

**TEACHING ENGLISH AT RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF
BANGLADESH: FACILITATING OR DISADVANTAGING?**

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree of Bachelor of Arts in ELT and Applied Linguistics

Department of English and Humanities

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

This study “Teaching English at Rural Secondary Schools: Facilitating or Disadvantaging” is genuine work and I have collected all the data used in this research by myself. I have also used proper citation for the published materials. I have explained the purpose of this research to all of my participants. The information that I used from the interviews was also sent to my participants before using in this research.

Abstract

This research aims at digging up the barriers and facilities of English teaching at rural secondary schools in Bangladesh. In a country like Bangladesh, the rural areas are deprived of different opportunities and facilities which are available in urban areas. In case of education, rural education system is also far behind the urban education system. So along with the students, the teachers also face different difficulties in case of teaching and learning in rural areas. However, this research focuses on the English teachers of rural secondary schools. Since I wanted to understand the scenario of English teaching in rural secondary schools I went for qualitative research. I visited four secondary schools of different rural areas and interviewed the teachers and students and also observed the English classes to get the genuine information. Though the data collected from these four schools cannot generalize the whole picture of English teaching in rural secondary schools, it gives important and valuable information of teaching English in rural areas of Bangladesh. This study tries to find out the pros and cons of English teaching at rural secondary schools. Along with the barriers, it also tries to find out whether there are any facilities in case of teaching English in rural areas.

Keywords: Teaching English, rural areas of Bangladesh, qualitative approach, secondary level, teaching methods, advantages, difficulties.

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List of Acronyms:

JSC	Junior School Certificate
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
CLT	Communicative Language teaching
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board

Chapter 1

Introduction

In recent times, to communicate with the rest of the world, it is obvious to have excellent command over the English as well. In case of Bangladesh, being a monolingual country, where most of the people speak in Bangla, still we lack severely to have basic conversation in English. After completing basic and secondary level of education for 10 years, yet the students are not confident regarding their English knowledge which is an alarming sign for all of us. To mitigate this sort of problem, we need to address what are the different types of problems that exist in our curriculum and educational system. Without investigating the symptoms, we can't treat the cure properly. For that reason, this research is going to focus on the challenges as well as facilities that our instructors face while teaching English in the rural Secondary Schools. at the beginning of this chapter have discussed about the context of teaching English at rural secondary Schools of Bangladesh and then I have added the statement of the problem. at the end of this chapter, I have showed the organization of this whole research paper.

1.1 Context

The research was conducted in the context of rural secondary schools of Bangladesh. Several reasons are lying behind selecting the secondary schools. First of all, the lifestyle widely varies between the urban and rural areas. Because of the historical economic background, rural people still rely heavily more on agriculture-based occupation in the context of Bangladesh. The income per capita of rural areas is still in the lower range compared with the urban area as the people from urban areas get used to a more luxurious style of living because of their profession & economical activities. As the urban people are more open to the world in terms of obtaining information, and are more exposed towards achieving better opportunities so they are more likely curious towards achieving good level of education. On the contrary, there is no scope to question regarding the poor infrastructure condition in rural areas. Despite being recognized as one of the fastest growing economies, yet our people from rural areas are miles away from utilizing the full benefits of science, technology and education due to

the poor infrastructural condition and poor financial subsidized amount from the government. As the people from rural areas are not well educated as well as don't possess enough expertise in the English language, they suffer badly. The teachers or instructors from the rural areas are not that well equipped with the materials and knowledge. As a result, students are not privileged to experience standard level of education like students from the urban area, and it ultimately makes the urban students as incompetent. For that reason, my research is based on rural areas as it brings the real picture of the overall existence of backlashes in the English language learning process compared with urban areas where people are more gifted with utter benefits, opportunities.

There are few reasons behind selecting secondary schools for my research. At first, as the secondary level is a very effectual and productive period for nurturing the students for better future and establishing a solid base of knowledge. Our rural primary schools still need lots of improvements to become world-class knowledge hub. The learning experiences that our students get from the primary schools are still questionable and there is no deny that their knowledge base is not that strong because of some incompetence. So, there is only one place where we can rebuild, remodel our students so that they become well communicator and competent in the global scale and that is secondary level. In the secondary level, the students are more matured and they are more aware of the underlying opportunities of learning English. So, for the time being, secondary school becomes an ideal choice to conduct this research.

1.2 Statement of the problem

From conducting this research, I want to address the challenges that our English instructors from rural secondary Schools face on a daily basis and also like to mention the hidden opportunities for them so that more experienced and skilled instructors get interested to teach in the rural areas.

In Bangladesh, the level of English adequacy has not yet reached a satisfactory level. In most of the case, the secondary level is often considered as one of the most important stages of learning for the students. But it is a great matter of sorrow that, the students from the secondary level in our country are not getting enough of the learning as the level requires. The scenario is quite the same for all over

the country since we still rely more on grammar-based learning other than not adopting the communicative based approach. But compared to the urban areas, the rural people are in great trouble. In the rural secondary schools of Bangladesh, it is usually seen that, while conducting English classes, the instructors feel different problems. Besides, here effective English learning is not possible, as there is no scope for participation and the session becomes boring and less interactive. The usage of English in the classroom is very less so it often seems impossible to make count on using English right outside of the classroom. In that current scenario, the nation is in no place to make a progress in quick time if the policies are not strictly implemented and monitored

1.3 Significance of the study

The world becomes much smaller nowadays. People are more connected using sophisticated technology and the world is fast-forwarding. In this current time, advanced level adequacy in English is often considered as the pre-requisite to have an extra edge. Other than that, a country that does not impose any type of importance on the learning of English as a tool of communication often lacks proper development growth, since the people from various corners of the world. Considering this fact, effectively learning English should be initiated by our students. But things often don't look this way. The poor infrastructure often doesn't allow us to implement well-suited policy as the rural area of Bangladesh is still far behind from the urban area in terms of facility receiving, training conditions lack of equipment, and so on.

The research is aimed at finding the core issues behind the steady progress of teaching English at the secondary level in rural areas. Despite taking several friendly policies which support the notion of making the nation a better communicative place, the country is severely facing some drawbacks. The purpose of this research mainly focuses on the instructors, who face severe challenges while teaching the students due to the quality of aids. As a less developed nation, the support and training they receive are not sufficient enough to upgrade the current scenario which attracts the major attention of the readers of this research. Nevertheless, some sorts of benefits also exist for the instructors by

which they can leverage in a greater context. But more and more people are not giving enough attention to provide educational support in rural areas keeping the benefits both in monetary and other terms are quite less compared to the urban. Cyclically this hampers the level of education as the students are not getting a quality education. This paper finds out these types of challenges from the perspectives of the instructors of rural secondary schools. It also sheds a light on facilities that the rural secondary school teachers get so that more skilled English teachers become interested to teach at rural schools and the rural students become more benefited in terms of learning English.

1.4 Dissertation outline

Here I have tried to provide a helicopter view regarding the whole outline of this research. The first chapter discusses the little brief or introduction about the whole research. Then I added the context of my study. Here I have described where I have conducted my study and why I have chosen rural areas and rural schools. After that, I have also included the statement of the problem and significance of the study. Then the second chapter discusses the literature review, from which we can get hindsight from the past studies about the hidden challenges and obligations our teachers are facing while teaching English as a second language. This part also denotes the background history of English in Bangladesh and also the current status of teaching English at secondary level. Third chapter briefs about methodologies. This chapter begins with the research questions and research objectives along with the research design. Then it talks about participants, setting, instrument and data collection procedures. Finally, this chapter ends with ethical consideration and limitations. After that, chapter four upholds the findings and analyze these findings. Finally, chapter five concludes this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Historical Background of English in Bangladesh

Recognized as the language of numerous cultured nations across the borderless community, the English language itself has earned respected recognition as the most powerful medium of

communication in recent times (Salahuddin, 2013). for the first time in history, English was introduced back in the sixteenth century in this south-Asian region when the Mughal Empire had started to lose its prime (Dil, S. Anwar, 1996 cited in Kamrul, 2014). Even though in that period the region was fully controlled by Portuguese, but as soon as the English colony was established people from the elite class cordially welcomed the English language along with Portuguese. After the establishment of the colonial region, the rulers believed that it was essential to introduce the English language to these people. The rulers thought that the way Indians were presenting their culture and language was completely in the wrong manner. There remained a substantial number of gaps between the locals and rulers because of their cultural gap. It was all over the region that, following only Sanskrit and Arabic would not give the scope to carry on the English culture whatsoever. For that reason, leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy came up with a vision to help the people regarding the familiarization of the English language to bring revolutionary change and to connect with the rest of the world. In the whole colonial period, eventually, the rulers had rigorously tried to implement the vast usage of English all over the region.

However, after the regime of the colonial period, the West-Pakistani rulers forced us to use Urdu as the only language in the Bengali region. But people of this soul were not satisfied with this kind of heinous decisions. Regardless of the forthcoming outcome, they fought in every way for 19 years which started from 1952 to 1971 just for asking a country where people would be living freely and Bangla should be the only official language. After the massive blood-shed of nine months, we got independence. Subsequently, the usage of Bengali as an official language had gone to that peak, apart from the foreign ministry and army battalion usage of English could not be seen anywhere else. Considering the sacrifice made by the people, the usage of English dropped drastically and the level of adequacy in English which was expected as a nation was very dissatisfying. The lack of communication skills was started to visible among our graduates as soon as after the implementation of the Bangladesh law which admitted the cease of using English as a second language (Hasan, 2004). In the century of globalization, the English language has geared such a point that, for the people who want to take up the new challenges to cope up with the economic and social

development, it is often told as a prerequisite to gain adequate expertise regarding English efficiency both verbally and written means (Salahuddin, 2013). To transform human mass into human capital, development-friendly policies should be adopted sooner since the govt. yet is finding very much challenging to make it well-fashioned policies looking at the decline in the performance of communication skill. Being identified as a middle-income country, the literacy rate of Bangladesh has been in upward shape for the last decade. However, it's surprising to find out that the usage of English and the proficiency of learning this language hasn't been satisfying at all. It often concerns the policymakers regarding the notion that both the students and teachers haven't been well developed in terms of gaining expertise over the second language and because of that Bangladesh is losing huge potentiality to grow more rapidly.

2.2 Current Status of Teaching English at Secondary Level

Comparing with other countries, Bangladesh also shows the value of having competencies in English-based communication as English is used along with Bangla in many governments, semi-government & private organizations. Though English is learned for many years in our educational system, empirical studies show strong evidence that graduates often fail to show enough competencies when it comes down to the efficiency in English based communication regardless of the level of studies they have completed. Despite showing the importance of learning English over the years, yet we are far lagging to reach the satisfactory level let alone crossing it due to sheer challenges that lie in every sphere of all the layers. As the situation has been degraded massively for quite a long time due to the poor implementation of educational policies, it is high time that proper development should be initiated right from the rural level to meet the global standard (Rahman, 2009 cited in Salahuddin, 2013).

If we dig down, from the empirical studies, several data have shown that there lies a huge number of discrepancies between the students from an urban and rural area in terms of English-speaking abilities which is very alarming to notice. Md. Kamrul Hasan differs his view to a conclusion that, from the performances in the competitive exam where students from the urban areas often

outperform students from the rural areas. According to the provided curriculum by the NCTB, the English teaching method at the primary level often decodes to enable the students to write, give basic commands, and speaks by understanding. To get comprehensive and meaningful success, curriculum always plays a pivotal role in any given situation (Rahman, 2003). Despite adopting several changes within the curriculum, still, there are some loopholes that act as barriers for the overall upgrade of the current trauma. Several measures have already been adopted to upgrade the ELT learning facilities in the country but the outcomes do not show an upward curve in terms of performance.

If we further discuss what is the current practices are adopting in the context of ELT in Bangladesh, then the answer will be in short Bangladesh is yet far away from introducing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in its curriculum despite knowing its sheer importance. Even though we often heard from the NCTB that, the govt. is heading towards the CLT method, but the reality is it exists only in the textbook & curriculum (Abedin, M., Mojlis, K., Akter, S. 2009 cited in Abedin, 2013.). The first-time people got introduced to CLT was back in the late part of 1990 (Monir, 2009). But the hand on visualization came in the form of an NCTB approved English textbook, “English for Today”. There are several differences between Grammar Teaching Method (GTM) and CLT. The main difference is, GTM only focuses on applying and teaching basic laws of using the right grammar rules in sentences. We can see the rigorous effort on writing and reading in GTM while listening and speaking are often get ignored. In the GTM method, students are often taught to memorize some listed vocabularies whereas, CLT ensures an effective learning environment since it enables two-way communication between trainer and participators in the classroom. Looking at the current practices, we all can say that in order to find the best-trained manpower who can communicate effectively with the rest, the valuable experience of earning English efficiency via the CLT method is immense. But due to some infrastructural and practical reasons, we still get too sick with the old school GTM method, in which students barely learn effective communication just by grammar rules.

There are some noteworthy reasons behind facing this ongoing situation in Bangladesh which include the lack of resources like trained teachers, communicative teaching materials, and poor management (Sadek, 2002). However, teachers show a vast level of teaching experience and share a major proportion of the teaching community in Bangladesh, even though they possess less amount of experience, training, and opportunities (Alam, 2014). Besides, according to him teachers from rural areas often trap themselves in the loophole of inferiority complex thinking that, they often lag from the teachers of urban areas in terms of teaching abilities (Alam, 2014).

As a teacher, often situation demands to have immense practices to find trending relevant information in the field of practice, but teachers from rural areas don't show this kind of nature as they rarely communicate with others in English, let alone watching and listening to movies and podcasts in English (Hasan, 2004). This makes often the situation worse enough as teachers are required to go an extra mile not only for the teaching purpose but also for broadening the student's learning capacity and their base of knowledge. The lack of practice among teachers often makes them incompetent enough as they hardly can write an essay whereas it should be a daydream if we expect the students should be able to speak fluent English (Rahman, 2003).

Moreover, in rural areas, it is needed to use workable teaching aids and methods but the negligence for this aid has reached so far that, there is almost near to zero implementation of the necessary method thus the classes always remain boring and not fruitful enough. Because of having shyness and inferior complexity, students from rural areas often perform poor contrary to the urban students. They often like to keep themselves away from a situation where they are supposed to communicate in English. The reason behind doing so lies in fear as they think people will mock them ruthlessly. This makes them inferior enough from the psychological standpoint, given that they often give up the zeal of upgrading themselves since they believe that they come nowhere close to the students from the urban areas because they get a smaller number of aids to earn proficiency.

Most of the teachers often disclose that they are self-encouraged to provide better teaching facilities towards the students despite knowing their learning limitations, but the situation like poor training

facilities, no support in the aid of teaching equipment don't enhance the level of encouragement as the educational institutions often run after earning more and more money (Salahuddin, 2013). Providing less amount of support towards the teachers do not bring any superficial result overnight. Hence without taking care of them, without aiding them, it should not be optimistic to reckon that forthcoming days will be better for sure.

Lack of evaluation policy may be recognized as another big issue since evaluation helps to make decisions regarding the performance of any teacher whether an individual teacher has adopted necessary cautionary steps while teaching or not (Hasan, 2004). Without having an adequate evaluation system, poorly performed teachers often find themselves in the same position. Thus students get affected severely since they can't extract better outcomes from these types of teachers any further.

To get a further idea of how critical the situation is, from study researchers have found out that approximately 80% of the teachers find it comfortable while speaking Bangla in English class regardless of the learning curve (Alam, 2014). That puts a question mark on the overall policy since the dilemma of using non-native language in the classroom keeping the conservative perceptions of the general people. Because of that standpoint, interactive session always stands far away from the reality and the conservative mindset is gradually dragging us from having fine-tuned classroom policy.

From the recent studies, many have seen that there is a huge number of mismatches between demand and supply who are well-equipped with better knowledge and training facilities, thus the institutions don't have enough options left other than opting for teachers from this pool which hurt the backbone of the overall system in the long run (Sadek, 2002). Less number of teachers often creates a monopolistic mindset among them, since they started to think that there is no chance to get terminated even if they perform poorly due to financial constraints. This can come often two way around, as educational institutions often treat them as cash cows. Even though the teachers don't

possess adequate proficiency but students have to take their tuition from them by giving the monetary portion as well. That in return favors the teachers, but subsequent turbulence occurs in the overall learning process of the students.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the way in which the research is conducted. As this research aims at findings the barriers and facilities faced by the English teachers of rural secondary schools of Bangladesh, data was collected through different data collection tools like interviews, classroom observation and small survey. At the beginning of this chapter, there are research questions and research design. Then it appeared with participants, setting and data collection procedure. Finally, it describes data analysis process.

Research Question:

A research question is the nucleus of a research based on which the whole research is conducted. A researcher conducts a research project with a view to find out the detailed and analyzed answer of the research questions. This research questions give an explicit goal to conduct earmarked and effective research.

In this research there are also questions which are the polestar of this study. These are:

1. What are the obstacles faced by the English teachers of rural secondary schools of Bangladesh?
2. Are there any facilities that the rural secondary school teachers get in Bangladesh?

3.2 Research design

A researcher applies various strategies to conduct a research project. The different researcher applies different strategies to make their study fruitful. A research design is a combination of the procedures of conducting the whole research. According to Akhtar (2016), the research design is the conceptual blueprint within which research is conducted. He also added that it can be considered as the structure of research and it is the “Glue” that holds all of the elements in a research project together. The procedure of a research project includes the collection of the primary and secondary data bringing the most relevant data under an umbrella in work organizing data and analyzing the gathered data. So, in the research design, the researcher gives an overview of the procedure of the whole project. As the aim of this study is to find out what difficulties and facilities the English teachers of rural secondary schools’ face, different procedures of the qualitative method are applied to conduct this study and to get the core information regarding this. I have also conducted some surveys among my participants. I have used the Likert scale to prepare my survey questions and analyze the collected answers from these questions. The main emphasis is given on the interview and the observation. I have made some questionnaires for the interviews. As most of the interviewees were secondary school teachers and students, I have made two different sets of questionnaires for the teachers and students.

As this study aims at identifying the obstacles and facilities faced by the English teachers of rural secondary schools in Bangladesh, I need to collect data from the English teachers and students of rural secondary schools. So, I decided to go to my own hometown which is situated in the Manikganj district. I choose four secondary schools that are situated in different villages of a particular Upazila. At first, I went to each of the four secondary schools along with my father and talked to the headmaster and the authority so that they give me permission to collect data from the teachers and students of that schools.

3.3 Participants:

Teachers: To conduct this study, I have interviewed some teachers and students. Among my interviewees, I had 14 teachers and 10 students from four different secondary schools situated in different villages. Among the 14 teachers, 5 were the English teachers of the four high schools where I visited. Among these four secondary schools, three had only one English teacher and just one school had two English teachers. One of them was Mr. Akbar. He is a B.A and teaching in a secondary school for more than 20 years. The second one is Mohammad Shafiqul who is an M.A and teaching for 10 years in another secondary school. The third one named Shohel who is also a B.A and teaching English for 18 years in a rural secondary school.

The other two teachers named Jalil and Sahera are from the same secondary school. Both of them are B.A. Jalil is teaching English second paper for more than 22 years. Sahera is teaching for 12 years and she teaches English first paper. I have interviewed another teacher who usually does not teach English but sometimes they take English classes when the English teacher is absent. Among these four teachers, one is Rafiq. He is an M.A and he teaches social science. He is teaching for seven years. Then the second one is Halim who completed B.Sc. and he teaches biology for fifteen years. Then another one is Imran who is teaching social science for 3 years and he is an M.A. The last one is Mamun who is a B.Sc. and teaching physics for two years.

Besides these nine teachers, I have also interviewed another five teachers who teach different subjects. One of them is Kamal who is teaching Bengali for 25 years. He just completed his H.S.C examination. Another one is Anwar who is a B.Sc. He is teaching mathematics for 17 years. The third one is Tahamina who is a B. Com and she is teaching accounting for 9 years. The fourth one is Hassan. He is a B.Sc. and teaching chemistry for 19 years. The last one is Rayhan who is an Islamic studies teacher and he is teaching for 13 years.

Students and guardians: For conducting this study, I have interviewed students who read in different rural secondary schools and also some of their parents. Among the students, one is my relative. His name is Ratan. He reads in class nine at 'X' High School. I also interviewed his father. His name is Mofidul and he is fifty years old. He teaches at a primary school. Then the second one is Raju. He is Ratan's friend. He also reads in class nine and lives nearby Ratan's house. His father's name is Babul and I also interviewed him. Babul is 55 years old and he is a shopkeeper. Then Shila is another participant who reads in class eight at 'Y' High School. She lives in a village which is situated beside our village. His father is a C.N.G driver and familiar to us. Then another participant whom I interviewed is Rani. She also read in class eight and her brother is in class five. Her father is a day laborer and her mother is a housewife and sometimes works at other people's house. Her father's name is Rahmat and he is 45 years old. I also interviewed him. Rana is also one of my participants. He is my cousin and is an S.S.C examinee. Then another one is Sumi who is also an S.S.C examinee. She is from our village but she lives in her uncle's(maternal) house and read in a secondary school named 'Z' High School which is nearby her uncle's house.

Another two participants are Shanta and her brother Sharif. Shanta reads in class seven and her brother reads in class ten. Shanta lives with her parents and Sharif lives in his grandfather's (maternal) house. Their father is a farmer who is about 45 years old. I also interviewed him. Another participant is Sharif's cousin. His name is Salam. He reads in class nine. He also reads in the same school where Sharif reads in. My last two participants are from 'M' High School where I visited. One of them is Nazrul who reads in class ten and another one is Naim who reads in class seven. I do not know them but I interviewed them when I was coming back after visiting their school and they were also returning home from their school.

3.4 Setting

As I have mentioned, I have chosen four secondary schools situated in different villages in my home town, the schools were far away from my home and the communication system was not so good. There was another issue that, whether I should get permission from the school authority or not. So,

considering all these facts, at first, my father took me to these schools. Among these four schools, the headmasters of two schools named 'X' High School and 'Y' High School were familiar with my father. So, I did not face any difficulties to get permission to visit these schools and take interviews with the teachers and the students. They also gave me permission to observe their English classes. One of these two headmasters managed permission for me to visit another school named 'M' High School. In the last school that I visited, there was a mathematics teacher named Anwar who was my relative and managed permission for me. The school name is 'Z' High School. After getting permission I visited the schools several times. I took the teacher's interview when their classes were finished.

3.5 Instruments

For this study, I have collected most of the data in the Qualitative Method. So, I mostly relied on interviews and classroom observation. I also had some focus group discussions. In terms of interviews, I prepared a separate questionnaire for the teachers and students. During my interviews I wrote down the information and, in some interviews, I recorded the whole session on my phone. So here my cell phone was an important tool for collecting data. Besides, I have also conducted a survey. For that survey, I prepared a questionnaire consisting of ten questions. I have used the Likert scale as an important method for my survey.

3.6 Data Collections Procedure

As I have mentioned before that for collecting data I went for interviews, classroom observation, and survey, these procedures helped me in deep observation and collecting accurate data by understanding my participants. By taking face-to-face interviews with my participants and spending more time with them I got accurate and recent information. The teachers and students shared their practical experience with me about the current scenario of teaching English at rural secondary schools in Bangladesh.

Interviews: For this study, I took interviews with teachers and students, and four guardians. I went for semi-structured interviews but I also asked other questions that are related to my topic. During the interviews, I discussed related topics with them and also asked questions based on the discussion. I wanted to take face-to-face interviews of my participants but it was not possible for all of my participants because of the Covid-19 pandemic. So, I took some interviews over the phone. Before starting the Covid-19 I took almost all of the interviews with the teachers. I took some of the interviews when I went to visit the schools several times. Some of the teachers were known to me and also my relatives. I also went to their home for taking their interviews.

In the case of the students, I tried to take the interviews when were on their way back home from school. The students who were known to me, I went to their home so that I can take interviews with both of them and their parents. I have also taken the interviews of two students over the phone. I had to use the Bengali language to take the interviews. For the teachers, I also used the Bengali language but one teacher was eager to give the interview in English and I did so.

Classroom Observation: I went to my hometown several times so that I can visit these schools. For classroom observation, I went to my hometown on Wednesday evening. Then on Thursday and Saturday, I went to the schools and observed the English classes. During the time of the classroom observation, I used to sit at the back of the classroom. I observed the teacher's and student's activity carefully and noted all the relevant things.

Survey: I have done a survey to conduct this study. I prepared a questionnaire consisting of five questions. Printed several copies of that questionnaire and gave these copies to the students of different classes of different schools. I conducted a survey on the students of class seven, eight, and ten. I gave the printed copies of the question immediately after observing a class. I gave them five minutes for answering these ten questions and took back the copies once they were done.

3.7 Analyzing Data

I have collected my data in different ways like interviews, observation but my aim was to find out the core and genuine data so that I can show the obstacles and facilities that are faced by the rural secondary school teachers by analyzing them. After collecting the data, I analyzed these according to my own perception. I rearranged the data so that I can find the necessary data when I needed them. I translated the recordings of my interviews and then printed out important and relevant data. I analyzed these data according to my experience and intellection.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

I was concern about the ethical issues of this study. When I recorded some of the interviews, I asked for permission from my interviewees. I explained my topic and purpose of this study to the headmasters of the four schools that I visited. I also explained to all the teachers whom I interviewed. When I took permission from the headmasters, I ensured them that I should not use the real name of these schools. I also told all of my participants that I should use their pseudo names in this study. The information that I collected from my participants will be sent to them due to ethical issues.

3.9 Limitations

Though I did not face any problems in order to have the permission of visiting the schools, I went through some limitations in the case of conducting this study. Some teachers were not eager to give the interview, some of them who were the teachers of other subjects were concerned about their identity. Some of the students whom I interviewed were nervous and some of them felt shy to give the interview. When I observed the classes sometimes the students were not comfortable. Some students were laughing and their concentration was on me not in their classes. As I observed only the English classes, sometimes it happened that, after observing one class when I went to observe another English class at another school, I found that the class is already done.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussions

There are quite a number of challenges that our instructors are facing while providing the lectures regarding English learning at rural secondary schools. As the situation becomes saturated enough, so in order to find the backstory out of it, here is my few cents on it which are derived from the research I have conducted.

4.1 Barriers in case of Teaching and Learning

Lack of sufficient English instructors: Inadequate number of teachers has been a headache for the overall system in a sense, always some minimal number of instructors need to take the responsibilities while conducting the classroom. In most of the rural secondary schools the number of English teachers is not sufficient according to the number of the students. Among the four rural secondary schools that I have visited only one school have two English teachers. It is matter of great wonder that, the rest of the three schools have only one English teacher in each. So, there are too much pressure on that teachers. As the large classroom issue is already there, so often teachers find the utmost challenges in terms of preparing the class materials, handling the lectures in a proper manner. Because of inadequate numbers of teachers, often they have to burden too much pressure which is not going to produce any fruitful outcome. For class six to ten English is a compulsory subject and as it is considered as an important subject, the only one teacher need to take all the English classes every day. So, for one teacher it is quite tough to conduct lots of classes at a day and it also become monotonous.

Moreover, the teachers often need to remain busy for checking the large number of scripts. As the students' number is quite large, so handful numbers of teachers obviously become the first choice to handle this type of condition whereas, right now only a limited number of efficient teachers are out there to check all the exam scripts and student's class activities. In return, teachers spend their valuable time in the preparing of class materials, lectures, and checking the exam scripts whereas

they need to engage themselves in the research so that they can contribute and help the students more about learning. As a result, teachers focus less about on the self-development and research, so students often deprive from the utmost benefits of learning. In case of substituting one instructor, it becomes really hard to find the suitable option. If any instructor is substituted due to some unavoidable issues, in that case teachers of another subjects like mathematics, social science needs to handle that particular classes. Then students don't get the opportunity to learn English from that substitute teachers. They only try keep the students under control so that they cannot make noises. One of my participants is Naim who reads in class seven. He shares, "When our English teacher cannot come to school our English class remains off. But when the students make noises in that off period, Math teacher or Bangla teacher comes to our class. Then they tell us to read a paragraph or composition". So, in case of teaching at rural secondary schools, the English teachers usually do not take sufficient leaves as there is lack of suitable substitutes. Exchanged instructors often don't seem to be a very viable option as they don't possess much expertise on the field and they don't have much control over the class as well.

Large Classroom: In urban areas, we often see the class size that doesn't exceed more than 40S students. It often has a class size less than 40 to have more control from the instructor's perspectives. The institutions from the urban areas do not even have to sacrifice with this policy, as they are well equipped with handsome number of instructors. But the problem starts with the rural areas. In rural zone, the class size often exceeds the maximum point of tolerance. In every class there must be an 80-90 students or even more. As in most of the rural schools there are only one English teacher and lack of sufficient classrooms, the class size needed to be maximized at a certain level so that all the students get covered up. Thus, teachers often have less control over the class and the command does not get passed in well-functioning manner from one end to another. Because of lots of noise, the students do not get the message right and they are not in a position to take best of the outcomes out of the classroom. As a result, they perform poor and because of the high classroom size, it will be near to impossible for the instructors to make the students motivated enough to participate in the class to excel in communication purpose. Students often lose their concentration

and it will be not possible for the instructors to take care of each and every student individual problem and to make a better solution to tackle those problems. However, the situation would be completely different to experience if we had a minimal class size like we have for the students from urban area. Because of less authoritative power from the instructors, some of the students from the back side of the class often make some noises which make it even more difficult while lecturing the session. The whole class gets irritated and often the class dynamics is shifted.

Moreover, the duration of class is not sufficient according to the large classroom. Teachers need to spend huge amount of time for controlling large classroom. One of my participants Sahera says, “In one class there are there are almost 100 students. We need to spend at least 15 minutes for Roll calling and settling down the students where class duration is only 40 minutes”.

4.2 Barriers in case of Policy and Ground Reality

Curriculum: English is a language, so when anyone aims at acquiring the language in order to be a better communicator, the best possible way is to follow the practical route other than following the ins and outs of grammar. By saying that, I am not trying to conclude that grammar is not essential at all. But in the context of Bangladesh, we have a tendency that, we often think in order to excel in English, we all need to be a grammar nerd. Putting everything aside, like speaking, writing listening, we often put our concentration only on grammar. And our curriculum was designed based on that way. But later on, the mistakes that we committed are realized and it is understood that, in order to be competent enough with the rest of the world we need to express our self as a better communicator and that is only possible by implementing the CLT method in the educational level. So, CLT method is included in our curriculum. But in rural secondary schools there is no implementation of this English learning method. When I interviewed some students of rural secondary schools to find out the real scenario, all of them replied that they need to bring the grammar books in every class as the teachers often read line by line from the rules and exercise the books. The listening and speaking are not practiced in the English class at all. The students cannot go an extra mile to learn the language as they think English as a subject not as a language because of the

materials and curriculum design. Even if we see the new textbooks that are designed to teach the students based on CLT method, but the students and teachers cannot cope up with these. According to an English teacher named Shohel, teaching by the book which is supplied by the government is tough for them as they do not get the proper training on the new selected books.

Nevertheless, the students sometimes get so upset with the memorizing the grammar rules fact. One of my participants Rani reads in class eight. She reports that, she sometimes does not go to classroom intentionally as she doesn't want to memorize the grammar rules and essays because these do not make her the topics interesting to have a read.

Lack of training facilities: It often makes a clear advantage for the students from the urban area when it comes to learning English as the teachers are so well versed regarding the training facilities and they are up do date about the materials what they are about to teach. Contrary to many popular beliefs, we are still far away from achieving the sustainability in the context of well infrastructural environment which ensures a level playing field for all the students of the country. Many teachers from the sub urban and rural areas are not competent enough compared to the teachers from urban areas. There are couple of reasons for that. But the most noticeable reason that makes the situation quite complex is that, there is not enough training facilities for the teachers. The rural teachers always deprive from the quality training session and they are not well aware of the trend that is going on around the academic world. Even though the curriculum has shifted from GTM to CLT based methods, but to provide lectures based on the fundamentals of CLT is quite a day dream as the teachers are not well prepared about the procedure of conducting the session. To take a class based on CLT method, the teacher needs to have well diverse skill like top notch communication and listening, writing ability whereas the teachers are not meeting the standard which is required. In order to prepare the teachers, we all need to conduct as many training sessions as we can but it is a matter of great regret for us that, in every year the budget sanction is not adequate to reach the level of sustainability that we are dreaming. If we make a comparison with the other fields of learning then we can clearly visualize the discrimination as the English teachers rarely receive any

types of training. They are often neglected in a sense that, people from the administrative section often put less emphasis on them. Among my participants a secondary school teacher named Jalil says, “We (rural English teachers) do not get necessary training. Teachers from science department got more training than us. We do not have less knowledge than urban teachers but we do not get proper training like them”. He complains that, though the teachers from the rural area are in the same level of knowledge with the teachers from the urban area but surprisingly the training the rural teachers receive are quite low in amount which degrades their quality of teaching instead of upgrading. He also adds that, during his twenty-two years teaching life he got training only two times. In a situation where, the education system itself is putting less effort to build its students into a greater scalability, then we cannot blame only on the teacher.

Poor condition in infrastructural equipment and teaching materials: In order to properly assess the recent condition of our English learning ecosystem, we don't need to go too far rather our poor infrastructural condition from thousands of institutions are alone enough to resemble the picture. In most of the schools of rural areas there are lacking of sufficient classroom. Sometimes it is seen that in one room two teachers are taking classes at a time. There students of one class are sitting in one direction and the students of another class are sitting in opposite direction. Besides, specially from the rural areas, we often see that teachers still use chalk and black board for conducting the lectures purpose whereas there is almost zero sign of using the marker and white board which makes the lecture even more interactive for the students. When I visited the schools, I found out that, out of four, only one school uses the projector for the interactive learning purpose. In rest of the 3 schools there is no sign of using the projector which is now considered as a must tool for conducting lectures as it allows digital, interactive and more lively sessions to have.

Besides, it is a matter of great regret that the one school which has the projector, most of the times the schools use it for the science related coursework. So, the students who are eager to learn English get deprived of from the learning benefits. Among my participants, an English teacher named Mr. Akbar, who is teaching English for twenty years said, “We do not get any digital instrument for

teaching English. There is a projector in our school but it is only used occasionally by the teachers of science department and we have two computer which are also disable". While conducting the interviews with the teachers from different schools, often one question is asked towards them and that is whether they use smartphone or not which allows them to have more up to date knowledge about the recent on-going trend in the field of academia. But only one of them replied with a positive not and surprisingly all of them replied that they are heavily dependent on the grammar books to teach the students about the fundamental rules of English language.

There is also a noteworthy problem to share for this research, and that is both the students and the teachers often find it extremely hard to find out the inner meaning of the books that are published according to newly implemented CLT based method. In Bangla medium, especially in the rural schools, the teachers always teach the grammar rules in Bengali language and students are also used to have a session only on Bengali language. But there is no Bengali explanation and definitions in the books according to the newly proposed curriculum. So, students find it extremely hard as they are incapable of understanding the meaning about what is written inside the books. Besides, as the teachers do not follow that book, they ask the student to buy another book which is written based on GTM. According to one of my interviewee Raju shared his thoughts, and that is; as like as him most of the students find it tough to buy another secondary grammar textbook.

Instead of having several obstacles in case of teaching English at rural secondary schools, English teachers also have various facilities. While conducting the research, I have found the following advantages that the English teacher of rural secondary schools get.

4.3 Financial Benefits

Awareness among the rural people the about the necessity of private tuition: Most of the rural schools in Bangladesh are facing the lacking of educational instruments. Even there are not enough classrooms for taking classes. The classroom size is often too small to accommodate all the students properly. So, in one classroom there lots of students. In this situation most of the students

cannot understand the lectures of the teachers. This scenario is very common for the English classes and students mostly struggle to understand the English and Mathematics lectures. One of my interviewees named Ratan who reads in 'X' High school shares "We face more problems during English and Mathematics classes because most of the students are weak at English and Mathematics and in the class lecture, we cannot understand everything".

Besides, as nowadays people are concerned about education, rural people also want their children to be educated and they try their level best for this. Ratan's father Mr. Mofidul is a primary school teacher. I also interviewed him. He told that, in rural high schools' students do not get the proper instruction in the classroom and most of the time they do not understand the lectures. So private tuition is must needed for them. So, as the students do not understand properly in class, most of the students go for private tuition. Ratan also said that as English and Mathematics are important subjects and we do not understand the class lecture, we try to have private tuition at least for English and Mathematics.

Another participant is Shila who reads in class eight at 'Y' High School. She shared that, if the students fail in other subjects like Bangla, Social science etc. they easily get promotion in the upper class but if any student fails in subjects like English or Mathematics teachers do not give promotion. So, we go for English tuition for good result.

Most of the rural students are weak at English because in rural environment they do not get opportunity to practice English. Here English is considered as royal and tough subject. My participant Sumi says that, she is an S.S.C examinee and she is weak at English. So, it is a must for her to go for a private tuition if she wanted to pass her S.S.C examination. For further understanding when I did a survey on the students of different classes, I asked them whether they fully understand their English lectures in classes or not. Among the 85 students 68 answered negative. That indicates that, the large portion of the class do not understand the class lecture and that upraises the need for private tuition

English teachers earns a lot from private tuitions: Nowadays in the context of Bangladesh private tuition is a mostly common thing in secondary education system. Along with the urban areas, private tuition is available in rural areas. In recent days private tutoring is blurring geographic boundaries and private tutoring in English has gained prominent popularity in all over the world both in developed and developing countries (Bray, 2010 cited in Islam, 2019). Students from rural areas are also trying to keep pace with the challenges of 21st century. Nowadays they are making their positions in the top educational institutions for higher education as well as working in different important workplaces in Bangladesh. So rural people are also aware about the importance of education as well as the private tuition. One of my interviewee Babul whose son reads in class nine, says, “My father was a day laborer, I did not get opportunity for education. So, I do not want to see my son as like as me. Though it is tough for me, I try my level best to provide him the necessary thing for his education and also the private tuition”. As a result of the awareness among the rural people the English teachers of rural secondary schools are getting private tuition.

Besides, In Bangladesh English is a mandatory subject in every class of secondary school. So, every student has to study English. In rural areas there are lots of students in secondary schools and majority of them go for private tuition. Again, in most of the rural secondary school there are only one or two English teachers for class six to ten. So, in case of private tutoring both the teacher gets the whole benefit. During taking the interview one of my participants Shila, who reads in class eight shares, “the students of our class go to our English teacher for private tuition and those who do not go for it cannot make good results in English examination”.

Beside this, in rural areas English teachers are offering different packages which are highly acceptable to the students. In secondary level, there are two public exams that the student needs to face. One is J.S.C. which is at the end of class eight and another one is S.S.C which is at the end of class ten. As the students find English as a tough subject, they become tensed about passing in English in the public examinations. So before different public examinations teacher offers different tuition packages like 3 months package, two months package for passing and doing well in the public

exams. Students who go for private tuition throughout the whole year and who usually do not both are encouraged to take these packages. These packages are costlier than the usual private tuition. One of my participants name Rana who is a S.S.C examine states that, before S.S.C exam students read under different packages. There are special batch for the students who want to get A+ in English. I also read in this batch. It is a 3 months package and it costs seven thousand. He also adds that, there are also special batch for the students who want to pass in English and who are very weak at English. Those packages costs four thousand taka. So, earning of the rural secondary schools' teacher are certainly considerable.

Moreover, when I take the interview of the teachers of another subject like Social Science or Islamic Studies, they share that the English teachers are highly demanded and they earn a lot of money by private tuition. One teacher named Kamal who teaches Bangla says that, their earnings are very little compared to the earnings of the English teachers.

In addition, when I interviewed the English teachers of different secondary school, they all appreciated me as I am doing my bachelor degree in English. According to them teaching is a good profession where English teaching is highly appreciated and benefited. One English teacher encouraged me a lot and said, “As you are studying English you do not need to worry for earning. If you come back to the school of your village as an English teacher, along with respect you will get lot of private tuition and you can earn a lot”. So, in rural areas people might got English teaching as a benefited profession.

4.4 Social Benefits

English teachers are highly respected at rural areas: Teaching is a respected profession not only in Bangladesh but also all over the world. Furthermore, English teaching has always spacious positions as English is an international language. If we consider the scenario of Bangladesh, we find that most of the rural people are monolingual. They can use only Bengali language. They use Bengali language for every purpose of their daily life. There is no use of English language by the rural people because most of them are uneducated and engaged with agricultural occupation. As a

result, the students of rural areas are usually enclosed by an environment of Bengali language. They do not get any chance of practicing English in their family as well as in the society. So here the people give high value to the person who know English well and, in this case, English teachers are in the first position.

If we look back to the past, we can see that while we were under the British rule English knowing people were highly appreciated. People who knew English had an extra honored position in the society. They were in the important positions in the government job. From that time in this subcontinent English is considered as a language of higher-class people. Even today in this twenty first century, the importance of learning English has not decreased. People from all classes give the value of English learning and honor the English knowing people.

So, in the rural areas people are highly dependent to the English teacher for their children's English learning. One of my interviewees is Rahmat. His daughter reads in secondary level and his son reads in class five. He says, "I want my children to do good job in Dhaka. So, they need to learn English properly. As we are uneducated, English teacher are the only person who can help us in this regard".

Moreover, rural people give the English teacher an extra value. People go to the English teacher for understanding any English writings. Even when any student from rural schools does better results and want to go to Dhaka for higher studies their parents go to the English or Mathematics teacher for consultation because people think that they can give them a good decision for their children. One of my participants Raju shares "When my elder brother wanted to apply for university admission my father went to our English teacher to consult that which university would be better for my brother".

Furthermore, as English teachers are considered as an honored person in rural society, they are respectively present in the important decision making of the society. Along with this, sometimes the foreigners from different NGO and rural development organization come to visit the rural areas, as the rural people cannot speak English and so they cannot highlight their problems to the foreigners. So, the English teachers are requested to be with the foreigners and on behalf of the villagers and represent the poor condition of them. My participant Raju also shares, "Once two foreigners came to

visit our schools and then the English teachers communicated with them". So, by English teaching at rural schools' people can be highly honored by the openhearted and simple rural people.

Teaching at rural areas are less competitive and beyond questionable: If we consider the urban areas the number of secondary schools are many. Even in many areas there are more several secondary schools which are situated beside one another. So, there are more competition among these schools as well as the teachers. The teachers need to be more concerned about the teaching technique, providing hand notes and so on. If the teacher's teaching method and other provided facilities are not up to date the demand of these teachers reduces gradually.

In rural areas there are not sufficient secondary schools according to the number of the students. It is usually seen that, there is only one secondary school in each union. In rural areas, English teaching is less competitive. As most of the rural people are uneducated and dependent on the English teacher for their children's English learning. No one can question about their teaching. Here for teaching the students, they do not have to be that much concerned about the teaching methods and other techniques. Because they always follow the GTM method, where they are the controller of the class and students have to listen to them. Here the teachers need not to face the different creative questions from the students. They can teach the students by following the composed grammar rules. In rural areas, even teachers with low proficiency in English can easily influence the students and as there is a smaller number of English teachers, students are bound to read to them and cannot raise any questions about their proficiency or skills. While conducting this research, I found an English teacher in 'Z' High School, who is teaching for the last 20 years. He got 2nd division in his secondary exam and in his higher secondary exam he failed for the first time and second time he got 2nd division. But he is the only English teacher in this school and has a reputation for teaching English.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Nowadays English is a prime need to cope up with the modern world. For learning English, it is very necessary to give importance on its four functions like- reading, writing, listening and speaking. Although most of the student study English for a long period of time in their academic life, they are unable to show proficiency at English. This is a very common and severe scenario mostly for the students at rural areas. In case of teaching and learning English there are differences in the scenario of rural schools and urban schools. There are many reasons behind this. Our government is not giving any extra concentration on the rural secondary schools. If we want our rural students to have fruitful learning, we also need to give priorities to the teachers of our rural secondary schools. In this research I have tried to drag out the barriers faced by the English teachers of rural secondary schools. So, the necessary initiatives should be taken to overcome these barriers. Then I have also tried to show the facilities that are faced by the rural secondary English teachers so that comparatively expert and proficient teachers become interested to teach at rural Secondary Schools and the students can be more benefited and interested to learn English.

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Appendix A

Interview question for the English teachers-

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. What is your educational qualification?
3. Have you received any professional training? (If yes how many times?)
4. How many English teachers are there in your school?
5. What is your opinion about the new English curriculum?
6. What are the problems that you face in case of teaching English in rural areas?
7. Do you think there is lack of teaching instruments in rural areas?
8. Are there any facilities in case of teaching English?
9. Do you think there is less competition in case of teaching English in rural areas?
10. Do you feel the necessity of private tuition for the students?

Appendix B

Survey questions for students-

1. What do you think about learning English?
 - Difficult
 - Easy
 - Neutral
 - Very easy
 - Very difficult

2. Do you go for private tuition?
 - Yes
 - No

3. What do you think about the following statement- 'I properly understand the English lecture in class'?
 - Understand
 - Do not understand
 - Neutral

4. For how long do you go for English private tuition in a year?
 - 3 months
 - More than 3 months
 - 6 months

More than 6 months

5. Do English teacher follow CLT in case of teaching English?

Yes

No

Appendix C

Questions for the students-

1. What class do you read in?
2. How many English teachers are there in you school?
3. Do you and your teacher speak in English in classroom?
4. How many English teachers are there in your school?
5. Which method do your teacher follow- CLT or GTM?
6. Do you follow the grammar book issued by the NCTB?
7. Do you go for private tuition for English?
8. How many students are there in your class?
9. What happens when your English teacher is absent?
10. Do you practice English at your home?
11. Do you think your English teacher is highly honored in your area?