

A Study on English Language Performance of Bangla Medium Students of
Private Universities during Covid-19

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

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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/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethics Statement

This is my own work. I read various books, articles, journal paper while conducting this research but the results of this study are based on my own study. I also tried to maintain ethical issues during the research and did not force anyone for interviews.

Abstract

This research explored the current situation of online language classes in Covid-19 Pandemic. It explored the increasing struggle of Bangla medium students during online language learning. This research also includes the perspective of teachers about online language learning. Throughout this research, the researcher focuses on the problems that students and teachers are facing during online language classes. Researcher shows how these problems of online language classes are hampering the listening and speaking skills of students. Therefore, this study aims to present the real problems of online language learning so that our students can overcome these problems in future.

Keywords: Online language class; Language performance; Bangla-medium students; speaking skill; listening skill; Covid-19.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to the Almighty Allah the most merciful, to my parents, my sister Monisha and Maliha.

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First and foremost I am thankful to the Almighty Allah whose blessings have brought me here. Then, I would like to thank my father and my mother for giving constant support, love, care, affection in my life. I am wholeheartedly thankful to my supervisor Ms. Asifa Sultana for guiding me throughout the semester. In particular, I am very much grateful to my teacher Lubaba Sanjana for supporting and motivating me in my university days. She is the main inspiration behind choosing linguistics as my major. I would also like to thank Professor Firdous Azim, Afsan Chowdhury, Nahid Afrose Kabir and Md. Al Amin. I want to give a big thanks to my friend Sadia Tasnim and Arunima Zaman for supporting me and helping me in my studies. Also, I would like to show my gratitude to Amrin, Katha, Promee, Sugandha, Lata, Zayed, Dipro and Kanika for being by my side in the hardest times of my undergraduate journey.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Nowadays, English is used as basic language in sectors like science, aviation, computing, diplomacy or tourism. Students can enhance their likelihood of landing a desirable job in an international or national organization by understanding and knowing English. English is necessary not only for job sectors but also for socializing, achievement and daily lives. The main reason of increasing English learning demand is using English as the language of international communication, the media and the internet. English is not the most commonly spoken language in the world, yet it has become the official language of 53 countries worldwide. More than 400 million people speak English all over the world. So, English is the second widely spoken language in the globe. It becomes easy to communicate with the people of another country through English language. Consequently, we can say that English is very important to survive. In this study, I focus on how English Language Performance of Bangla Medium students of Private Universities are suffering because of online classes during Covid -19. It discusses about the comfort zone of students to practice English in online classes, difficulties and facilities they face throughout the online session. Face to face interaction gives students a scope to improve their speaking skills. Unfortunately, students are not getting the opportunity of face to face interaction during this pandemic which puts bad impact on their language performance.

Barriers faced by Bangla medium students in Private Universities:

Maximum Bengali students study in a Bengali medium institute that is why it is easy for them to survive in that environment. Main problem occurs when they enter into English medium private universities. Prova (2019) says that after passing 12 years of education in Bengali school and college, students feel uncomfortable to speak in English . After private university admission, they start to feel alone or left out because of their weak English skills. In private universities, Bangla medium students have to depend on others to read the English notice or poster properly . So, it is difficult for them to cope up without good English skills. Afrin (2016) thinks that English writing problems of Bangla medium students makes them more weaker than their English fellow mates.

Kabir (2012) identifies speaking as a specific problem of Bangla medium students. Since they are not used to speaking English, it becomes a challenge for them. Bengali medium students feel humiliated for not knowing English properly. Many students are demotivated because of this kind of harassment. Sometimes, teachers also demotivate them by making fun of these Bengali medium students about their language weakness . Moreover, these students are also mocked for their Bengali accent by bullies of English medium private universities and colleges. It is sad but true that these kind of bullying puts bad impact in the mental health of these students. Slowly many Bengali medium students understand that they are not good enough for English medium institute. Nowadays, Private Universities also arrange debates, group discussion and competitions. They considered English as their language of communication. So, maximum Bengali students are not being able to participate in these competitions and activities. In short, English has become a barrier between Bengali medium

students and English medium students. It hampers the socialization process in private universities.

1.1 Difficulties of learning a new language;

According to Afroze (2014) , a large number of Bangla medium students suffer from psychological problems. Self-doubt is the one of the psychological issues that any bengali medium students face during English language learning. In Bangladesh, every Bengali medium student has used Bengali to communicate with family, friends and institutions for years. When they try to learn a foreign language like English, they start to doubt their abilities. Maximum Bengali students suffer from inferiority complex. Therefore, they think several questions like whether they would be able to compete with English medium students or not. Also, Bengali medium students get few scopes to practice English skills. Due to the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic, all private universities and colleges are closed. So, students are deprived from the opportunity for face to face interaction. I think that face to face interaction with teachers and classmates would help the Bengali medium students to fill the gap between them and their English medium fellows. In this pandemic, all the students are spending their time at home. So, they are mostly interacting with their parents, friends and other family members. It is obvious that they would communicate with their family and friends in Bengali which would reduce their opportunity to practice English skills. However, students would lose their English fluency and efficiency in this process of learning language.

1.2 Online Language Classes and Covid-19:

The system of education has changed because of the outspread of coronavirus all over the world. Due to Covid-19, all universities and colleges of Bangladesh are closed. Hence, Private English Medium Universities have started to apply online methods to conduct classes.

Most Bangladeshi students have studied in classrooms for years. It was a challenge for them to switch their classroom immediately. At present, university students including language learners have to sit in front of technological media to continue their studies. Online teaching also creates different challenges like technical issues for our teachers and students. Many poor students do not get the proper computers access or internet connection. However, they face problems in virtual methods of learning. Also students are not comfortable to use computers, laptops and the internet. Besides, many students face trouble attending the class because of slow internet connection. On the other hand , language students should have proper knowledge about different computer applications such as MS Office, MS word and PowerPoint.

It is true that huge number of language students do not have technical proficiency. They do not know how to login, download, upload, submit projects and communicate with their teachers and fellow mates on online platform. Students also face problems like online time management. In regular days, students have to follow a routine by private universities and colleges. Therefore, they have to manage and plan their schedule according to online classes. It is hard for the language students to cope up with the new technicalities of online learning because of their long time habit to attend physical class. In online classes, students can easily feel distractions. Hence, students can use his/her phone, internet or login into social media accounts. So, they can miss out important skills or points of language lectures.

1.4 Significance of the Study: English learners should have good command over English skills. Private Universities use to provide English language classes on a regular basis before the 2019 pandemic Covid-19 situation. Unfortunately this regular classes and lessons were obstructed by the world-wide lockdown of all the places including the educational institutes also. This paper tries to find out the current situation of online language class and also wants to discuss about the circumstances of this new approach. It also finds out how language students of Bangla medium background are performing in English during online classes.

Literature Review

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this section, I discuss some previous research papers and articles which are related to this paper.

2.1 Speaking skill: Speaking skill is one of the most essential language performances that can help a learner to adapt his/her target language. Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) mentions speaking skill as a process of making meaning , understanding information or analyzing a speaker's thought. Rao (2019) says that students are judged in regular life because of their speaking skill. After learning to speak English for so many years, learners still find it very hard in real life. Rao (2019) adds that speakers have to create sentences under the impulse of the moment, which is why it becomes difficult for learners.

Listening, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation skills are important for speaking. Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) say that we should follow several steps to send messages between speaker and listener. Vocabulary plays an important role in speaking skills. Not having enough vocabulary is the main reason for foreign learner's poor speaking skills (Ali et al.,2019). Therefore, English learners should focus on their vocabulary. Rao (2019) says that foreign learners are struggling to speak English properly because of not understanding grammatical structures and poor vocabulary collection. Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) say that students can make strong sentences with the help of grammatical rules and use them in speaking. According to him, grammar is considered as a guideline in making a perfect sentence. In a word, both good sentence making and vocabulary are the keys of success in speaking skills.

Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) states that fluency, accuracy and communication play a major role in speaking. Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) defined fluency as the ability of speaking thoroughly without facing any difficulties. Speaking without repetition, fear, pause, and self-correction is a sign of speaking fluency. He also says that at first teachers should help students to speak English freely in the classroom . Then the teacher has to evaluate the proficiency of the student (Pratiwi and Prihatini, 2021). In this way, a student can know his/her mistakes. Many authors think that speaking proficiency and vocabulary knowledge is dependent on each other (Ali et al., 2019). Therefore learners should have increased their vocabulary to get speaking proficiency. Also they have to improve their knowledge of grammatical features. Learners can get a high level of language proficiency by practicing grammar rules (Ali et al., 2019).

2.2 Listening Skill:

Bozogia (2012) states that listening skill concentrates on the ways of oral discourse. He also identifies listening as a way of hearing, understanding, judging and giving response to the cultural theory of society. Listening skill is known as integrative skill (Ulum, 2015). Ulam (2015) says that a language learner can get enough advantages from target language with the help of consciousness and formation of proper listening comprehension strategies. He also adds that listening skills can supply the essential input of language. Ulum (2015) mentions that students can also get speaking authenticity in target language by listening songs, videos and radio channels regularly. In real life, we can find it's evidence. If we like a song of another country, then we will listen it countlessly. After few days, we can automatically memorize the song. It means we can easily adapt any language without even knowing it's meaning. Ulum (2015) also says that teachers should be careful about the listening materials. Listening materials have to be well organized to fulfill the needs of students (Ulum, 2015).

Only then a teacher can take a good listening class. Ulum (2015) states that listening skill is always ignored in English language learning.

He has also included that listening skill has some elements which can help a learner to gain proper language. They are-

1. Sound differentiating
2. Identifying words and understanding their meaning
3. Recognizing grammatical groupings of words
4. Identifying expressions and meaningful written/oral statement
5. Creating a connection between linguistic , non-linguistic and paralinguistic cues
6. Predicting the meaning with the help of background knowledge
7. Recalling important words and ideas.

From my perspective, If a learner gives his full attention to the native speakers, then he can be able to differentiate the difference of sound. In this way a learner can identify the new words. It shows these elements are effective for learners.

Nurkhamidah (2021) mentions that the total percentage of listening is 40-50% during conversations. So we can practice both speaking and listening skill through conversations.

Again, Nurkhamidah (2021) is divided listening into six categories. They are

1. Intensive listening
2. Extensive listening
3. Responsive listening
4. Interactive listening
5. Autonomous listening
6. Selective listening

Nurkhamidah (2021) describes the characteristics of these skills. Intensive listening is used to evaluate a student's phonological and morphological skills. Secondly, teachers try to reduce learning issues with the help of activities in extensive listening. Also mentions that feedback is important in extensive learning. Thirdly, students have to give proper response in responsive listening. Fourthly, interactive listening tries to involve students with different kinds of group works. Fifthly, autonomous listening gives students the ability to work alone. Though I prefer extensive learning but Nurkhamidah (2021) considers autonomous listening as effective tool. I think feedback is very important in language learning. It helps us to achieve our target. A learner should focus on her listening categories perfectly, only then she can improve her target language.

2.3 Listening Skill Problem during Covid-19: Major students face difficulties to focus on listening activities because of low speed internet connection in online class (Puluhulawa et al., 2021).

. Sometimes, it ruins the quality of listening materials. They state that a huge percentage of students find the listening material unclear. Besides, they also say, many students think that teachers are giving clear instructions before / during online listening activities (Puluhulawa et al., 2021).

Listening skill is the most used in English language learning. According to Liu and Yuan (2021), Listening skill is less clear than the other skill . They also say that listening learning performances are affected by the FFLA and other variables such as language proficiency, strategy use, self- efficacy and motivation (Liu and Yuan, 2021). In online classes, students who have a high level of self-efficacy face less anxiety. They also mention that FLLA (Foreign Language Listening Anxiety) and strategy use are co-related. It means students can overcome FLLA by using strategy for listening test performance (Liu and Yuan, 2021). Therefore, students' listening performance depends on their English proficiency level.

Again, Liu and Yuan (2021) identify listening anxiety as a negative predictor and self - belief as a positive predictor for weak listeners' listening performance. They also claim that online based listening activity is responsible for the anxiety of foreign language learners. From the perspective of Liu and Yuan (2021), English students may feel isolation, struggle to stay motivated, virtual interaction, receive timely responses and feedback in online based learning. They also add that students may lose their confidence in online listening learning because of all these problems. They focus on the fact that all these steps are really important for second language learners. Students need all these requirements to improve their target language by practicing (Liu and Yuan, 2021).

2.4 Speaking skill problems during Covid -19:

Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) state the current situation of Indonesia where teachers are trying to apply different methods in speaking classes during Covid-19. They also add that teachers and students both face a lot of difficulties because of online classes. According to them, different types of technologies are used for speaking classes. So all students should have good command over technology as well as speaking skill (Pratiwi and Prihatini, 2021) .

Otherwise they will give very poor performance. Huang (2021) also identifies some other problems with online language classes. In online classes, students have to take an appointment or tutorial class time to clear their confusion (Huang, 2021). In physical class, students can easily clear the confusion by asking questions to their teacher after finishing the class. These two articles prove that students are facing communication problems in online classes. Students are not getting any scope to clear their confusions. This communication gap will affect their language performance.

Then, Liu and Yuan (2021) mention that when Chinese University students use vocabulary and speak in English, they feel more anxiety. They add that the majority of students feel anxiety in online class because they concentrate more on correctness of language performance. Students are more engaged in online conversation and producing words. They also feel less anxiety issues than offline (Liu and Yuan, 2021). Similarly, Pratiwi and Prihatini(2021) identify four difficulties of students in speaking class during this pandemic. They are-

1. Psychological, 2. Linguistic, 3. Environmental, 4. Teaching Strategies

According to Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) , psychological factors like confidence, motivation are causing difficulties in student's speaking. Linguistic factors like thinking about making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes are creating troubles for students. Different environmental factors are also responsible like lack of attention, appreciation or respect from their classmates. Verhoefet et al. (2009) also describes the situation where learners feel inhibition because of switching one language classroom to another. Liu et el.(2017) also indicates inhibition as a block in the process of second language learning. According to Linck et el.(2009), learners are struggling with inhibition in the process of second language learning. They also say that the new environment is responsible for the inhibition problem of

learners. It is true that covid-19 has created a new online environment for students. Many students need time to adjust to a new environment like online. So it is normal to have confidence issues to perform in online language classes. Huang (2021) states that many students avoid speaking publicly because of unwanted humiliation.

Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) add that no partner for speaking English in the outside world is also considered as a barrier for the betterment of student's English speaking. They think that teaching strategy factors are affecting students' speaking. They mention total four types of strategies –

1. Method of teaching
2. The changing curriculum of government
3. Covid- 19 Pandemic
4. Lack of technology

Another author Wulandari points out different reasons for the speaking problems of language learners. Wulandari (2020) states that maximum 2nd year students of Universitas Malang are facing trouble in speaking English. He mentions that students failed to create words and sentences in English. He also thinks that many factors can create problems in a student's language performance during online classes of Covid-19 (Wulandari,2020). Second semester students of Malang University are affected by factors like vocabulary, pronunciation issues, low internet connection, bored students and less participation in class (Wulandari, 2020).

On the other hand, Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) think that not only methods but also the changing syllabus by the government is also blameworthy. Authors also believe that the difficult situation of Covid-19 and lack of technology has made a bad impact on the impact on the speaking classes of students (Pratiwi and Prihatini, 2021). They give more focus on the teacher's motivation. According to Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021), a successful speaker needs

high level motivation from the English speaking class. They also discuss inhibition which is a very common problem of an initial stage of English learners. In this stage, learners feel insecurity about their mistakes and negative/sarcastic criticism from others. It is agreed that both authors give some logical points. I totally support wulandari's slow internet factor. I personally face inhabitation problem because of slow internet.

Another author Huang talks about the positive side of online language classes. He claims that online teaching is successful in giving students proper discussion questions and knowledge in computer-based language learning class (Huang, 2021). Huang (2021) describes how students find positive sides of online language learning where they can enhance their knowledge by sharing and receiving proper information. He adds that nowadays students are taking the advantage of text-based and visual methods for communication. In this way, students can easily understand the question-answer and information of their target language (Huang, 2021).

2.5 Recommendation for conducting online language classes:

Listening material plays a vital role in listening class. Nurkhamidah (2021) says that teachers should create materials to fulfill the needs of students. He also says that teachers should introduce their students with different accents in listening class. When students are not familiar with different accents, that time they struggle to understand different accent speakers (Nurkhamidah, 2021). He states that YouTube is a platform that has the power to grab student's attention. Nowadays, a student can deliver better performance in language class with the help of YouTube (Nurkhamidah, 2021). Similarly, Zaini and Triyana (2021) states that teachers and students both can consider YouTube as a friendly platform for online language learning. It starts to provide authentic material on several topics for practicing English.

Another author Fachriza (2020) says that audio podcasts are beneficial for both physical and online language teaching.

Nurkhamidah (2021) again describes how effective the use of authentic material is for university students. Students can get different types of authentic listening materials from audio-visual material, authentic printed material. Movies, songs, TV commercials, TV news, Radio news and shows are considered as authentic audio and audio-visual materials. Nurkhamidah (2021) recommends teachers to use authentic audio and audio-visual materials in online listening class.

Not only learning material but also teaching techniques are important to conduct a listening class. Nurkhamidah (2021) adds that teachers can use instructions like question-answer, transfer information, paraphrase, translate and summarize the information in online based listening class.

He mentions three strategies that will help students in distance listening skills (Nurkhamidah, 2021).

They are:

1. Pre-listening activities
2. While-listening activities
3. Post-listening activities

Nurkhamidah (2021) also elaborates these activities and shows how effective they are for listening skill. In pre- listening activities, teachers can evaluate student's vocabulary and also give them a chance to estimate the learning content. On the other hand, students get the chance to listen to the prepared materials of teachers in while- listening activities. In post-

listening activities, students have to evaluate their performance and also summarize the whole information (Nurkhamidah, 2021).

Nurkhamidah(2021) also gives advice to follow a journal web-based activity in electronic English listening class. This activity will provide a short time video. Students have to watch the video and take notes from it. After watching the video, students have to fill up the gap. At last, teachers will allow them to see the same video with subtitles (Nurkhamidah, 2021). In this way, students will be focused to develop their observing power. It will be beneficial for students' listening skills.

He also recommends using Ted Talk (Nurkhamidah, 2021). In this process, students have the authority to select the video on www.ted.com. Students have to watch this video thrice. At first, students will watch the video without subtitles. Secondly, students will get a chance to watch videos with subtitles. Lastly, students will watch the video with first language subtitles . After finishing the video, students will get the chance to compare the information of three videos (Nurkhamidah, 2021).

Many authors suggest that teachers should give simple , obvious and correct guidelines to students' activities (Puluhulawa et al., 2020). It will help students to understand their lesson properly. Zaini and Triyana (2021) says that 21st century teachers have to be more creative than before. Students will lose their interest if they follow the traditional way of teaching language skills.

Wulandari (2020) suggests some solutions to solve speaking problems of online classes like increasing the vocabulary collection, keep practicing English on a daily basis and a good internet support system. He also adds that teachers should motivate students and help them to learn English (Wulandari, 2020). Then he gives advice to the teachers to choose the most

engaging and attractive media and method so that students can find the classes less boring (Wulandari, 2020).

Huang (2021) mentions online courses as student-centered online learning which includes different scopes of speaking like synchronous communication, group discussion and group presentation. Online learning also provides some communicating activities to enhance student's knowledge such as web resources, traditional resources etc. Huang (2021) states that students can use their personal life experience as a resource. In this way, they can practice speaking skills. In student centric online learning, students will play a major role. On the other hand, a teacher will play the role of a mentor who can help his/her students by giving knowledge (Huang, 2021). Majority of teachers give feedback on grammatical roles. According to Huang (2021) , teachers need to focus on task-based language teaching. He thinks teachers should give more priority to teaching meaning rather than forms (Hunag, 2021). Hunag (2021) also states that students can get various advantages by participating in several tasks. He also says that students can practice their pronunciation and fluency by doing both online and offline speaking tasks. Students can be part of a group discussion of a topic and try to communicate with his/her group mates in their target language (Huang, 2021). It means students can use English to perform these learning tasks so that they can get a positive outcome. Students can also practice speaking English by giving their opinions, ideas or sharing questions and answers in these learning activities.

Huang (2021) says that students loved this teaching approach where students play the main role. Students feel that task based teaching is useful for them (Huang,2021). He gives a suggestion where he says that the only way to gain speaking confidence is practicing language without thinking about mistakes. According to Huang (2021), teachers can create a healthy environment of speaking foreign languages so that students can achieve speaking confidence in an online classroom. He also suggests that teachers should invite students for

online group work in a non-judgmental way (Huang, 2021). If students find a supportive teacher, then they will feel less stressed and also gain speaking confidence.

Conclusion: Online language learning is a unique concept for both teachers and students. However, a large number of scholars discuss about the negative sides of online language learning but my aim is to show how it affects the speaking skill and listening skill of our Bangla medium students.

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter, researcher elaborates the methodology that is used for this research. It begins with a brief description of the purpose of the study in university level education of Bangladesh. Then it gradually moves on to the method used for research. Along with this, the researcher describes why qualitative approach was chosen, who the interviewees were, how data was collected and analyzed, which factors created obstacles to conduct the research. Lastly, it provides brief discussion of limitations and obstacles that researcher face during her research. At the same time, researcher also discusses how the ethical consideration was maintained.

3.1 Purpose of the Study:

The aim of this research was to find out how online classes are impacting student's language learning speaking and listening skill. Due to Coronavirus Pandemic, most of the universities have continued their classes online. University authorities are also following same approaches for students' assessment. Therefore, many language teachers are trying their best to use online tools for English language learning. Hence, this study was designed to explore the views and experience of language learners. In addition, since many teachers were also new in online teaching, it was also essential to learn about their perspective on this issue. The researcher believes that online language learning is more difficult for the fresher of university. So the main focus is on the first and second year students of private universities. Therefore, this research investigated and recorded the opinion of private university students and teachers regarding online language performance. The researcher followed three questions to conduct the research. They are-

1. Are students comfortable to practice speaking and listening skills in online classes?
2. What kinds of difficulties and facilities do they face to practice English speaking and listening skills in online class during Covid-19?
3. What are the steps taken by the students and teachers to overcome the difficulties?

3.2 Research Design: According to Gay and Airasian (2000), research design is a general strategy that contains the basic structure of the research study. They also said that a researcher can understand which strategy he should follow through the research design. Perry (2011) identifies a research design as an overall plan that helps a researcher to carry out a research study. Also, Griffiee (2012) thinks that with the help of research design we can describe the internal reasoning and external reasoning of a research project.

The researcher followed a qualitative method to collect data with the help of online interview in a natural setting. The researcher has followed the narrative approach of qualitative research throughout the whole study. According to Elkatwnech (2016), the researcher can explore the real- life issues to get required information or data through the narrative approach. Therefore, all the information was recorded from the words of interviewees' real- life events while doing online language classes. In this case, it is not possible to observe the participant, and so the researcher has to depend on their vocal and written statements. Though the participants were few but they came up with detailed information and depth analysis of every question.

This study is designed on the individual experience, opinion and self- observation of language learners and teachers on coping up with online language class. Bogdan and Biktan (1997) says that a qualitative research build up methodologies and techniques to authorize themselves to examine the interviews from the point of view of participants. The researcher used interviews as a research instrument. In this process, the researcher has gathered sufficient amount of information and experiences from small number of people with the help of technology. Therefore, the researcher gave some open-ended and opinion-based questions and took their responses. She (R) used their response as the primary data in her research. Later, she analyzed the data. Along with these, the researcher also used some secondary resources like books, electronic publication, articles etc.

3.3. Setting of the study: During the pandemic, everyone was following the government instruction of staying home. This study was conducted in a situation when Bangladeshi students were doing online classes for the first time. Hence, the researcher was unable to visit the participants physically. So she took the interview by using digital platforms and social media. Furthermore, the researcher also took some interviews from private university teachers taught online classes. Since the main focus is on the online language performance, it was important to know about perspectives of first and second year students of university. Thus, the researcher interviewed the students of the private university who are struggling with their English before pandemic. Therefore, the study has focused on private university Bengali medium students' current status of English learning during pandemic.

3.4. Participants of this study: Unfortunately, the researcher did not get any chance to visit selected universities to take interviews. So, she (R) asked her friends, juniors and relatives to help her in finding teachers and students. The researcher had started to take interviews after getting some positive reply from her acquaintances. Therefore the researcher followed naturalistic approach to conduct the interview. She (R) requested her participants to ask their university friends and teachers for interview. She also told them to inform her if they know any student or teacher from other university. In this way, she was successful to manage more students and teachers. The researcher also took interviews from some of her neighbors who were able to fulfill the requirements. In short, both students and teachers of private university were interviewed. They were total 12 in number where 8 were students of 1st and 2nd year from different universities and 4 were private university teachers. All the participants were from territory level. They were also having experience on online language classes in this pandemic. In this study, the researcher included the data of participant anonymously.

Table no 1.1

Title: Details about student participants

No.	Name	Semester
1	AA	2 nd semester
2	IJR	4 th semester
3	JF	4 th semester
4	KTK	6 th semester
5	SSS	1 st semester
6	TBR	3 rd semester
7	TT	6 th semester
8.	FS	5 th semester

Table no 1.2

Title: Details about teacher participants

No	Name	Position
1.	Mr. AD	Assistant Professor
2.	Ms. NJ	Assistant Professor
3.	Ms. MK	Assistant Professor
4.	Ms. RRK	Assistant Professor

3.5 Research instrument:

The researcher collected data through interviews for the qualitative research. In order to portray the scenario of online class, the study was conducted in Dhaka and Sylhet. Most Private Universities are situated at Dhaka in Bangladesh that is why the researcher took interview from Dhaka. Researcher also collects data from Sylhet. The researcher gave open-ended questions with a scope for the interviewees to reply from their thoughts and perspective. Every participant was interviewed through Phone calls, e-mails or Facebook messenger. The researcher was recorded the interviews and also took notes individually. Then she analyzed the data for research.

3.5.1 Interview:

Since the interview was conducted during pandemic, the researcher had to use alternatives like online platforms to collect data. It took almost 3 months to take interview because of large number of participants and online/technical issues. The researcher sent questions to them before conducting the interview so that they will be prepared for their interview. She made two different sets of questions for participants. The researcher took their interview via phone call, zoom meeting, texting and audio message. The researcher also got a chance to ask extra question spontaneously, while taking interview in zoom meeting or phone call. As the researcher asked few extra questions including previous one, on that account the interview was semi-structured. The researcher recorded both conversations of phone call and zoom meetings with the permission of participants.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures:

According to Creswell (2012), there are total six steps for analyzing and interpreting the data. The researcher followed these six steps to fulfill her research. Firstly, she (R) started with organizing and collecting data. Then she looked into the information and coded them. Then, she gathered the codes to understand the broader themes. She figured out some sub –themes that contain important information. After reading several time, the researcher finally selected some broader themes to analyze. Lastly, the researcher followed the procedures of thematic analysis and coded the data.

3.7 Limitation to the study:

This study was conducted during the outbreak of Covid-19, and so the main focus was on online language learning. It was not possible for researcher to take interview physically, so she was dependent on online based interview of participants. This internet interruption created disturbance in the middle of the discussion. Furthermore, the researcher was very careful about the allocated time given by the interviewee. However, the researcher tried her best to make her study reliable.

3.8 Ethical Consideration:

The researcher tried her best to maintain ethical issues. Firstly, she did not force anyone to give interview. She also tried to select right words to avoid biasness. Moreover, She did not disclose my participant’s full name or their institution’s name in order to maintain privacy and security. Also, every interviews and data collection took place after taking permission and the participants’ convenient time.

Chapter 4 [Results]

In this chapter, the researcher presented the collected data and findings from the interview sessions of participants. She (R) also discussed about her observations from these interviews. The researcher also focused on the research questions. Moreover, this chapter will be discusses d the opinions of the interviewees.

4.1 Student's Response

4.1.1 Uncooperative Teachers and their Limited Feedback:

Almost every student gave the similar answer that teachers are not cooperative and also provide limited feedback. All participants agreed that they are not getting proper feedback. One of the participant AA told me that “ I personally think that the teacher gives good feedback in physical class which helps me to understand my language mistakes. Here, I also get feedback from my teacher. Sometimes, I find emails and messaging more confusing.” SSS as a first year student said that she does not get any help from her teacher to improve her listening and speaking skills. It was really sad that freshers of the universities are not getting any guideline for their English skills. Another participant TBR shared that “Though I am participating in class lecture, teachers are not giving proper feedback. Sometimes, they are not giving any feedback at all. Therefore, I do not know how to improve my speaking skill without any feedback.” I also agreed with fact of TBR that without feedback it becomes tough to develop language skills. Also teachers are showing their unsupportive nature through it. TBR also mentioned that he finds his teacher frustrated in online language class. In case of motivation, all of them think that they are not getting enough motivation to improve their language skills. TT said that, “Unfortunately, I am not getting any appreciation from my teachers. So, I lost my interest to practice speaking in online class.” In a similar

way, TBR mentioned that “It is sad but true that I do not get any motivation or support from my language teacher. Sometimes, it becomes monotonous to study without any motivation.” Eventually, these statements proved the unsupportive nature of teachers during online language classes.

4.1.2 Internet Issues and Listening Skill:

Some participants shared common problems that they are facing internet issues in between the online language class. They also mentioned that it has put bad impact on their listening skill. KTK told that, “Though I am getting some benefits in my speaking skill, my listening skills are affected because of online classes. Sometimes, I missed my lectures because of slow internet, and load shedding. Therefore, I am starting to do my listening practice in my leisure time.” FS also said that, “I face internet issues that ruin my listening practice in online class.” SSS pointed out that she uses to get panic attacks because of internet issues and zoom app issues. Then she loses concentration from her listening activity. JF also agreed the fact and said that, “I lose my concentration from my classes. I face various distractions from home during classes. Moreover, online classes are affecting my English listening skills.” It was not easy for anyone to give full attention after facing internet connectivity problem. I also found some different comments of participants which said that they are not facing any trouble in practicing listening skills in online class. KTK said that “It is true that I am not facing any internet issues during my class period. Therefore, I can listen, my lecture smoothly. Besides, I always find some distraction from my fellow mates in offline classes. It means online classes are quite beneficial for my listening skills”. Another participant TT also gave same response. He said that, “I feel less distraction during listening practice in online class.” Both statements showed that some students are comfortable with online language class.

4.1.3 Online Language Class affects the communication skill of learners:

SSS also shared that “I am a student of Bangla medium background. As a Bangla medium student, I knew that I had to face discrimination in language class because of my fluency and English knowledge. Now, I feel that online language classes make it way more difficult than regular classes. I do not get any help to improve my listening and speaking skill from my teacher in online language class.” It meant that Bangla medium students are not getting any kind of guideline because of online language class. Another Bangla medium student JF said that, “ my first experience of first year was not so pleasant. I face a lot of discrimination from my teacher in physical class because of my poor English. Now, I find myself totally invisible in online classes. She also added that, “In physical class, I was trying to speak in English and share my perspective to my teachers and fellow mates. I used to get confidence from my friends that help me to put my opinion in front of the class. Now, I can only see the face of my teacher which makes me feel uncomfortable and insecure about my speaking. Therefore, I never share my opinion in online classes.” Bangla medium students were losing their confidence because of online language learning.

Maximum participants stated common thing that their communication skill is not improving because of online language class. AA pointed out that, sometimes she faces internet issues during the class time. That time, she becomes nervous and frustrated. After reconnecting the class, she has to deal with the inhibition during speaking. Sometimes, she becomes frozen and cannot say any word in English. IJR said that , “Though my English is not so good, still I use to face less struggle to give presentations in English language. Unfortunately, I was stuck in between my presentations in English during my online class. I was really very nervous to give my presentation in zoom meetings. This process was more difficult for me than my physical classes. At the end, I get poor marks because of my poor English speaking.” It was sad to know that an average speaker is struggling with speaking skill because of his nervousness in online class. TT pointed out that students are not getting enough time to practice speaking skill. She added that, “Unfortunately, I am not getting any appreciation from my teachers. So, I lost my interest in practicing speaking in online class. Besides, they are putting double pressure on us. They are taking more quizzes and assignments than before. It affects the practice of language skills. Therefore students are not getting any opportunity to practice speaking skills neither in an online classroom nor in leisure periods.” It clearly showed that how badly students’ speaking skill is affected by online language class.

There was one participant who disagreed with the fact. According to her, their speaking skill is not affected in online class. KTK said that, “ In online class, my teachers allow me to turn off my camera, so I do not feel nervous in speaking English. I also feel that no one is watching me during my class. It helps to reduce my nervousness. Now, I can easily communicate with my teachers and students by giving my opinions in English.” However, online language class had seemed blessings to shy students but it was not good for weak students of Bangla medium.

4.2 Teacher's Response:

4.2.1 Technological Illiteracy and Time Mismanagement:

Total three teachers thought that their online classes are affected because of their technological illiteracy and time mismanagement. Mr. AD said, "Online language teaching is more difficult than offline class. I am not that much good at technology. At the beginning, I struggle to conduct Zoom meetings, Google meetings and so I lose my class time. Then I get limited time to take class. I had tried my best to finish my lecture properly in this limited time. Despite that, I was unable to take discussion or hear the language problems of students. In short my students do not get chance to practice speaking skill and listening skill." It showed how helpless are teachers like Mr.AD. Not only Mr.AD but also Mr. NJ shared that he also used to face troubles to conduct zoom classes at the initial stage of online language. Slowly he overcame the technological difficulties. Another participant Mr. MK said that, "I feel pressure because of the sudden use of Zoom and Google application. Only one participant shared that he has enough technological knowledge to conduct an online class." It presented the struggles of teachers who want to teach students in online class but they are not successful because of technological issue and the mismanagement of time.

4.2.2 Following Traditional way for Online Language Class:

Three participants admitted that they are following the old theoretical method in online language class. Mr. AD said, "I need time to prepare different types of lecture. Unfortunately, I do not have enough time to make changes in language lectures". Mr. NJ also gave same answer to this question. It pointed out that teachers are not getting enough time to make language class interesting.

Only one teacher participant shared that he is trying to follow new way to make his lecture more interesting. He said that, “ In summer 2020, I use my old language notes to teach my students. I feel that it is not developing my student’s language performance. Then I start to create language videos to make my lecture more interesting” He also added that, “. After completing three semesters online, now I can see the improvement in their performance.” It presented how perfectly a teacher can make an online class interesting.

4.2.3: Communication Gap between Teachers and students:

All Participants admitted that there is a communication gap between teachers and students. Ms. RRK said that, “. In online learning, I can only guide those who were speaking actively. However, many students are not speaking and they also turn their camera off. It was difficult for me to observe their activity or give feedback. I personally feel many students are not attending the class.” Additionally, Mr. Mk said that, “Also, I do not get enough time to give feedback about their language performance.”

Mr. NJ said that, “Many students share their problems with me and I find that they are able to practice both listening and speaking because of slow internet or internet disruption. I also find my students stressed out and frustrated because of the effect of online classes. Unfortunately, I do not get enough time to motivate them. If I compare the situations then, I will pick offline class for English language learning.”

Mr. AD said that, “, I was unable to take discussion or hear the language problems of students. In short my students do not get chance to practice speaking skill.”

It showed that both teachers and students are feeling communication gap because of , teacher’s limited time, not co –operative nature of students or internet connectivity issues.

Chapter 5 Data Analysis

5.1 Online Language learners are not getting enough opportunities:

After analyzing the result, the data researcher found students are not getting enough scope in online language learning because of some factors such as motivation, internet issues etc. Researcher selected total three themes and discusses the themes with some solutions.

5.1.1 Motivation and Feedback:

From the interview, the researcher has found that large number of students think that they are not getting proper feedback and motivation from their teachers. They find their class monotonous without any motivation. Many students are losing their interest to practice speaking in online class because of less motivation. Motivation gives students energy to work hard for achieving his/ her target. In second language learning, motivation plays a vital role. While giving the interview one of the participants JF said that, "I find myself totally invisible in online class. I think my communication gap with my teacher has increased more in online classes. In physical class, I was trying to speak in English and share my perspective to my teachers and fellow mates. I used to get confidence from my friends that help me to put my opinion in front of the class. Now, I can only see the face of my teacher which makes me feel uncomfortable and insecure about my speaking. Therefore, I never share my opinion in online classes." From this statement, it is clear that, JF used to get motivation from her friends. In online class, she is not getting encouragement from them and so she loses her confidence. In this case, teacher can try to motivate not only JF but also all the students of class. . Biswas (2013) said that any student can achieve the standard language through the influence of motivational factors. It means if teachers say some positive word towards them, it will help them to control over their nervousness. Again, Bangla medium students are shared their insecurities in their interview. They think that they face more discrimination in the online language class of a private university. Only a teacher's motivation can help them to

become confident and break the discrimination. I think these students need both instrumental and integrative motivation. According to Anjomsha and Sadighi (2015), instrumental motivation helps to get good language command for a purpose and integrative motivation helps to adjust with other community. Bangla medium students want to get good language and to survive in English medium Universities. Unfortunately language learners do not get any motivation because of online language learning and it affects their language performance. Researcher has got another finding from her interview which is feedback. All participants of the study admitted that teachers are giving limited feedback in language classes. Feedback helps a language learner to improve his/ her mistake. If a student does not know about his/her mistake, then she/he will never get a good command over English. TBR (Participant) mentions in her interview that she does not know how to improve her English skill without feedback. According to Sadia (2019), Teacher's feedback can help students to know about their strong points and weak points. Therefore, a student gets a chance to improve his/her mistake. In current online class, students are deprived from the benefits of feedback that is why language performance of learners is not improving.

5.1.2 Necessity of Pre- teaching the language learners: Responses from teachers and students both give evidence that students listening practice are affected because of internet issues. Maximum students share that they deal with the problems like slow internet connectivity, load –shedding and internet disruption on a regular basis. Teachers also said that many students tell them how badly internet issues are putting impact on their listening skills.

I think, our teachers can start pre-teaching the language learners. In this process, teacher will make a video and send them to students one day before the class via e-mail. Additionally, students will get enough time to listen their lecture in English. So, Pre-teaching can save our students listening skill. Bangla medium students will get more benefits with the new

approach of pre- teaching (Babelyuk et al; 2021). Then Bangla medium students will easily catch the class lecture of English. If they miss any class because internet issues, it will not be able to affect their language lecture.

5.1.3 Group Works to develop speaking skills: Participants such as SSS, JF, AA and many more accepted that they are facing problems in English speaking. Except one participant everyone shared a common thing that they face nervousness, inhabitation and less confidence while speaking in online language class. Both teacher and student think that teachers are getting any scope to conduct class discussion or speaking activity due to the time limitation.

I think students should take steps to practice speaking skills by their own. Group study can be a good option for speaking practice. In this case, students can follow task –based learning where they have to use target language through various tasks to get good communication skill (Safitri et al., 2020). In addition, they can make group calls to practice speaking English. If they practice speaking English online in groups, then they will also get confidence to speak English fluently.

5.2 Incapability of teachers: Researcher also selects two themes to discuss this section.

5.2.1 Importance of Computer knowledge:

In order to do online language classes, both students and teachers should have the computer knowledge. Many authors find out that a large number of teachers and academic stuffs do not have any knowledge about E-learning applications (Shehab et al., 2020). I also find the similar situation in my teacher participant’s statements. Total three participants shared that they face trouble to conduct online language classes because of their low computer knowledge. One also said that he slowly adjust with the new technologies like zoom app, google meeting etc. Mr. AD shared that he takes long time to arrange a class. For this reason,

he does not be able to utilize the class time. It is unfortunate that students are suffering because of this problem. Students' participant also shared that teachers are also struggling to do online language classes. It shows that language teachers should have computer knowledge to conduct a language class.

Teachers are also using old traditional ways to teach language in online. They should change their teaching methods. In online language class, teacher can grab the attentions of students by making proper use of technology. It is impossible for teachers to manage without having proper training of E- learning (Shehab et al., 2020). Only then, they can be able to provide visualizing instructions. Also they can make their lecture interesting by making video lecture or using You tube.

5.2.2 Consequences of Poor Communication: Online language learning is also new for the Bangladeshi teachers. Researcher has figured out that teachers are not comfortable to communicate in online language class. One participant thinks that all students are not participating in class. They always turn off their camera during online class. It is not possible for a teacher to communicate with those who are not sincere. Other teachers think that they are not communicating with students because of their limited time. Online language class has created a communication gap. Unfortunately, student's language skills are affected because of this gap. According to student's participant Bangla medium students are not be able to express their views because of poor English speaking. Therefore, they face a communication gap with their teachers. Maximum student thinks that this teacher- student communication gap is increasing day by day. Therefore, this gap is also responsible for their poor language performance. Both teachers and students should try to reduce this gap, only then an online language class will be more engaging and beneficial for students.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This study tends to show how things are changing for Bangla medium students after enrolling the online language class of Private Universities during Covid-19 Pandemic. This research took Dhaka and Sylhet city as sample. It is true that English language is a name of fear for the students of Bangla background because of the educational systems of Bangla medium institutions. Normally, Bangla medium students face inequalities in private university due to their inexperienced English speaking. Therefore, this study tries to draw a real picture of the challenges of online language classes by exploring the perception of both language learners and teachers during the situation of Covid- 19 pandemic. Additionally, Novice teachers and students will also get a basic idea of online language class through this paper. It will also help the officials and teachers to figure out the problems of online language classes.

To conclude, the researcher comments that online language class is not as bad as it seems now. It has both merits and demerits. Researcher hopes that in future Bangladeshi institutions will be successful to reform the online language class.

Recommendations:

- The Government should construct online language teacher training program.
- Technologies such as Audio Cassette, Multimedia, You Tube Videos, Video documentary, Pictures are recommended for online language class.

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Appendix A (Interview questions for Students)

1. Describe the positive sides of Online language Class?
2. Which semester are you in?
3. Are you comfortable to practice English speaking and listening skills in Online language class?
4. Do you feel communication gap between you and your teacher because of online language class?
5. Do you face trouble to attend Online Classes? If yes, can you please share your experience?
6. Do you feel your English speaking and listening get affected due to Online Classes? If yes, then give me the reasons why you feel so.

7. Physical Class or Online Class: which one do you think is better for English Language Learning?

Appendix B (Interviews of teachers)

1. Do you face any trouble to conduct online language class?
2. Are you satisfied with your teaching methods during online language class?
3. Do you feel that student's language performance are affected because of online classes?
4. Online Class or Offline Class which one is better for language learners ?
5. Do you feel any gap between you and your students in online language class?