

REVEALING ENGLISH COMPETENCY CHALLENGES: EXPLORING
WASHBACK EFFECTS OF PUBLIC EXAMINATION

By

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the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

English and Humanities

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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

During conducting the research, I took permission of my participants to use their real life experiences in my thesis. I did not in any means pressure them to participate in this interview. I convey only relevant information and ensured that none of them was participants' personal information and maintained ethical consideration by mentioning nick names. I did member checking with all of the 12 participators before finalizing my work. Therefore, there is no room for my own misinterpretation of the data that has been collected for research purpose. Moreover, I have strictly maintained participants and my own interpretation did not affect their statements.

Abstract

Public Examinations have been a matter of concern in a country like Bangladesh where English is taught in isolation. Public examinations of Bangladesh act like an achievement test that eliminate listening and speaking skills in English and discourage students to practise those skills. As a result, even after completing higher secondary level, students remain incompetent in English though it is a compulsory subject from the very primary level of the education. This study explored the reasons behind incompetence in English even after completing higher secondary level of study. In particular, this study focuses on how washback effects of public examinations shape students' proficiency in English. This study is conducted following a qualitative approach. I have used face-to face interviews and classroom observation to collect data for this study. The analysis revealed that public examination shapes students' proficiency level; practicing proportion of English language among individual students and institutions is very limited as the language exposure is not enough. Besides, schools and colleges apply both formative and summative assessment to enhance students learning but applying traditional assessment instead of alternative assessment leads to ineffective learning outcome. Also, though public examination is creating motivation in fostering academic involvement but the procedure of the exam is directly demotivating students to practise all four skills equally in English language. Lastly, public examinations play crucial role in shaping curriculum and overall educational system of Bangladesh.

Keywords : public examination, washback effects, speaking and listening skills, motivation, curriculum, poor proficiency, assessment.

Dedication (Optional)

I would like to dedicate my work to my wonderful and ever-supporting parents.

Acknowledgement

Firstly, all my praises are to Almighty Allah for keeping me healthy, safe and strength to complete my thesis. Secondly, I would like to mention my ever supporting parents who are around me and ensures my opportunity for higher education and growing me up as the person that I am today. I would like to mention all of my faculties of English and Humanity department who supported and helped me from the very beginning of the university life. And most importantly, the praise go to my supervisor Md. Al Amin sir, I wish to extend my gratitude to him. I have dome many courses under Al Amin sir who taught me with patience and gave me feedback until I came out my mistakes also sir often share real-life example rather than relying on only text-book to make the class communication and meaningful understanding. Lastly, I would like to mention my friends who were always beside me and appreciated me with comfort.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Examination is a final product that is made to measure and evaluate a particular set of objectives or specific behavior. It is one of the most prominent influential tools in learning outcomes. The education system in Bangladesh is basically exam oriented. From the very beginning of student life they need to sit for exams that measure the knowledge and intelligence. To be admitted to any school, at first students have to participate in a test and if we pass the test only then students will be eligible to study in that school. To continue the next level of study we need to pass all the previous examinations. In Bangladesh, there are some major public examinations such as S.S.C, H.S.C, Admission test and so on. The secondary high school certificate (S.S.C) is the first high stake test in the hierarchy of public exams in Bangladesh that is usually held after 10 years of schooling for students to measure their overall knowledge and skills regarding particular areas and subjects. It is conducted by public administrators for successful completion of secondary school education. Similarly, H.S.C refers to the higher secondary school certificate. If we successfully pass in the S.S.C and H.S.C only then students will be able to go ahead for higher studies in well known universities.

These public examinations are high stakes tests as the impacts of these public examinations are very crucial in academic life. To bring a good outcome in every test students are used to emphasizing on those areas of a particular subject of the syllabus which are important for the test. From the very beginning of academic life students exclude some area of the syllabus which remains less important for the test. Though the S.S.C and H.S.C exam are held after a long journey of academic field and English is included from the first level of class, but students are less proficient in English language. Students emphasize more on the tested content rather than the whole syllabus due to the shortage of time and compact syllabus. In the national examinations, the two major skills such as Listening and speaking of English subjects are being excluded. Despite being included in these skills in the syllabus; those are not being tested in the public test.

Washback is a common notion of teaching, learning and testing literature that is held to determine the expected circumstance in the classroom. The 'washback' rather than observations, influence to fulfill the gap that has been created through a test and has a very beneficial effect in teaching and learning (Murat, 2020). Backwash effect of public examination represents the positive effect and negative effect of the examination that helps students, teachers and authority to find out the problems easily and the possible ways to overcome those issues. The public examination in Bangladesh is held based only on two skills of the English language, which are reading and writing they completely exclude the other two major skills; listening and speaking. Although the content of academic book is included with all the four skills of the language in the English subject, it is avoided in the classroom practice.

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study explores reasons behind incompetence in English even after completing higher secondary level of study. My study focuses on how washback effects of public examinations shape students proficiency in English that emphasis on listening and speaking. Also, whether the classes are able to fulfill what curriculum has promised by implementing assessments. Moreover this research has been tried to fill the gap between incompetence in speaking and listening in English and the implication of curriculum in the classes based on national examination system. Moreover, this research explores the forces that shape the backwash effects of public examination that causes students' poor proficiency in English and how it's shaping students academic engagement, classes and overall curriculum.

1.3 Problem stating

The policy and system of learning and teaching system of Bangladesh has included English subjects as a compulsory subject from the very primary level of our education. But students are not competent in English even after passing higher secondary level. Also, teachers in the school and college are not properly competent and also the procedure of teaching system etc makes the limitation in learning the language. Moreover, examinations are held to measure the acquired knowledge or skill of students on particular areas of a subject. Therefore, Students, teachers and parents are all concerned with the content that will be tested in the examination since exam result is crucial in students' academic and personal life. Also, it is psychologically proven that human beings pay attention only to those which seem to be important. As, everything in the syllabus would not be tested in the exam, so students and teacher both ignore those areas which will not be tested. Thus, we learn the shortcut way to study and practice only those certain skills which will be evaluated in the examination because the limited allocated time period binds us to the limitation. In result,

after passing successfully in all the public examinations, most of the students remain incompetent in English.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

As English is an international language, it is very important to acquire the language very well. In Bangladesh, students learn English as a compulsory subject in their academic life. In this chapter, I have brought multiple articles that support to fill the gap of the research and to prove the study with validity that has similarity and connection with the content of the research. This chapter is divided into several sub-section that describe what is washback effects and how it is beneficial for learning. Also, it represents data on how Bangladeshi students are eager and engaged with learning English. Besides, their competence or proficiency level in English has also been discussed. Moreover, this study explores assessment with its potential effect and describes how examination and teachers creates motivation and what the Bangladeshi exam procedure is. Furthermore, the importance of curriculum and how examination system and curriculum has positive relationship in learning has also been described in this chapter.

2.1 What is Washback effect and why it is important?

Wash back effect refers to the impact that tests have on teaching and learning. Backwash effects represent the effect of exams that can either be beneficial or harmful. Also, it works as measurement driven instruction that refers to the notion that tests should drive learning. Saglam (2019) investigated that how washback effects of examination can change how and what students learn. He stated that examination had both positive and negative

washback on learning. In his study he found positive washback when most of the students considered using source-based information and taking notes during the listening activity in writing that raised students' awareness in terms of generating, organizing and interpreting ideas regarding vocabulary and sentence structure. However, he also found the negative washback of test upon learning as students were eager to prioritize test oriented practice. And washback effects influence curriculum alignment focuses on the connection between testing and the teaching syllabus. More, Karim (2021) expressed that the notion of 'washback' is significant concept in the field of language learning and teaching assessment. He explained that washback mostly positively acts as influential factor in teaching and learning practices where positive washback positively foster the changing factor of test design and content. He also added that washback justify students' weakness and strength by enhancing intrinsic motivation, self-confidence and autonomy and good test enhance motivation among students and teachers and positively influence the learning and teaching process. Besides, Karim opined that based on achievement and objectives washback effects ensure that the test is known and understood by students and teachers. Washback effects of assessment may influence pedagogic principles that occur in the class and it is used to make change students' learning and teaching methods as well as it reflects the skills and contents that taught in the class (Kresna, 2019). She also identified that washback also helps to identify Where the problem is, then it provides assistance with necessary changes to teachers. Kresna (2019) also explains the effective ways to generate change students learning is to bring change the form of assessment and only it is possible to identify the lacking and solutions by demonstrating the backwash effect of assessment.

2.2 Tendency of learning English among students in Bangladesh

Students are highly intend to learn English as it is useful and helpful so they start learning English from class one to twelve class as a compulsory subject but can't command over English well (Mainul , 2023). He mentioned “Yet, learning English plays a very significant, central, key, crucial, important and vital role” to lead a successful life. Rahman (2021) stated that from urban to rural areas, everywhere in Bangladesh students are practicing English as their compulsory subject. They feel the need to learn this language. There is a massive tendency in learning the English language among Bangladeshi students. Until 2017, there was no English subject in Madrasa. But now, both teachers and students of Aliya Madrasa also intend to learn English. Besides Arabic, They are motivated to learn English as their second language. Elizabeth (2016) reported that over 30 million students in Bangladesh have been learning English as their compulsory subject since grade 1, however among them 65% students are eager to be competent in the language. Cheng (2014) also added that the increasing movement of people across the nation has increased use of English as international communication. He also reported that the implication of English is not only for English-dominant countries which receive a massive number of immigrant students from around the world but also China, Bangladesh, South Korea have heightened their focus on learning English.

2.3 Bangladeshi student's competence level in English language

In Bangladesh at rural site students are very weak in understanding content in English with listening & speaking. Mainul (2023) also claimed “Their spoken level or fluently is low or poor but one kind of the 'O' or 'A' level can be mentioned; even some teachers of English have no fluency in speaking skill”. It is really disheartened that most of the students don't know how to read or how to speak in English with others (Mainul, 2023). He expressed his concern regarding the proficiency level in English among Bangladeshi students who are very

poor in producing speaking and understanding listening skills. In contrast to reading and writing, most of the students in Bangladesh have poor proficiency in speaking and listening to the English language. Imam (2005) articulated that the students of class 11 and 12 in Dhaka City found that less than one in five students scored well in all the language skills. It is also found that girls performed much less well than boys. Found results on students proficiency level in different skills is as follows: 58% on ability to write independently; 40% on comprehension of a passage of reading; 19% on ability to use sentence patterns; 9% on ability to recognize words. Moreover, in a news article Altaf reported that the proficiency levels of tertiary level students of Bangladesh are comparable to standard Grade 7 students. He also added that In Bangladesh though students are required to read English for about twelve years but the level of proficiency they reach is low (Altaf, 2009). Besides, Mainul (2023) thinks that students must be competent in all four skills to join developed and advanced world as English is the passport to a successful future. However, he expressed “but we are we are unlucky due to proper nursing for learning English.” for what students proficiency level is very poor in English.

2.4 Potentiality of Assessment

Assessment is one of the most potential aspects in language teaching and learning. Also, in the field of language teaching and learning assessment is denoted as the act of collecting data and making judgments regarding the language learners’ ability and knowledge to apply it (Carol, 2019). He expressed that the purpose of assessment is nearly tied to testing as well as it regulates the type of assessment tool that should be used in classroom to make effective learning. Similarly, Imam (2005) explained that without assessment the ordinary class cannot create a communicative environment that influences competence in English. Assessment usually generates and translates score to statement about participant’s learning

proficiency and achievement. Also assessment provides summative evaluation and feedback that helps learners to be progressed. There are some factors that influence language learning, such as the backwash effect of public examinations that emphasize listening and speaking. More, Sayera (2018) said that learning oriented assessment encourages students to learn and engage their context with skills. Similarly, Natasha (2015) agreed with Sayera and claimed that assessment influences institutional learning. According to Natasha (2015), assessment practitioners are tasked to enhance teaching and learning that improve institutional effectiveness and provide related quality assurance. Also he added that assessment acts as a driving force of reinforcing students' learning and their motivation. However, Sultana (2021) argued that assessment system of Bangladesh in English language learning is ineffective that only focusing on certain area those would be measured in the examination. As a result, students remain lack of proficient in speaking and listening skills. Similarly, Mainul (2023) claimed that English language class in Bangladesh is not able to provide an effective assessment whereas he thinks the ineffective assessment system is responsible for incompetence in the language among students. He claimed that a test or assessment might have a detrimental backwash effect on the education system if it does not measure what a test is supposed to measure. So, if a test is not being properly oriented that can harm an overall education system rather than influencing.

2.6 Assessment as achievement

“Assessment is central –perhaps even the central process in education” (William, 2010). He added that at the very last assessment is integral to effective instruction, assessment is a process of cycle that involves elicitation of evidence and its interpretation may lead to action. And he claims that assessment stands as a significant component in teaching and learning through which students achieve their target language. However,

According to Menendez and Napa (2019) explained the importance of formative assessment, how it influences students' learning and makes the class more effective. The study mentioned that the formative assessment fulfills the teaching-learning process which is based on a continuous evaluation process that takes place during learning. The study also claimed that the importance of formative evaluation as a means to raise the quality of performance of students, and thus to demonstrate the results of learning obtained within the classroom in students and they found that the formative assessment improves the school performance of the students and this can be used as a strategy to promote collaboration between them.

2.7 Examination and Motivation

As, examination is a final product that is made to measure and evaluate a particular set of objectives or specific behavior; it should be taken in a way that can motivate students in learning. Along with that, Cheng (2014) considered that motivation is one of the most important aspects in determining students' learning. Similarly, Ngozi (2021) thinks that examination is an integral part of education and without it the learning process is incomplete. More, she claims that examination plays vital role in the learning development of students which acts as a mandatory criterion to decide whether or not a student is capable to move up to the further studies. Again, Ngozi (2021) extensively depicts the effectiveness of examination and how it creates motivation among students in developing their learning. She added that examination provides a quantitative data of extend of skills or learning gained over a period of time. Also, she opined that examination is an assessment tool, which used in measuring how much learning has taken place over a certain time and to what extent the educational objectives and goals have been achieved. The fear of academic outcomes can be a powerful motivator in influencing students' academic performance. As, Ju (2020) commented that high stakes English tests shape EFL secondary students motivational mindset

and encourage the engagement with oriented English tasks and activities. Besides, Students feel pressure to perform well and they remain aware about their performance as the consequences determine their further access to particular program. Along with that, Chang and Fox (2014) explained the prevalence and impact of high stake tests in language learning where they stated that the test creates extrinsic motivation among students and they get more engaged with the academic performance for its positive consequences and rewards. He again mentioned, specially structured examinations not only determine students' satisfactory work but also evaluate teachers' own degree of accomplishment. Thus, high stake test inspire students in learning to study more and deeply as the consequences is very significant to them.

2.8 Public Examination procedure and assessment system

In addition Gustanti and Ayu (2021) stated that learning strategy relies on examination system and effective learning strategies influence the language learning where learners not only get learning achievement rather they can improve their language skills. Similarly, Zamorano (2022) developed the idea of learning strategies regarding speaking and listening skills. He claimed that Team games- based language learning designed with appropriate learning activities, materials and making class with providing English music song, providing group presentation and so on successfully improve learners speaking and listening skills in the class. Heidi and Susan (2020) demonstrated how classroom assessment is related to all aspects of the regulation of learning where they found that applying effective assessments is a useful expansion for the learning field. Besides they suggested that if assessment is needed to be used in classrooms to help students learn, it must be transformed in two fundamental ways where the content and character of assessments must be significantly improved initially. And secondly, the gathering and use of assessment information as well as insights must become a part of the ongoing learning process. He also

suggested that the procedure of a test is very important in measuring the achievement of a given course. Hanumantharao (2011) shared his concern about the ineffective assessment system of Bangladesh in English language learning. In a journal article states that a test should be designed in a way that would measure the actual achievement of a student, if the procedure is wrong, and then the test would fail to gain its purpose. Education policy of Bangladesh emphasizes on the importance of improving students' creativity and talent but a research conducted by Al Amin and Janinka (2018) found that this goal cannot be achieved in the way of assessing tests in Bangladesh as the emotional pressure and face of rote learning is associated with the education system. Also, Sultana (2018) reported that public examinations are being taken at the end of a certain Grade in the mainstream of Bangladesh. Sultana(2018), also claimed that though in Bangladesh there is huge importance of learning English from economical, social and cultural perspective, it is strongly criticized by academicians alike. “The public examination is alleged to fall short to measure the communicative English proficiency of the test users.” Besides, Maniruzzaman(2020) claimed that teachers feel pressure in our country to teach according to what they believe will appear in the examinations. Thus they feel pressure to focus on specific areas that remain important to the exam. And the procedure of public examination is not fulfilling its purpose of learning as the communicative learning of English is missing.

2.9 Public examinations as achievement tests

In the book *Testing and evaluation*, author declared “Achievement test also called an attainment or summative test” and the goal of achievement test is to measure “what has been learnt over a longer period of time” (Amanov, 2019). The national exams in Bangladesh are held at the end of the course. That measured students ability and knowledge that they have acquired during the whole course. Sultana (2018) reported that SSC is taken at the end of

grade 10, which is the gatekeeper of higher secondary education and HSC is taken at the end of a 2 years course that is the gatekeeper of tertiary education.

2.11 Importance of Curriculum

Curriculum is the framework of overall learning contents, objectives, instructional materials that used to shape teaching and learning of a certain program and acts as a blueprint for what students are expected to learn and how they would achieve within a given context. Shah (2023) explained how coherent curriculum inspires students' efforts in the learning process. He present a learning based paradigm that demonstrates the relationship between curriculum and developments of students in the learning process. Also, Mohammad (2022) observed that curriculum draw a overall degree for education system in which students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills that guide centrally all educators including what is essential for learning and teaching students. It consists of the academic materials, method, goal and the assessment. Palmer (2010) emphasized curriculums' impact on education and how it shapes academic development and students' attitude, and found that modification of curriculum changed students were more engaged with academic response and teachers' behavior engaged in classroom management activities. According to George (2019), a well designed curriculum enhances students' involvement in study by offering meaningful and coherent learning experiences and progression with relevant content will motivate them to engage in their learning journey. It consists of the academic materials, method, goal and the assessment. National curriculum (2021) focuses on the communicative functions of language. To fulfill its aim, the textbook provides lots of opportunities for learners to apply English for multiple purposes. Each contents of the book are designed based on different skills in English. However, Ali and Walker (2014) depicted the problems of curriculum of Bangladesh and its classroom implication where they claimed

that despite the curriculum of Bangladesh education has been beginning with lots of promises; the communicative approach has not been implemented to the class and assessment as it was intended in the curriculum.

Chapter 3

[Methodology]

This chapter is intended to provide a description of the methodology of this project. This chapter presents how I have designed my research and the approaches with rationality for using the approaches in the study. Also, I have discussed here ethical consideration that I have taken consent from teachers, college authority and students before taking interviews and observing classes. Besides, participants profile of twelve participants and data collection procures and data analysis procedures have been discussed in this chapter.

3.1 Research question

The study explores the following questions:

1. What are the backwash effects of public examination that focuses on speaking and listening skills?
 - Is the exam Policy and actual practice fulfilling its aim?

3.2 Research Approach

I have adopted a qualitative approach for this study; as it aims to explore an area of the research in a broader perspective. Initially, I have reviewed the literature then found a research gap and assembled research questions that shape the study with its required aim. Also, by operating research questions, I have made the interview questionnaire and outline of observing classes. After that, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 people

including students and teachers. Usually, in purposeful sampling researchers intentionally select sites and individuals to understand and grab the central phenomena. Besides, Patton (2015) states that qualitative studies are inherently naturalistic since it involve conducting research in a naturalistic environment without changing the context. This study engages individuals in open-ended interviews in a comfortable condition to entail out the observing situation. As my objective is to explore a real-life naturalistic phenomenon with providing a comprehensive portrayal and without the intention of influencing and altering its course, therefore I have used a qualitative approach for this research.

3.4 Ethical consideration

For ethical consideration, I have presented the information sheet, explained the research topic and it's important. Also, I have taken consent from teachers, college authority and students before taking interviews and observing classes. Though there is no apparently threatening possibility in participating in this project but only after having their permission I recorded their conversation and took notes during the interviews.

3.5 Participants

There are in total 12 participants including students and teachers. Students have different educational levels and among them three students have already passed higher secondary level and are preparing for admission tests. And two teachers participated from the same college and the other one is from high school.

The participants profile is given below-

Name of the participants	Institution	Profession	Educational level

Shegupta Islam	D.I.C	Teacher	M.A
Mobassher Ahmed	D.I.C	Teacher	M.A
Rajoth kumar	T.G.H.S	Teacher	B.A
Rakin	T.G.H.S	students	Secondary
Fatema	B.N.M	students	Higher secondary passed
Siam	D.I.C	students	Higher secondary
Roshney	T.G.H.S	students	Secondary
Shuvro	B.N.M	students	Higher secondary Passed
Riya	T.G.H.S	students	Secondary
Razeen	T.G.H.S	students	Secondary
Faizan	DIC	students	Higher secondary
Ashrafun	DIC	student	Higher secondary

3.6 The data collection procedure

The data collection procedure is included with interviews and class observation that started with recording, writing notes and taking pictures and observing class with patience. After that, I do not transcribe the entire conversation rather only relevant information. The researcher has visited college and school, took appointment of the teachers. Beside, some students did not understand about the interview and felt shy as it was recorded. However, I explained the thing with simple word and they feel comfort and expressed their eagerness to participate in the interview. One of the students participated via online session as it was quite impossible to participate in face to face conversation. Though there was no significant challenge to be faced during collecting data but often time management was quite difficult as most of the students were busy with their exams, admission test, work pressure and so on hence I did not often get them in my desire time. It took almost 1 month to manage those participants, appointments and class observation. For this study, I have interviewed twelve participants and observed four different classes. I choose a small number of participants but I have gathered data through in-depth interviews with participants and class observations. Moreover, class observations allow me to see the actual practice.

3.7 Interview

Interview is considered as the most powerful and widely used tool through which researchers can gain the elicited information and insights (Fontana and Fray 2005). In the interview I have tried to follow to cover up the research question. However, as the questions are not precisely structured, some interviews had examined questions and some had omissions. I have allowed ample of time and relaxation to listen to each of their experiences with patience to know in detailed regarding the relevant issues. The interview questions are made in three phases. One is for students, and others are for teachers and psychologist. The

semi- structured questions allowed participants to have relaxed and comfortable feeling to share their stories and experiences that helps to explore my study in depth.

3.8 Observation

Initially, I observed 4 lessons taught by 4 different teachers. Additionally, I have visited one rural school and one rural college in Dhaka where I talked with other English teachers and students with an intention of understanding the differences, methods and lacking that these institutions have. For the class observation I made a checklist for systematic procedure. The purpose of class observation was to understand the reflection of teaching methods and practice in its natural setting to describe whether the class activities are centered regarding the examination syllabus, curriculum or to make students competent in all four skills. Moreover, I noticed the interactions and behavior among students and teachers, lessons content, tasks and classroom language and efforts that teachers gave to prepare students for their public examinations. Besides, classroom environment, students and teachers communication skills, the way of teachers, presentation, these all are also observed and taken notes that help to recognize all the information which follow my research aim.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

Initially, I have prepared and organized data for analysis by keeping notes and recording the interviews. Then, I have transcribed that relevant information and made decision to analyze data by hand instead of computer based analysis. After that, I have conducted a preliminary data analysis by reading all the information that I gathered to gain a general sense of the data. Afterwards, I have extracted out codes segments to develop description of people and places from the transcription by examining the text data base line by line and asking myself what the participants are actually saying. Then, I converted those codes subsequently into themes that represent a broader abstraction than codes to portray the interconnection of my study. For

example, from the transcription I extracted out code as Board-exam pressure, joined additional coaching centre, fosters academic involvement, hard-work in study, good at only reading and writing skills, public examination do measure speaking and listening skills, practice and focus on certain skills etc. So from these codes I have presented following themes- “Public examination creates motivation”, “Examination shapes proficiency level” and so on. And I carefully examined this procedure to make sure all the relevant themes are found. After that, those them I have descriptively described chronologically in the findings section.

3.10 Trustworthiness and Reliability

My own experience of the education system help to understand and identify the factors of public examination that leads to poor proficiency in English even after successfully completing higher secondary level of education. Besides, I faced and experienced familiar circumstances during my student life as s I was also a student of this education system. Along with that to boost trustworthiness and reliability I have spent around 1month for collecting data. Besides, I have gathered various data from multiple sources. I have checked the transcribed interviewed information with participants to ensure that whether my interpretation and understanding were matched with what they had meant. More, I strictly have maintained the accuracy during conducting the several interviews, class observations and analyzing them.

Chapter 4

[Findings:]

The findings part explores the sources I have collected during interviews and class observations. This section is divided into several sub-sections that make it easier to understand each of the parts individually. The themes were generated from notes that I have gathered information during the interviews and observation. This sub-segment discusses

basically how the examination of Bangladesh is playing a role in shaping students' competence in English language. Also it explores the relation between students' proficiency level and the public examinations and also exam procedure is shaping educational curricula.

4.1 Examination and English Language Proficiency

Firstly, regarding the proficiency in English language, different participants share different experiences and conditions, however all are the same in the point that though they are proficient enough in writing and reading skills, their other two skills are not satisfactory. As Siam mentioned his proficiency level is very poor in speaking and listening skills but good at other two skills reading and writing. He shared his experience that he feels intense hesitation and fear while he try to speak in English and can produce only 2 or 3 sentences in front of others. Sometimes he remains silent when the medium of conversation is only the target language. "In counseling program of our college, I remained silent most of the time as we need to speak in English" (said Siam). Similarly, Famtema agreed with Siam, that she can write and read in English but her speaking and listening skills are very limited. "Though I can produce more than 600 sentences in writing in English" but while it is speaking "I am unable to produce more that 10 sentence" she also said that she is very good at her writing and reading skills but her condition is not so well in other two major skills. She also added that she needs to use subtitles when she is watching English movies, series or music, otherwise she cannot understand the conversation. While, Roshney mentioned, even though she has completed her higher secondary level with satisfactory results but is unable to speak in English. it is easy for her to understand the conversation when it is written but in case of listening she misses most of the information ; so she need to use subtitles when she watches or listens to any movies/song/ story and so on. However, Ashrafun states that though she is

better in reading and writing, her listening and speaking skills need to be improved. Faizan commented in this regard-

After watching many series and movies in English my listening skill has improved than it was until I listen more, because now I can understand at least the main information in a conversation but I cannot speak in English more than two minutes a day that is not enough for communication

Most of the participants explained the same condition where they are good at reading and writing but they are incompetent in case of other two skills, speaking and listening skills. Moreover, when I asked about the reason for being proficient in only reading and writing, most of them answered they practice only reading and writing skills and ignore the other two skills because their examination would not measure those skills. Rosney said that she only focus on those areas which remain important to them for the exam. Also, teachers agreed on this point and Mubassher claimed

The Principle of this college do not allow to practice speaking and listening in the class since the examination will be taken based on other two skills and the time limitation binds all on only emphasizing those areas which will be tested.

So, as they have no extra time they cannot practice listening and speaking skills as they are very busy completing the syllabus and covering only those areas which are important for the public exam. Shegupta also added that “our class conversation and activities are based on reading and writing as these two skills will be tested in the final exam.”

4.2 Practicing Method and Exposure of English Language Learning

This sub-section relates and describes participants' English language exposure and practicing methods inside and outside of institutions.

Faizan had very little exposure to English during growing up; he grew up with his two siblings who were of bangle medium background and also his all friends from the same educational background. So, he always speaks jokes and chat with others in Bangla. There is no such environment for practicing speaking and listening skills in English in his institutions and home. For practicing English he only read the academic books provided by his school and only his own interest drives him to watch English cartoons. He said “I always used to watch Hindi and Bengali movies and series and rarely watch English movies” as he does not understand most of the things in this language. Except for academic books, he did not have much exposure to the English language. Similarly, Razeen opined in this regard-

I always listen to Bangla and Hindi songs and ignore English as often do not understand the lyrics but often read English story books and comics from own interest. I learned to memorize a lot of grammatical rules, sometimes I created a shortcut method to memorize them, after that I practiced again and again to be fluent and avoid mistakes.

Apart from his reading comic and story books, he also read academic books for practicing reading that give him a little exposure to practice English. Razeen used to memorize grammatical rules, word meanings, paragraphs, letters etc and apply those in his writings. However, Siam and Fatema share that they are very busy practicing English at their home as the admission will be held a few months later. As, the admission test will justify their writing and reading so they are mostly focusing on memorizing multiple words with synonyms and antonyms. Fatema mentioned, “ for practicing English I read the grammar

books for making proper sentences then I practice those rules in my writings''. Besides, both Siam and Fatema memorize ample word meanings in English as these are crucial for their upcoming exam. Also, Siam was admitted in an additional English language learning coaching center for learning and practicing English as he thinks after admission in university he needs to speak in English there. "there is a great environment in the coaching center for practicing English including reading, writing, speaking and listening". Hence, except the language coaching center there was not much exposure of English in his student life. Rakin said, "I have practiced English from the very childhood of my life. My reading room is full of various grammatical rules such as tense, right form of verbs and many vocabularies as well." He added that he usually follows 5 to 6 books for learning and practicing English such as; *Nobodut guide* book, test paper, *Tofel*, text book, grammar book suggested by school and so on. From my text book I read a text first. After that, he used additional guide book to understand the content. Also, he memorized vocabulary and synonym-antonyms from another book. Besides, he follows grammar books to learn grammar and then practices to apply those rules.

Rosney claimed that in their college there was no such environment for practicing speaking and listening skills as the medium of the conversation was Bangla and teachers did not inspire them in these two skills for practicing. "Our teacher reads the lesson in English but she translates line by line for our meaningful understanding." She also added that during her whole academic life, in school and college, she did not have the opportunity for practicing English except reading and writing. All the classmates and instructors speak in Bangla and there was no any language club for practicing all the four skills in English. Shegupta shared, "we do not use the target language as a medium of our class because most of the students do not understand the language rather they pretend they understand which can be harmful for their further academic life." she thinks meaningful understanding is must, so

she need to use bangle in the class room as students' listening skills is very poor and even cannot guess the overall meaning of what teachers said.

4.3 Classroom Implication

This subsection explores the implication in English language classroom how teachers and institution are practicing assessments. During class observation (XI), English class teacher asked them to read silently a text topic such as; "Amazing children" after completing the reading, the teacher explained a writing task that was "Flow-Chart", and everyone wrote the flow-chart according to the instructions. ". their class activities are included with making diagram of own activities, writing short & long question answer, writing true –false and matching sentence, practicing grammar from grammar book, reading loudly and individually a certain text from the book, sometimes they are asked to read a dialogue as a pair and so on. And medium of the conversation was Bangla instead of target language. Fatema shared that she learned grammatical rules such as tense, right form of verb in the class after that teacher asked them to apply those rules in writing" from *Chowdhuri & Hossain* grammar book. Also she added "during English for today's class, our teacher reads the text and translates it line by line in Bangla, sometimes she shows us photos related with text, then explains and connects the idea with our context of the book".

Moreover, During IIX class observation, "Teacher taught "Degree" and explained its application in details" there was no group work or pair work. Teacher taught the topic with multiple examples and after that he asked students to complete the task from the text book that chapter was based on "Degree" (Dhanmondi Ideal College). As, Faizan said, "miss read a story of "Shilpi's Dream" from the textbook and inform the new word's meaning in Bangla. Then she asked us questions regarding the story". Also, Mobassher sir informed that he does not provide group work and pair work rather he preferred to provide individual reading and

writing tasks; such as as he mentioned he asked students to write a “pie chart” about their daily activities. Similarly, Riya claimed that though she rarely practiced speaking during Question-Answer sessions in her college, listening skills were never practiced in class. She said “I never practiced group work or pair work in college”.

In addition, the English class teacher of (DIC) explained that we provide assessment to students based on reading and writing skills that do not motivate the listening and speaking skills. In reading class, she usually provides reading sessions, presents a dialogue, recites a poem from the textbook, and memorizes multiple grammatical rules and so on. And for writing skills, Shegupta asked students to write an essay or paragraph or short story regarding their academic syllabus, writing to fill in the gaps, making flow-chart, explaining a graph chart etc. During (class 10) observation, I noticed students were talking in Bangla among their friends and teacher except for the question-answer session in the English class. Teacher asked, “Where he is giving the speech?” students answered in English, “ he is giving the speech at Suharawardy Uddan.” But the whole class the teacher spoke in a bangle including context explanation, giving feedback, reinforcement. Such as; “Tomra ki ki janoamder Jatir Pitha Shomporke?”(asked Teacher), and students answered, “tini 7 e March er Vashon e shokol.....prerona jugiachilen”. In the class they used Bangla as a media of conversation instead of target language including giving feedback. Their all activities and tasks are about reading and writing, whereas they completely ignore other two skills in their discussion and assessments.

4.4 Examination Fosters Academic Engagement

Participants shared their different insights and perspectives on how examinations encourage them to study more. Examination creates an external motivation that fosters their academic involvement with hard word, engagement, patience and so on. Shyvro said that to

make progress in English he joined ‘ten minutes school’ online English class where they taught him how to write a good essay, paragraph with a structure etc. Besides, he was admitted to an ‘ABC’ English coaching center to get a good result in the exam. Also he added that the teacher taught them many easy techniques to memorize grammatical rules, vocabularies and sometimes, he let us solve many problems from a grammar book. Riya also said, “Examination makes us feel pressure to study more. To cut a good figure in the SSC exam, I have worked very hard. I kept notes. I bought lots of guide books besides additional books. And practiced more and more to make a good preparation for the exam” she is taking preparation for the admission test of tertiary level education; she is memorizing ample vocabulary, grammatical rules, and practicing various question papers of previous year examinations.

Along with that, Fatema has been admitted to two different coaching centers for taking good preparation for her admission test. She said, “ I am memorizing lots of vocabulary, grammatical rules, synonym-antonym since these will be tested in my public admission test. I am not focusing on listening, speaking and writing essays or paragraphs because these will not be included in my test”. Moreover, Shuvro mentioned that his ultimate goal is to do well in the HSC exam because its consequences is very important to his further academic career, “if I get GPA-5, then my possibility to admit a public university will be ensured much otherwise poor result in HSC will affect my public admission test badly.” Also, Rakin expressed that he basically goes to school with only one reason that is good grades. He works really hard in studies and does all assignments before the deadline. He added that “Exam helps me to prove the hard work I have done during the whole day. It’s like an infinite cycle that keeps me engaged with studies. Also, to me, Examination is like a form of satisfaction and reflection of my hard works.”

4.5 Examination Shapes Curricula and Creates Barrier of Practicing All Four Skills equally

Though the textbook is included with many speaking and listening tasks; to discuss a certain topic among students and teachers in a pair or group in English, giving a small presentation but teacher does not offer such activities and tasks in the classroom (said Shegupta). She also said that usually, they read a text or poem and then asked to write some question answers based on the text. As homework and assignments they provide writing paragraphs/essays or biography and so on which were important for our exam. Razeen expressed that his school arranged many primary test based on reading and writing skills to prepare them for the board exam. There was no task based on speaking and listening skills because in the S.S.C exam, these skills would not be measured. There was no assessment regarding speaking and listening skills. That is why their teacher always skipped those tasks of our textbook and reluctant to teach which were based on speaking and listening skills. Also, “Though I wish to practice free hand writing, but the syllabus binds me to practice those rather I have to rely on additional, traditional memorized base writing; early rising, invention of science etc”. Shuvro expressed “ In my textbook, there are some activities of speaking and listening tasks, such as mentioned to listen to an audio and then below the line there are some blanks that we need to fill after listening the audio” however they never practiced those activities in the class. Besides, Rojot Kumar (the class teacher) replied that they have no such time to practice warm-up sessions in the class and these are not important for the exam, they generally teach them what remains important and may appear in the board exam.

During class observation (x) teacher skipped unit fourteen, lesson (1-4) and unit 9 lessons (2-4) when I asked about this they explained that as those are less important for the

exam hence they ignore those chapters. Again, Shegupta expressed that they have no such time to teach extra skills that will not be tested in the exam but important for real-life communication. She meant that though she knew speaking and listening skills are must to be competent in language, they ignore these two skills during class only because these two skills will not be tested in the board exam. Riya said “I am practicing again and again the writing part that will help me to avoid the mistakes but I do not ever practice listening and speaking as I have no extra time to practice these skills because the time I have only to focus on certain areas which are important for my SSC exam”. Similarly, Rosney shared that her college arranged many primary tests based on reading and writing skills to prepare them for the exam. There was no task based on speaking and listening skills because in the H.S.C exam, these skills would not be measured, that is why the teacher always skipped those tasks of the textbook which were based on speaking and listening skills. And Mobassher agreed that they do not practice these two skills only because those skills are not included in the public exam. He said, " my institution focused on only reading and writing skills and completely ignored speaking and listening skills”. He also said that there is no task and activities based on speaking and listening skills because in national exams, these skills would not be measured. However, he ensured that if the board exam included a speaking and listening test, he and my colleague would put lots of effort into learning it, as the exam result is very important for their reputation. “In my textbook there are some activities of speaking and listening tests, such as they mention listening to an audio and then below the line there are some blanks that we need to fill after listening to the audio”.(said Siyam). Moreover, “ though the textbook includes many speaking and listening tasks; to discuss a certain topic among students and teachers in a pair or group in English, giving a small presentation but we do not offer such activities and task in the classroom.”(said Shegupta).

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Examination shapes Proficiency level

Proficiency level among Bangladeshi students is primary as most of the students cannot fluently speak in English and cannot understand listening even after completing higher secondary level. In a journal article Mainul Islam stated that in Bangladesh at rural site students are very weak in understanding content in English with listening & speaking and students spoken level or fluently is low or poor as well as even some teachers of English have no fluency in speaking skill. It is really disheartened that most of the students don't know how to read or how to speak in English with others (Mainul, 2023). Mostly, from participants' point of view examination procedure is the prominent reason for being incompetence in this language. Participant shares different perspective and experience regarding their effort, engagement and practicing methods where from it is found that examination system shapes their proficiency level in English.

Initially, regarding proficiency level among Bangladeshi students it is found that there is a positive correlation between students proficiency in English and public examination. Public examination measures only reading and writing skills whereas other two major skills of a language are completely ignored (Sultana, 2021). Basically, students, teacher, syllabus and over all curricula system focuses on the certain area which will be measured in the examination. In the national examination students basically asked to write paragraph, essay etc and complete multiple choice and short question after reading a passage. Gustanti and Ayu (2021) stated that learning strategy relies on examination system and effective learning strategies influence the language learning where learners not only get learning achievement rather they can improve their language skills. Similarly, Zamorano (2022) developed the idea of learning strategies

regarding speaking and listening skills. He claimed that Team games- based language learning designed with appropriate learning activities, materials and making class with providing English music song, providing group presentation and so on successfully improve learners speaking and listening skills in the class. However, Bangladeshi Schools and colleges do not practice speaking and listening in the class with following these effective learning strategies because the board examination will be taken based on other two skills. Besides, during class observations I have noticed every student was talking in Bangla among their friends and teacher except question-answer sessions in the English class. But the whole period of the class the teacher spoke in a bangle including context explanation, giving feedback, reinforcement. Sometimes, ineffective assessment system causes incompetence in a language. As, Hanumantharao (2011) shared his concern about the ineffective assessment system of Bangladesh in English language learning that assessments they are using are not able to make students competent in the language. Public examination does not inspire to practice speaking and listening in class and lack of practice lead to poor proficiency in speaking and listening skills. Beside, class conversation and activities are based on reading and writing skills as these two skills will be tested in the final exam.

Moreover, lack of practice is the reason for the poor proficiency level in English among Bangladeshi students. as, teacher and students only practice and engage with reading and writing skills thus students' reading and writing skills are much more better than their speaking and listening skills. Though some students such as Rakin, Siyam and Shuvro practice listening skills by watching movies, listening music but they do not practice speaking skills as they do not have the English language exposure. However, teachers inspire students only for practicing reading and writing skills by providing task and activities and avoid the other skills to practice. Therefore, students' proficiency level in English is poor though the subject is compulsory from the very primary level of students' academic life. In a news

article Altaf reported that the proficiency levels of tertiary level students of Bangladesh are comparable to standard Grade 7 students. He also added that In Bangladesh though students are required to read English for about twelve years but the level of proficiency they reach is low (Altaf, 2009). Class teachers and students they completely ignore the major two skills in language and do not practice these skills since these will not be tested in the national examination. As a result, students successfully passed in the public examination but their proficiency level is very poor.

5.2 Practicing method of Individual and institution

Generally, Students practice English as it is required for examination and some of them practice English for their higher level education and their own interest. From the findings it is mostly found that there is no English language exposure where they can have the English environment and practice with ample of English sources. Less exposure in English leads to lack of proficiency in English. Mainul also thinks that students do not have the opportunity to communicate in English because Bangla speaking parents, family and friends surround them (Mainul, 2023). Additionally, practicing method of institutions and individual students are mostly similar as they are learning English by memorizing. Individually students most of the time memorize grammatical rules and extensively learn structures such as; tense, right form of verb etc and apply those rules in their writing. I asked Fatema and Rakin regarding their practicing way of leaning English they expressed that in learning English they usually follow reading books, memorizing ample of vocabulary and practice previous question paper, writing essays, stories, paragraphs and so on. Besides, students use multiple additional books along with their English text books that help them to learning and practicing grammar to write any sentence or content without mistakes. Along with that, some students also practice speaking and listening skills from intrinsic motivation.

Though these skills will not be measured in the exam but they learn and practice to their own interest. Some of the participants (Rakin, Razeen, Siyam) watch movies and you tube videos to improve their listening skills. On the other hand, for practicing speaking skills they did not found much information except practicing speaking by own-self. However, their practicing proportion is not enough to be competent in the language as they mostly emphasize on reading and writing skills and hardly practice listening and speaking skills.

As, students do not practice more and get the opportunity to develop English speaking skills in a natural setting thus this leads to incompetence in English (Muniruzzaman, 2020). He also suggested that if teachers wish their students to speak with ease in the foreign language, they must ensure that students are given ample practice in expressing themselves in different situations. Similarly, Zamorano (2022) mentioned to successfully develop learners' speaking and listening skills in the class 'Team games- based' language learning designed with appropriate learning activities, materials and making class with providing English music song are must. On the contrary, the institutions of Bangladesh Classes are followed by GMT(Grammar Translation Teaching) in a prescriptive way rather than CLT(communicative language teaching). In class teachers provide grammatical rules to memories after those students apply those rules from the practicing section of the grammar book. More, for reading class teacher asked students to read a text where they translate it line by line in bangle and for practicing writing they asked students to follow the task given in the book such as; "writing Flow-chart". Besides, I noticed when the teacher taught "Degree" and what its application in details" there was no group work or pair work. He taught the topic with multiple examples and after that he asked students to complete the task from chapter was based on "Degree". According to Lestari (2020) to make the reading material meaningful need to build a network of retrieval cues, take text and class notes in students own words. And applying concepts to their own life, form images, understand and organize information, relate the material to what

students already know or have experienced, and put it in their own words that increase retrieval cues by forming associations. Otherwise, without such cues, students may find themselves stuck when a question uses phrasing different from the rote forms they memorized. Schools and colleges do not usually apply the meaningful learning strategies to be proficient in English language rather they let students rely on only memorization. In Bangladesh, the school and colleges are practicing English based on Reading and Writing skills whereas to be competent in any language four skills are required to learn. Therefore, tasks and activities the institution provides for practicing English are not effectively applied for what students are deprived of practicing the major two skills.

5.3 Formative assessment and alternative assessment fosters effective learning

Assessment is an essential learning tool that enhances and fosters students' academic performance and engagement in long term prospects (Carol, 2019). School and colleges in Bangladesh generally follows the combination of both formative and summative assessment. As, the syllabus is designed with monitoring and evaluating students progress in learning through a ongoing process. Teachers arrange mini class test, assignments, feedback and so on to help students understand their improvement. Along with that, institutions also follow summative assessment by conducting final examination at the end of one or two year to measure students overall knowledge regarding all compulsory subject. A research article explains that formative assessment plays crucial role in influencing students' learning and makes the class more effective (Menendez and Napa (2019). They mentioned that the formative assessment fulfills the teaching-learning process which is based on a continuous evaluation process that takes place during learning. The study also claimed that the importance of formative evaluation as a means to raise the quality of performance of students, and thus to demonstrate the results of learning obtained within the classroom in

students and they found that the formative assessment improves the school performance of the students and this can be used as a strategy to promote collaboration between them. In Bangladesh, teachers provide immediate and delay feedback, students made mistakes and struggled with pronunciation in reading, and class teacher supported the students with additional practices. Wiliam (2010) stated that formative assessment allows constructive feedback from both students and teachers which not only assist students receiving feedback but also help to enhance the reviewing of their language skills since they need to articulate the ideas and thoughts effectively. Similarly, exam results and teachers feedback after completing any assignment help to improve Shuvro's and Rakin's skills and also encourage them to study hard and effectively to make academic progress.

Additionally, in the formative assessment framework most of the teachers use traditional assessment in the English language class instead of alternative assessments. Alternative assessment is very effective as these can engage students to the activities and improve communication skills (Cristopher, 2018). He described that alternative assessment has largely emerged to perceived inadequacies of conventional and traditional form of assessment and it is applied to fulfill learners' special needs. Along with that Jesse (2022) suggested that classroom based activities based on alternative assessment encourages students' involvement in the class. To develop in language learning sessions there should be ample alternative assessments that engage students to interesting activities that promote their engagement in learning. Similarly, multiple interests and activities that make the language learning class more effective and encourage students to enhance their academic engagement (Olima, 2023). Such as; games, role plays, group work, pair work, etc. play an important role in learning a second language effectively as they have certain features in common. However, in Bangladesh the schools and colleges do not provide such activities which would inspire them in learning the target language rather teacher and students shared that English class

conducted with only reading and writing session by following traditional way. College provides assessment to students based on reading and writing skills that do not motivate the listening and speaking skills. In reading class, teachers usually provide a reading session, present a dialogue, recite a poem from the textbook, and memorize multiple grammatical rules and so on. And for writing skills, they asked students to write an essay or paragraph or short story regarding our academic syllabus.

The various kinds of language assessments such as selected-response assessments, constructed-response assessments and personal-response assessments are classified in different types of activities in the language class that improve learners' learning ability and enhance their capability to competent in that language (Denman, 2018). On the other hand, from finding it is proven that class activities are included with making diagram of own activities, writing short & long question answer, writing true –false and matching sentence, and practicing grammar from grammar book, without pair and group work. Therefore, Bangladeshi classroom assessments are based on more reading and writing skills rather than listening and speaking skills and they do not apply the alternative assessment rather they rely on the traditional one which leads to lack of creativity and monotonous learning session and ultimately that cannot fulfill the goal of formative assessment.

5.4 Public examination creates Motivation

Additionally, motivation is one of the most important aspects in determining students learning. Public examination is considered as the final product that is made to measure and evaluate a particular set of objectives or specific behavior, it should be taken in a way that can motivate students in learning and as it is a high stake test, its motivate students to study more and give much effort to bring good result. Similarly, Ngozi (2021) thinks that examination is an integral part of education and without it the learning process is incomplete.

She opined that examination provides a quantitative data of extend of skills or learning gained over a period of time. The fear of academic outcomes can be a powerful motivator in influencing students' academic performance Hence, she emphasized that the most important purpose of any examination should be to focus on how to facilitate learning. Also, the processes of examination need to enable students to identify where he/she stands through a certain course in his/her progress. Participants of this study explained how they gave extra effort in study due to examination. Some students joined English online coaching class and additional coaching centre beside school and college class, have worked very hard including keeping notes, buying lots of guide books besides additional books and joining extra classes. They expressed that those coaching centre helped them to do a good result in English by practicing grammar, memorizing vocabulary and essays through many model test. Consequently, they become more engaged with study when it is a test. As, Ju (2020) commented that high stakes English tests shape EFL secondary students motivational mindset and encourage the engagement with oriented English tasks and activities. Besides, Students feel pressure to perform well and they remain aware about their performance as the consequences determine their further access to particular program. Therefore, high stake test inspire students in learning to study more and deeply as the consequences is very significant to them.

However, all tests cannot motivate students rather only those test which has significant consequences, can encourage students to their academic involvement. Along with that, Chang and Fox(2014) explained the prevalence and impact of high stake tests in language learning where they state that the test creates extrinsic motivation among students and they get more engaged with the academic performance for its positive consequences and rewards. He again mentioned, specially structured examinations not only determine students' satisfactory work but also evaluate teachers' own degree of accomplishment. Similarly, from

participants' information it is identified that they feel an extra pressure due to the national examination because only after successfully passing the test can ensure their further study. Examination and its Consequences inspire students in learning to study more and deeply. Also, examination is like a form of satisfaction and reflection of her hard work. Furthermore, Public examination has a significant consequences in students both academic and personal life. Besides, it creates an extrinsic motivation to do study more as its consequences remain very important to students. Thus, examination motivates students to study more as the rewards and punishment after exam influences them to their further academic career.

5.5 Exam procedure influences the prohibition of practicing all four skills equally

As examination force and enhance students' academic involvement as well the wrong procedure can lessen their interest in studies. However, Turgay (2019) claimed that there are many factors where examination unmotivated students instead of motivating them. He demonstrates that invalid examination question, and unbalanced activities in the course book and lack of unity and coherence can make discouragement in learning. More, Sultana shared her concern about ineffective assessment system of Bangladesh in English language learning that explains examination procedure force to focus on certain area that binds students practice and engage with particular topic and make a good result (Sultana, 2021). Besides, in a journal article Mainul (2023) commented that the education system in Bangladesh at present time, much emphasis is given to get better outcomes in the examination. Though speaking, listening, reading, and writing are the four common means of communication, education planners of Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary levels do not provide emphasis on these skills equally. As well, the institutions and the syllabuses do not offer students much scope to improve these skills and for all.

Most of the students practicing the previous question paper that would help them to guess what can be appear in the upcoming board exam As, speaking and listening skills will not be tested in the public examination, so all students emphasize on those area which will be appeared in the exam paper. Students' and teachers' goal is to bring a good result in the Board exam. Therefore, to do that, both teachers and students only focus on reading and writing skills and completely avoid other two skills. An English teacher of college who I interviewed in my study, Mubassher Rahman, commented in this regard:

Limited time bound teachers to focus and practice only reading and writing skills as the syllabus and curricula based on these skills. Also, the national examinations do not measure these skills so teachers and students emphasize on those certain skills that will be tested in the exam. More, not only speaking and listening skills but also from reading and writing skills teachers skip some part those are not important for the exam.

Teachers do not have extra time to focus on others area as well to make students be competent in English rather they have time only to focus on certain fields which are important for the exam. Even from reading and writing part teachers skipped some chapters as those are not so important to for national exam. Teacher and students exclude learning speaking and listening skills since these will not be tested in the public exam also students engaged themselves more in practicing reading and writing skills with hard word and extra effort to make a satisfactory result in the exam. teachers themselves are discouraging students of doing practice listening and speaking skills in the class as they are bound with limited time within what they need to complete their syllabus and prepare students for the national examination. Therefore, public examination motivate to practice reading and writing skills at the same time it is strongly ignore the other two major skills; listening and speaking.

In addition, In Bangladesh, it is very easy to predict what will appear in the exam by practicing previous assessments questions. And Muniruzzaman added in an article that in the English language learning class there is no system of assessment that focuses on speaking and listening in colleges and schools. He also claims that speaking has not been yet included in the syllabus and public examination (Muniruzzaman, 2020). There is no task in school and college based on speaking and listening skills because in the S.S.C and H.S.C exam would not measure these skills. Also, teacher always skipped those tasks of the textbook which were based on speaking and listening skills. Therefore, the procedure and pattern of public examination though its motivation to study and practice more but it directly demotivates to practice listening and speaking during their primary, secondary and higher secondary level along with admission test of tertiary level. However, Mubassher and Rotjot ensured that if the board exam would include a speaking and listening test, they and their institutions would put lots of effort into learning it, as the test result is very important for them. Therefore, as there is only a reading and writing test in the public examination, everyone else from teacher to students and institution itself emphasizing on these two skills whereas the other two skills (speaking and listening) are totally ignored in their assessments, primary test and practice session.

5.6 Examination system and curriculum

Initially, to shape the education system and students' overall learning achievement the national curriculum of Bangladesh plays significant role. The curriculum of Bangladesh study is contained with National Curriculum and Textbook Board that covers different levels of education including primary, secondary and higher secondary. The curriculum creates an outline of subjects, topics and learning goal by selecting what students would learn at each level of their study. Most importantly, public examination and curriculum are interconnected

with each other where the examination system influences the curriculum highly. In an article Amin and Janinka ensured that for public examinations system the curriculum mostly prioritizes rote memorization and focused on certain area to learn rather than the practical skills development in English language (Amin and Janinka, 2018) . As a result students learn English only in the purpose of passing the exam and deny the effective communicative learning styles. Curriculum and teaching methods do not emphasize the communicative learning in English and focus on memorizing grammatical rules, structure and vocabulary instead of learning all four skills in the language effectively. Moreover, shegupta claimed that English language teachers might not receive adequate training and their speaking skill also is poor for what they cannot speak in English properly. Besides, Curriculum did not present any requirement regarding the communicative skills of teachers which leads to limited ability among teachers to make the class for practical communication. Besides, in journal article George stated that a well designed curriculum enhances students' involvement in study by offering meaningful and coherent learning experiences and progression with relevant content will motivate them to engage in their learning journey (George, 2019). Whereas, from findings section it can be ensured that the curriculum is influenced by the examination system and is responsible for incompetence in English among Bangladeshi students as the national exam and curriculum both create a pressure on curricula for practicing only writing and reading skills rather than speaking and listening skills. Thus, students get prepare for the public examinations based on the prescribed curriculum. All the examination held based on the curriculum's prescribed syllabus. From the findings it has been pointed out that teachers are bound to the curriculum. They cannot teach or guide anything from their own choice rather they must teach and follow what the syllabus according to curriculum has contained for what they focus on only reading and writing skills and other two skills never practiced.

Along with that Amin and Janinka also informed that through a Curriculum students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills that guide centrally all educators including what is essential for learning and teaching students. It consists of the academic materials, method, goal and the assessment. students will be able in how to “describe people and places, announcements, follow instructions, requests, directions , and responds accordingly in social situations”, it also included that student will be able to “recognise and use English sounds, stress, and intonation appropriately while listening and speaking” moreover they can “narrate incidents in logical situations, ask for and give permission/ suggestions, participate in conversations, discussions and debates” (National Curriculum, 2021). Additionally, (Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2016) claimed that the government has developed the curriculum with the Free textbooks, communicative (CLT) based approaches in learning English and providing activities based on speaking and listening as well as reading and writing skills.

However, public examination procedure of Bshangladesh restricts fulfilling the curriculum's aim since it directly ignores speaking and listening skills. English classes in Bangladesh skip the task and activities from textbook those are based speaking and listening skills including warm-up session of every chapter. Though Warm-up session promotes interest and energy in study and class participation with attention but this part also has been excluded by teachers and institution authority as this are not included in the board exam. In an article, Akhter mentioned that principle of warm-up activity establish relationship among students and teacher and it enhance the lesson with background knowledge and motivation (Akhter, 2014). Examination restricts to practice all four skills equally and creativity in the class and it also creating obstacle to fulfill what curriculum has promised as objectives to be achieved.

5.7 Modification on curricula

All the colleges and schools in Bangladesh make their syllabus and curricula based on the public examination. As the public examination is a type of high stake test, its consequences are very prominent among students, teachers and for the institutions. They design their curricula in a way that focuses only on what will be measured in the national exam. In addition, Stecher (2002), commented “ The goal of changing educational practices is one of the major justification for implementing high stake test” and mentioned, “test scores will promote schools to reform policy, encourage teachers to make more effective practices”. Thus, the stretcher explained that the high stake test promotes educational institutions and the overall education system that modify it to good score in the examination. He wanted to describe that if high stake tests focus on particular skills then students, teachers, institutions intend an overall educational setting to emphasize on those certain areas and at the same time skip the others. Institution modifies its syllabus to bring out good results from students.

In parallel, to bring out good outcomes in examinations, institutions and students and teachers modify their curricula in a way that focuses on particular topic and skills which will be measured in the board exam. Rojot Kumar skipped unit fourteen, lesson (1-4) and unit 9 lesson (2-4) as those are less important for the exam. Though these chapters and activities are included in the text but institutions modify the syllabus following exam paper. As well, Shegupta along with other teachers was reluctant to practice speaking and listening skills since these are not included in the public exam though they also know to be practically competent in any language students need to practice and focus all four skills.

The school and college authority modify the syllabus according to national curricula and instructed teachers to teach particular area those will be measured the board exam. Even

more, not only teachers but also students organize their daily routine and emphasize to practice certain topic those are important for the examination because the consequences of the public exam is very significant that effects their further education life. Institutions regularly change the academic syllabus following exam pattern. As, the time is limited and teachers have no such time to teach extra skills that will not be tested in the exam but are important for real-life communication for a course, so teachers and students feel a pressure to focus on particular area and do hard work on certain skills will be tested since their only goal is to bring a good result in the exam rather than practically be skilled English language.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

All languages in the world have four basic skills; such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Language users cannot be able to express all their ideas and thoughts without acquiring all the four skills of language. Skipping one of these skills drives us to ignore one of the basic and integral parts of the language. However, as English is an international language and it is demanded as a more usable and prominent language in the world, every country pays extra attention regarding this language. Similarly, Bangladesh is not different from these countries, rather it made English as a compulsory subject from the beginning of our academic life till higher studies. Unfortunately, students of Bangladesh cannot speak properly in English even after completing their higher secondary level though they are learning English from the primary stage of their academic life. It is an important thinking question that though they are engaged with English from the very beginning of their academic journey then why they are incapable in this language and why they do not practice more as they do writing and reading skills.

From my findings and discussion it is found that public examination shapes the curricula of Bangladesh that affects classroom and outside practice of students. Reading and speaking are the only skills that will be measured in the national examination, thus all students, teachers and institutions focus on only practicing these two skills whereas the other two major parts of the language have been completely ignored. Moreover, a teacher mentioned that if she wished to practice speaking and listening skills, she cannot since the curriculum and exam procedure bind them to a limited time within what they need to prepare students for the exam rather than making competent students in English language. Backwash effects of examinations help to identify the crucial reason for why students are low proficient in this language even after completing higher secondary level. And from the teachers' perspectives they suggested that if authority remake the exam design and assessment where speaking and listening skills will be included too, only then it will be possible to make all the students proficient and competent in English. If the change would not occur then it will lead to many after effects for poor proficiency. Beside, teacher also talked about the proficient level among them that is not enough. Teachers cannot speak fluently as they also from infinite the circle of students-teacher in education system of Bangladesh. Therefore, the problems need to be solved from the very beginning and authority should provide circular for teaching in English who are at least 70% proficient in English language. Lastly, redesigned curricula that consist of alternative assessment in language teaching class, communicative environment and communicative language teaching methods and new pattern of national examinations including all four skills altered by administrators can only help students to be truly competent in English in the practical life.

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