get enough tasks to build up their communicative skills in English?

5. How do you engage your students in online classes and what techniques do you follow to get their feedback and enhance learning?

6. How do your students interact in virtual classroom? Do they ask frequent questions about their lesson?

7. What are the drawbacks of computer-assisted language teaching?

8. Do you face problems in teaching online such as taking home works, class works or participating in classroom?

9. Which ESL methods do you use for teaching online and why? Explain a method or strategy that helps students learn the most.

10. How do your students get exposed to the English language? What type of class activities do you provide? Please, provide some examples.

11. Do your students get enough financial support to use technological devices? Do you have any opinion or suggestions for the teachers of online classes?

Appendix B.

Classroom Observation using Checklist

Number of Students in class:

Date:

Subject:

Topic of the Lesson:

Class Duration:

1. Online Teaching Platform: Zoom App, Google Classroom.

2. Teaching Instrument: Laptop or computer, mobile phone, paper pencil, mini white board.

3. Interaction Pattern: Group work, pair work, one to one question answer.

4. Teaching Method: Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Total Physical Response (TPR).

5. Teaching Materials: Virtual worksheet, text book and pdf, YouTube video, movie and drama.

6. Focused Language Skills: Mostly reading and writing few listening and speaking.

7. Communicative Language for Teachers: English

8. Communicative Language for Students: Both Bangla and English

9. Classroom Tasks and Activity: Communicating in English, sharing experience, filling gaps, creative writing, role play, taking class notes etc.

10. Teacher's Role in Classroom: Present a lesson, ask questions, give feedback, monitor classroom, encourage students, listen to student's opinions or problems and provide enough classroom task.