English Vocabulary Development of Senior High School Students: A Study On The Similarities And Differences In Motivation And Skills Between English Medium And Bengali Medium Learners

Sohag Biswas

Student ID: 09-16-3001

MA (English)

BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Sohag Biswas

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to study the similarities and differences in motivation and skills between English medium and Bengali medium learners in English vocabulary development. People perform a job when it is rewarding. The word motivation refers to 'willingness to do a job'; however some major types of motivation related to second language acquisition include intrinsic, instrumental, and social. Motivational factors are important determinants of learners' success in second language acquisition in general and the development of various language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing and listening.

There are numerous academic researches on motivation for English vocabulary development. Also, there are multiple standard questionnaires to examine major motivational constructs, such as Motivation for Vocabulary Learning Questionnaire (MVLQ). In this study, no particular standardized questionnaire has been used considering the fact that learners' motivation for English language as well as vocabulary development varies according to particular culture of the society. However, to develop the questionnaire suitable for this study, a review of the current literature has been very useful.

Upon administering a 30-item questionnaire on a total of 60 students (30 from English medium and 30 from Bengali medium), this study has examined vocabulary development goals of senior high school students. The questionnaire consists of 20 items to measure motivational factors not directly related to English Language skills and 10 items to measure motivational factors related to English Language skills, such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. 20 motivational factors not directly related to English Language skills mainly examine whether learners are willing to develop English vocabulary for pleasure and to improve their social interactions; impress parents, friends or teachers; improve personality;

and to be a global citizen through accessing more sources of information. In this study, 10 motivational factors related to English Language skills mainly examine whether learners are willing to develop English vocabulary to facilitate the development of spoken and written English; improve understanding of English language, literature, other texts as well as various audio visual forms of entertainment in English language; improve communication skills; and excel in academic and competitive exams.

The empirical results depict that there are a number of similarities in motivation and skills between English medium and Bengali medium students although they are from two different streams of education. Both the English and Bengali medium students have placed higher importance of motivational factors related to English language skills than those not directly related to. In particular, there are four factors equally important to both English and Bengali medium students including *to improve my spoken English*; *to improve my written English; to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams;* and *to improve my understanding English texts.* Interestingly, both English and Bengali medium students have placed similar lower importance on two motivational factors, such as *to participate effectively in classroom activities;* and *to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs.*

This study points to the fact that highly motivated learners from both English and Bengali medium develop their English vocabulary skill from their inner urge and personal interest.

While the most important motivational factors related to English Language skills for Bengali Medium students to develop English vocabulary is *to improve my spoken English*, English medium students have placed the highest importance on *to improve my written English,* which indicates that suggests that Bengali medium students face more difficulty in improving spoken English than their English medium counterparts due to different instructional and

educational environment. English medium students have the advantage of interacting among themselves as well as with teachers in English.

The similarities in motivation and skills for English vocabulary development among senior high school students in Bangladeshi Bengali and English medium students can be related to globalization and an ever increasing importance of English language in the global and domestic context. Conversely, the differences are rooted to some micro level environmental contexts, for example, English medium students have more opportunity to access more resources to develop English vocabulary skills and use the words they learn more frequently. Also, English medium students have extra pressure from their parents and teachers to develop English skills for academic achievement. However, the differences in motivational factors among Bengali medium and English medium students are narrowing day by day thanks to the increasing dominance of English and the spread of information technology.

The findings of this study may be useful to educators in teaching English language to Bengali medium and English medium students in Bangladesh through adopting appropriate strategies as this study has identified most important and least important motivational factors influencing their vocabulary development. This study has also provided important insights about what language skills Bengali medium and English medium students want to develop via improving their stock of English Language vocabulary.

Finally, this study recommends that it is essential to review the English Language teaching-learning processes adopted in Bengali medium so that the learning environment is more supportive. The students should be given more opportunity to communicate in English among themselves as well as with their teachers. Also, it is recommended that the curriculum needs to be updated so that students can engage in various types of interesting learning activities and thereby improve their self-confidence.

Chapter-1: Introduction

In this era of globalization, like many other developing countries, a major and persistent challenge for Bangladeshi education system is to produce skilled workforce with higher skills in English language. Although English is the second language in this part of the world due to its colonial past, however, improving English has remained a challenging task for educators in spite of great focus on this language (Hamid, 2011). Even after being taught English as one of the most important subjects in primary, secondary and higher secondary levels, a large number of Bengali Medium students fail to demonstrate satisfactory level of achievement. On the other hand, there are also numerous English Medium schools in Dhaka and other divisional headquarters, such as Rajshahi, Khulna, Chittagong and Sylhet. However, there is no reliable evidence that English Medium students are always more capable than those from Bengali Medium in learning new words or grammatical skills. Nevertheless, due to their higher exposure to this language, and given that their all books are in English, they are usually expected to possess better reading and understanding skills in English.

Overall, the efficiency of the education system of the country is still not satisfactory to help children in achieving a satisfactory level of success in acquiring a sound knowledge of English (Hamid et al., 2009). The children are often forced to remember words through rote learning, even if they struggle and undergo agonizing hardship (Hamid, 2010). Most of the students require going to private tutors for their exam preparation (Hamid et al.,2009). However, how children can learn a second language (in most cases English) with ease and promptness is really a great concern for the parents and teachers. Moreover, parents and caregivers also consider the public policy and planning concerning English language development as ineffective (Hamid, 2011; Hasan & Akhand, 2010).

According to Diamond and Gutlohn (2009), the strength of the acquisition of the second language lies in one's learning new words, i.e. vocabulary development. Once a student has reached a sound level of vocabulary, developing further language skills become easier (Moir & Nation, 2008). Thus, this research is aimed towards exploring the differences in motivation in relation to vocabulary development strategies adopted by students from Bengali and English medium Bangladeshi schools. The proposed study is based on main research questions, such as what are the similarities in motivation for vocabulary development among students from Bengali medium and English medium background in Bangladesh? What are the differences in motivation for vocabulary development among students from Bengali medium and English medium background in Bangladesh?

1.1 Background and context

In Bangladesh, Bengali language has been declared as the state language, and great importance has been given on using Bengali in all spheres of life. Ironically, in recent years, English has increasingly appeared as the most important language in everyday life (McCrum, 2011). In fact, in the era of globalization, English has become a global working language; the denial of its importance will mean depriving oneself of a large number of benefits (Short et al., 2001). English has become the main language used in international communication (Saraceni, 2008), and almost every country has placed renewed importance of promoting English as an indispensible part of achieving development goals (Graddol, 2008). Moreover, every year millions of people in the world are forced to learn foreign languages who cross borders upon being traumatized by natural and human created disasters (Nation & Chung, 2009).

English is the second language in Bangladesh, a country with a British colonial past. In Bangladesh, the education system is mainly divided into three branches, namely the Bengali medium, the English medium and the religious education (Alam et al., 2009). In English medium, the medium of instruction is mainly English. Students sit for Ordinary Level (equivalent to secondary examination) and Advanced Level (equivalent to higher secondary examination) examinations under the British curricula. On the other hand, in Bengali medium, the medium of instruction is mainly Bengali (except for English language and literature). Students sit for the secondary examination and higher secondary examinations under various education boards. Lastly, students of madrassas receive instructions mainly in Arabic and Bengali.

There is little controversy regarding the underachievement of Bangladeshi students in the acquisition of English language (Hamid, 2011; Hasan & Akhand, 2010). Although there is no formal comparative measure of the performance of Bangladeshi education system in terms of enabling learners in English language acquisition, however, there are clear evidences that in international job markets, Bangladeshi citizens cannot compete with the white colour job-seekers from Indian, Sri Lanka and Philippines mainly for their inability to communicate in English (Moses, 2009).

According to Wallace (2007), 'the greatest challenge inhibiting the ability of English-language learners (ELLs) to read at the appropriate grade level is perhaps a lack of sufficient vocabulary development' (p. 189). Unfortunately, Bangladeshi learners do not have great exposure to English except for the time they are in school (Hasan & Akhand, 2010). Even in the school, they have one to two hours English class daily, which is not sufficient to develop a sizeable vocabulary. In situations when students do not have sufficient instructions from

English or of any other second language, it is the responsibility of the learners themselves to reinforce their vocabulary (Lu, 2008).

Therefore, the current study intends to explore the differences in motivation and skills in English vocabulary development between English Medium and Bengali medium senior high school students.

1.2 Research significance

The answer to the proposed questions has the potential to provide valuable insights about individual learners' differences in motivation for vocabulary development as well as vocabulary development styles of senior high school students from Bengali and English medium. The revealed information will help educators and policy makers to understand what rationale learners of different branches of education use to make their vocabulary development decisions. This can allow the educators to design an incentive environment for the learners to improve their vocabulary as a means of achieving higher efficiency in English language as well as adopt suitable motivational strategies in teaching English Language.

1.3 Assumptions and Research delimitations

The assumptions in this quantitative study include: the reality is objective; the researcher has no association with the participants; there is no role of values; the study is formal; and the study has identified trends in attitudes of two groups of students, i.e. Bengali medium and English medium students. This quantitative research design has some limitations, such as the variables can be chosen wrongly, and some important variables may be excluded; the instrument for measuring responses may be inappropriate or inefficient; and the research is largely incapable to capture contextual information (Creswell, 2012).

To sum up, this research has a few limitations. Firstly, it is a cross-sectional study, therefore unable to portray a dynamic trend in students' motivation in developing vocabulary. Secondly, the sample size is small (60). Thirdly, the students in the sample have been mainly from Dhaka. Lastly, as there is inadequate extant literature related to the topic, it may be difficult to compare the research findings with other empirical studies.

Chapter-2: Literature Review

2.1 Defining vocabulary

In the Longman Advanced American Dictionary (2003), the term vocabulary has been defined as 'all the words that someone knows, learns, or uses' (p. 1612). Vocabulary development provides strong base for learning to interpret and understand written text (Silverman, 2007). Empirical studies have revealed that with a vocabulary size of 5000 English words, it is possible for a L2 learner to understand 95% of a non-technical text (Huang & Liou, 2007). According to Schmitt (2008), an individual requires to learn the use of five to seven thousand words for articulate conversation, and around eight to nine thousand words for reading and comprehending a written material. Vocabulary development is essential not only for reading comprehension but also to facilitate future expansion of vocabulary knowledge through understanding a range of texts based on various contexts (Taylor et al., 2009).

Across countries, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of vocabulary development in the learning of second language, as well as in improving communication skills (Milton, 2009). However, 'the mechanics of vocabulary learning are still something of a mystery, but one thing we can be sure of is that words are not instantaneously acquired...... Rather, they are gradually learned over a period of time from numerous exposures (Schmitt, 2008, p.4).

2.2 An outline of learner characteristics

Gaining a deeper understanding of Individual differences among second language learners is essential as individual differences affect learners' acquisition of second language including

their vocabulary development. Interestingly, this study deals with students from two distinct streams of education with not only group differences but also individual differences. In general, learners may differ in the following ways (Dornyei, 2006; Ellis, 2008; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Kim, 2009; Dörnyei, 2010), which are also applicable to English medium and Bengali medium students:

1. **Aims and purposes of second language learning:** Bengali medium students are likely to enhance their English language skills to get higher scores on standardized tests; accuracy is more important to them than communicative efficiency. On the other hand, English medium students are likely to be more interested in developing their communication skills; they are likely to be a more comfortable zone than their Bengali medium counterparts.

2. **Exposure to the language:** Given the medium of instruction is English; English medium students are more exposed to English Language than their Bengali medium counterparts in the classroom. Also, they can interact with teachers and classmates in English. On the other hand, although English is the most important second language and is a compulsory part of the Bengali medium curricula, the exposure to the language by Bengali medium learners is limited outside the academic arena. Therefore, Bengali medium students are less likely to use English in their personal communication.

3. **Learning styles and strategies:** There is a great variation in learning styles and strategies between Bengali and English medium students. The main reason may be due to their exposure to different learning environment. Learning styles and strategies may be analytical, interactive or authority-based.

4. **Motivation**: Bengali and English medium students are also likely to differ in various motivational factors. Some major types of motivation include intrinsic, instrumental, and social.

As motivational factors are important determinants of learners' success in second language acquisition in general and the development of various language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing and listening, the principal aim of this study is to investigate how do Bengali and English medium students differ in terms of various motivational factors directly related to as well as not directly related to English Language skills. There are numerous academic researches on motivation for English vocabulary development. Also, there are multiple standard questionnaires to examine major motivational constructs, such as Motivation for Vocabulary Learning Questionnaire (MVLQ). In this study, no particular standardized questionnaire has been used considering the fact that learners' motivation for English language as well as vocabulary development varies according to particular culture of the society. However, to develop the questionnaire suitable for this study, a review of the current literature has been very useful.

2.3 Motivational factors and English Language vocabulary development

Motivation is the energy that stimulates one's genuine preference to acquire competence in areas he/she holds as important (Wlodkowski, 2008). According to Francis and Simpson (2009), contemporary literature implies that the students who actively try to learn, in other words, who have stimulated by self-interest to learn new words acquire larger vocabulary. However, they further assert that the main challenge for educators is to devise strategy that ensures active engagement of learners in the vocabulary development process.

There are a range of factors that impact students' motivation of learning a foreign language, such as gender, skills in mother-tongue, place of living (rural or urban area), stream of study, such as science, arts and commerce (Javid et al., 2012). Dörnyei (1994) asserts that there may be two types of motivations in improving the second language acquisition, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is subjective and self-determined and based on an individual learner's personal decision, goal-setting, self-esteem and judgement; however extrinsic motivation is affected by guardians, teachers, peers or groups.

Academic literature has placed high importance on English language teachers to influence the level of motivation of individual learners to improve their second language acquisition. Various socio-cultural and economic factors make the teachers face numerous challenges in motivating students to learn English. Nevertheless, a study by Maherzi (2011) conclude that through providing positive feedback, helping in improving critical thinking skills and self-confidence, teachers can improve learners' motivation in foreign language acquisition. In their research, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) have demonstrated that a number of factors influence the performance of students while learning a foreign language, such as, effectiveness of teachers; class environment; clarity and importance of lesson; teacher-student rapport; participants' level of self-confidence; whether the lesson is interesting; whether students can interact; relevance of the lesson; long-term and short-term goal of students; and students' cultural orientation.

While there are insufficient resources, support systems and manpower in the country to motivate Bangladeshi students to learn English, still many students excel in learning English being influenced by others. Sobkin (2007) views that teachers (and sometimes family members) can improve the motivation of students through demonstrating professionalism in attaining superior performance in English when they are perceived as role models by the

latter. Vocabulary learning can be also facilitated through engaging with other learning partners, such as fellow students as well as teachers (Schmitt, 2008). A vocabulary development program requires having explicit component and intentional component, as well as the opportunity for maximum exposure creating scope for the learners to engage actively in the learning process (Schmitt, 2008).

Unfortunately, students rarely utilize opportunities to improve their skills in English outside the classroom, such as by using English while talking to the teachers of other subjects in English, or with the librarian, administrators, and peers. It is very difficult to improve performance in second language only through class room learning (Chamot, 2005). Unfortunately, the lack of encouragement in applying class room learning in real life acts as a great hindrance to excel in second language (Hinkel, 2011). In an earlier study, Kim (2007) revealed that when teachers encourage students to use the second language outside the class room, although students hesitate initially, however, soon they overcome their hesitation. Goldenberg (2008) infers that teachers ought to influence the learners to engage in life-long education by encouraging them to readily learn new knowledge from outside the class room.

Advancement of modern technology has also created enormous opportunities to improve English language skills. Currently, students prefer a wide range of medium in learning English words including television, Internet and even mobile phones (Lu, 2008).

Interestingly, in their English classes, Bengali Medium students generally get instruction in Bengali, while English Medium students mostly get instructions in English. According to August et al. (2005) and Goldenberg (2008), many research findings suggest that learners demonstrate higher achievement in second language if they are instructed in their mother tongue.

2.4 Literature gap

In Bangladeshi education system, both Bengali medium and English medium education are dominant. While globalisation has created reinforced demand for manpower with adequate knowledge of English language, given the resource constraint of this least developed country, yet there is no effective policy in place to improve motivation of students to develop their English language in general, and vocabulary knowledge in specific (Hamid, 2011; Hasan & Akhand, 2010). Nevertheless, it is costly as well as impractical to devise separate strategies for vocabulary development for the learners of different medium of education. A successful research aimed towards exploring the difference of motivation for vocabulary development of learners' from Bengali and English medium would contribute to the designing of a cost-effective policy applicable for all branches of the education system. Unfortunately, till date no such research has been conducted on the differences of motivation and skills among students from different streams. Therefore, the proposed research intends to fill that research gap by investigating the differences in motivation and skills between English Medium and Bengali medium senior high school students in English vocabulary development. In this study, 20 motivational factors not directly related to English Language skills mainly examine whether learners are willing to develop English vocabulary for pleasure, to improve social interactions; impress parents, friends or teachers; improve personality; and to be a global citizen through accessing more sources of information. On the other, 10 motivational factors directly related to English language skills mainly examine whether learners are willing to develop English vocabulary to facilitate the development of spoken and written English; improve understanding of English language, literature, other texts as well as various audio visual forms of entertainment in English language; improve communication skills; and excel in academic and competitive exams.

Chapter-3: Research Methodology

3.1 Research paradigm

To ensure greater reliability and validity of this study, the concept-generating approach has been adopted, which broadly sits in interpretative paradigm promoted by Max Weber, George Mead and Erving Goffman (Grbich, 1999). Among the key concept-generating research approaches, this study has adopted phenomenology. 'The phenomenological tradition.... has generated a specific process whereby the researcher can become open to the structure of the essence of others' experiences of a particular phenomenon' (Grbich 1999, p. 39).

3.2 Research questions

The main research questions of the current study are:

Q.1: *What are the similarities in motivation and skills between the students from Bengali medium and English medium in terms of their vocabulary development?*

Q.2: *What are the differences in motivation and skills between the students from Bengali medium and English medium in terms of their vocabulary development?*

In addition to the above mentioned key questions, a set of sub-questions has been also answered, such as: What are the most important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills for Bengali Medium and English medium students to develop English vocabulary? What are the most important motivational factors related to English language skills for Bengali Medium and English medium students to develop English vocabulary? What are the least important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills for Bengali Medium and English medium students to develop English vocabulary? What are the least important motivational factors related to English language skills for Bengali Medium and English medium students to develop English vocabulary?

3.3 Participants and sampling technique

An appropriate sample size is essential so that the sample represents the population under study (Sekaran, 2009). Therefore, a total of 60 senior high school students (9th and 10th graders) have been invited to join the study (30 from Bengali medium schools and 30 from English medium schools). The students have been chosen through snowball sampling. A semi-structured questionnaire has been administered containing 30 closed ended questions; 15 on extrinsic motivational factors, and 15 on extrinsic motivational factors to develop English vocabulary. It is a cross-sectional study, which means that data has been collected from the participants only once.

This study has used convenience sampling as well as snow-ball sampling. Initially, convenience sampling has been adopted with the aim of locating a group of senior students from both English and Bengali medium. Later, snow-ball sampling technique has been used where each student has been requested to refer to one of his fellow student. These sampling techniques facilitate in maximising convenience and minimising cost (Flick, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). However, bias has been minimised upon applying judgement.

3.4 Questionnaire design

This study has used quantitative data upon using questionnaire as an instrument. Questionnaire is a widely used tool to attitudes of individuals' attitudes (Creswell, 2012). A 5-point Likert scale (containing 30 items; 15 for extrinsic motivation and 15 for intrinsic motivation) have been developed and administered to measure the participants' motivation/attitude, where 1= I do not agree at all, 2= I do not agree, 3= Neither agree nor disagree, 4= I agree and 5= I strongly agree.

The questionnaire has been designed based on an extensive literature review. Sufficient care has been taken to organize the questionnaire using appropriate language. For the convenience and clarity, questionnaire has been composed both in English and Bengali. The structured questionnaire has two parts, namely Part A and Part B. Part A seeks for general information and Part B consists of 30 close-ended questions (based on a 5-point Likert scale).

3.5 Data analysis

The data has been analysed upon using Microsoft Excel program. Various statistical techniques including frequency, mean, percentage and standard deviation (SD) have been used to analyse and interpret the data. Calculating standard deviations have been useful to understand whether the distribution of the sample is normal, and whether the results are statistically significant and well representative of the population.

3.6 Ethical issues

This study design has raised some ethical issues as this researcher has sought for some details/opinions of the participants, which may be confidential to them. Thus, this researcher has been required to ensure that the participants' anonymity is maintained, the confidentiality of their personal information as well as the scores they have provided against the questionnaire items are maintained (Creswell, 2012).

3.7 Presentation of results

The results of descriptive and inferential analysis of a quantitative research can be presented using tables, figures and a detailed discussion of the findings; in the detailed discussion the researcher also requires explaining the results of all statistical tests (Creswell, 2012). Accordingly, this research has presented results with the aid of tables, figures and a detailed discussion of the findings; also the findings have been compared with the extant literature.

Chapter-4: Findings of the study

4.1 Participants' Background Information

The questionnaires were distributed among 30 senior high school students studying in Bengali medium schools and 30 senior high school students studying in English medium schools situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Among the participants from Bengali Medium, 18 were females (60%) and 12 were males (40%). Among the participants from English Medium, 13 were females (43%) and 17 were males (57%). Among the participants from Bengali Medium, 10 were from class 9 (33%), 8 from class 10 (27%), 9 from class 11 (30%) and 3 from class 12 (10%). Among the participants from English Medium, 5 were from class 9 (17%), 4 from class 10 (13%), 8 from class 11 (27%) and 13 from class 12 (43%).

In this study, a total of 30 motivational factors has examined why the learners in Bengali medium and English mediums are willing to develop their English vocabulary and how do the students from these two streams differ in terms of their motivation and skills. Among the 30 motivational factors, 20 are not directly related to English language skills, such as reading, writing, speaking and listening; however, 10 are related to various English language skills.

4.2 Results on motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium and English medium students not directly related to English language skills

The study has revealed that although English medium and Bengali medium students largely develop their English vocabulary to improve a range of English language skills, such reading, writing, speaking and listening; in addition to that, they also develop their vocabulary for reasons not directly related to English language skill enhancement but for just pleasure or to improve personal communication and social interactions, impress parents, friends or teachers,

improve personality; and to be a global citizen through accessing more sources of information. Table 4.1 below presents the means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of 20 motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students not directly related to English language skills.

Table 4.1: The means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of the motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students not directly related to English language skills

Rank	Factor	Mean score (out of 5)	Standard deviation
1	to study abroad	4.73	0.450
2	to build a better career	4.67	0.479
3	to get chance in a good university	4.63	0.490
4	I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary	4.60	0.724
5	to learn more about other countries/cultures/people	4.40	0.563
6	to develop my computer skills	4.27	0.785
7	to make better use of Internet/information technology	4.20	0.664
8	an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary	4.20	1.095
9	it will make me a more knowledgeable person	4.03	1.189
10	my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary	4.00	0.743
11	a strong English vocabulary will make me smart	3.97	1.066
12	learning new English words often makes me happy	3.90	0.923
13	my English teachers encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	3.90	1.062
14	to solve crosswords (word game)	3.90	0.885
15	to use social networking site, such as Face book and Twitter	3.83	0.874
16	to play video games	3.73	0.944
17	to improve skills in subjects other than English	3.40	1.102
18	my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	3.10	0.743
19	to impress my friends/acquaintances	2.93	0.785
20	to impress my teachers	2.90	0.923
	Average	3.96	

On the other hand, Table 4.2 below presents the means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of 20 motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students not directly related to English language skills.

Table 4.2: The means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of the motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students not directly related to English language skills

Rank	Factor	Mean score (out of 5)	Standard deviation
1	I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary	4.13	0.681
2	to get chance in a good university	4.13	1.106
3	to build a better career	4.07	1.201
4	to improve skills in subjects other than English	4.07	0.980
5	to study abroad	4.03	1.098
6	it will make me a more knowledgeable person	3.87	1.008
7	an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary	3.77	0.971
8	my English teachers encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	3.63	1.299
9	to learn more about other countries/cultures/people	3.60	1.003
10	my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary	3.53	0.937
11	a strong English vocabulary will make me smart	3.43	1.104
12	to make better use of Internet/information technology	3.37	0.999
13	to solve crosswords (word game)	3.37	1.272
14	to use social networking site, such as Face book and Twitter	3.07	1.112
15	learning new English words often makes me happy	3.00	1.174
16	to impress my friends/acquaintances	3.00	1.114
17	to develop my computer skills	2.90	1.124
18	to impress my teachers	2.77	1.184
19	to play video games	2.67	1.213
20	my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	2.50	1.042
	Average	3.44	

Table 4.1 reveals that the average of the mean scores of 20 motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students not directly related to English language skills is 3.96. Interestingly, the two most important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills for Bengali Medium students to develop English vocabulary are *to study abroad* (mean score 4.73, standard deviation 0.450) and *to build a better career* (mean score 4.4, SD 0.563). On the other, two least important motivational factors for them in relation to English vocabulary development not directly related to English language skills are *to impress my friends/acquaintances* (mean score 2.93, SD 0.785) and *to impress my teachers* (mean score 2.9, SD 0.923).

For Bengali Medium students, there are other 8 items related to motivational factors not directly related to English language skills with mean scores of above 4.0, which indicate that these are important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *to get chance in a good university* (mean score 4.63, SD 0.490); *I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 4.60, SD 0.724); *to learn more about other countries/cultures/people* (mean score 4.40, SD 0.563); *to develop my computer skills* (mean score 4.27, SD 0.785); *to make better use of Internet/information technology* (mean score 4.20, SD 0.664); *an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 4.20, SD 1.095); *it will make me a more knowledgeable person* (mean score 4.03, SD 1.189); and *my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 4.00, SD 0.743).

For Bengali Medium students, there are other 8 items related to motivational factors not directly related to English language skills with mean scores below 4 but more than 3, which indicate that these are moderately important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *a strong English vocabulary will make me smart* (mean score 3.97, SD 1.067);

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learning new English words often makes me happy (mean score 3.90, SD 0.923); *my English teachers encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* (mean score 3.90, SD 1.062); *to solve crosswords (word game)* (mean score 3.90, SD 0.885); *to use social networking site, such as Face book and Twitter* (mean score 3.83, SD 0.874); *to play video games* (mean score 3.73, SD 0.944); *to improve skills in subjects other than English* (mean score 3.40, SD 1.102) and *my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* (mean score 3.10, SD 0.743).

Table 4.2 reveals that the average of the mean scores of 20 motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students not directly related to English language skills is 3.44. Interestingly, the two most important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills for English Medium students to develop English vocabulary are *I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 4.13, SD 0.681) and *to get chance in a good university* (mean score 4.13, SD 1.106). On the other, the two least important motivational factors for them in relation to English vocabulary development not directly related to English language skills are *play video games* (mean score 2.67, SD 1.213) and *my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* (mean score 2.50, SD 1.042).

For English Medium students, there are other 3 items related to motivational factors not directly related to English language skills with mean scores of above 4.0, which indicate that these are important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *to build a better career* (mean score 4.07, SD 1.201); *to improve skills in subjects other than English* (mean score 4.07, SD 0.980); *to study abroad* (mean score 4.03, SD 1.098).

For English Medium students, there are there are other 5 items related to motivational factors not directly related to English language skills with mean scores of above below 4.0 and above

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3.5, which indicate that these are moderately important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *it will make me a more knowledgeable person* (mean score 3.87, SD 1.008); *an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 3.77, SD 0.971); *my English teachers encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* (mean score 3.63, SD 1.229); *to learn more about other countries/cultures/people* (mean score 3.60, SD 1.003); and *my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 3.53, SD 0.937).

For English Medium students, there are other 8 items related to motivational factors not directly related to English language skills with mean scores below 3.5 and above 3.0, which indicate that these are somewhat important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *a strong English vocabulary will make me smart* (mean score 3.43, SD 1.104); *to make better use of Internet/information technology* (mean score 3.37, SD 0.999); *to solve crosswords (word game)* (mean score 3.37, SD 1.272); *to use social networking site, such as Face book and Twitter* (mean score 3.07, SD 1.112); *learning new English words often makes me happy* (mean score 3.00, SD 1.174); and *to impress my friends/acquaintances* (mean score 3.00, SD 1.114).

4.3 Results on motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium and English medium students directly related to English language skills

The study has revealed that English medium and Bengali medium students largely develop their English vocabulary to improve a range of English language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Table 4.3 below presents the means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of 10 motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students directly related to English language skills.

Table 4.3: The means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of the motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students directly related to English language skills

Rank	Factor	Mean score (out of 5)	Standard deviation
1	to improve my spoken English	4.73	0.450
2	to improve my written English	4.60	0.563
3	to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams	4.47	0.776
4	to improve my understanding English texts	4.33	0.547
5	to meet and converse with foreigners	4.23	0.971
6	to understand and enjoy English Literature	4.23	0.728
7	to get good marks in English Language / Literature	4.20	0.551
8	to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly	4.17	1.147
9	to participate effectively in classroom activities	3.90	0.759
10	to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs	3.90	0.759
	Average	4.28	

On the other hand, Table 4.4 below presents the means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of 10 motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students directly related to English language skills.

Table 4.4: The means, standard deviation (SD) and the ranking of the motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students directly related to English language skills

Rank	Factor	Mean score (out of 5)	Standard deviation
1	to improve my written English	4.23	1.040
2	to improve my spoken English	4.10	0.803
3	to improve my understanding English texts	4.07	0.980
4	to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams	3.90	1.094
5	to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly	3.90	1.029
6	to meet and converse with foreigners	3.63	1.066
7	to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs	3.63	0.928
8	to understand and enjoy English Literature	3.60	0.932
9	to participate effectively in classroom activities	3.5	1.196
10	to get good marks in English Language / Literature	3.47	1.306
	Average	3.80	

Table 4.3 reveals that the average of the mean scores of 10 motivational factors for vocabulary development of Bengali medium students directly related to English language skills is 4.28. Interestingly, the two most important motivational factors directly related to English language skills for Bengali Medium students to develop English vocabulary are *to improve my spoken English* (mean score 4.73, SD 0.450) and *to improve my written English* (mean score 4.60, SD 0.563). On the other, two least important motivational factors for them in relation to English vocabulary development directly related to English language skills are *to participate effectively in classroom activities* (mean score 3.90, SD 0.759) and *to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs* (mean score 3.90, SD 0.759).

For Bengali Medium students, there are other 6 items related to motivational factors directly related to English language skills with mean scores of above 4.0, which indicate that these are important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams* (mean score 4.47, SD 0.776); *to improve my understanding English texts* (mean score 4.33, SD 0.547); *to meet and converse with foreigners* (mean score 4.23, SD 0.971); *to understand and enjoy English Literature* (mean score 4.23, SD 0.728); *to get good marks in English Language / Literature* (mean score 4.20, SD 0.551); and *to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly* (mean score 4.17, SD 1.147).

On the other hand, Table 4.4 reveals that the average of the mean scores of 10 motivational factors for vocabulary development of English medium students directly related to English language skills is 3.80. Interestingly, the two most important motivational factors directly related to English language skills for English medium students to develop English vocabulary are *to improve my written English* (mean score 4.23, SD 1.040) and *to improve my spoken English* (mean score 4.10, SD 0.803). On the other, two least important motivational factors for them in relation to English vocabulary development directly related to English language

skills are *to participate effectively in classroom activities* (mean score 3.50, SD 1.196) and *to get good marks in English Language/Literature* (mean score 3.47, SD 1.306).

In the case of English Medium students, there is another motivational factor directly related to one of the English language skills (reading), which is *to improve my understanding English texts* (mean score 4.07, SD 0.980). However, there are other 5 motivational factors directly related to English language skills with mean score of below 4.0 and above 3.5, which indicate that these are important factors to develop English vocabulary. These factors include *to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams* (mean score 3.90, SD 1.094); *to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly* (mean score 3.90, SD 1.094); *to meet and converse with foreigners* (mean score 3.63, SD 1.066); *to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs* (mean score 3.63, SD 0.928); and *to understand and enjoy English Literature* (mean score 3.60, SD 0.932).

4.4 The similarities in motivation and skills between the students from Bengali medium and English medium in terms of their vocabulary development

The empirical results depict that there are a number of similarities in motivation and skills between English medium and Bengali medium students although they are from two different streams of education.

Interestingly, both the English and Bengali medium students have placed higher importance of motivational factors related to English language skills than those not directly related to. In the case of Bengali medium students, the average of the mean scores of motivational factors related to English language skills is 4.28, whereas the average of the motivational factors not directly related to English language skills is 3.96. Similarly, in the case of English medium

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students, the average of the mean scores of motivational factors related to English language skills is 3.80, whereas the average of the motivational factors not directly related to English language skills is 3.44.

Considering a mean score above 4 to be indicative of higher importance of a motivational factor to develop English vocabulary, there are four factors (not directly related to English language skills) equally important to both English and Bengali medium students including *to study abroad*; *to build a better career; to get chance in a good university;* and *I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary.*

Again, considering a mean score below 3 to be indicative of lower importance of a motivational factor to develop English vocabulary, there are four factors (not directly related to English language skills) equally less important to both English and Bengali medium students including *to impress my friends and acquaintances*; *and to impress my teachers.*

However, for English medium students, standard deviations of the scores are very high (the values ranging from 0.681 to 1.299; out of 20 cases, in 15 cases SD>1), which means that in most of the cases, the distribution is skewed and thus the mean scores are not well representative of the population. Nevertheless, in the case of Bengali medium students, standard deviations of the scores are not very high (the values ranging from 0.450 to 1.189; out of 20 cases, only in 5 cases SD>1), which means that in most cases, the distribution is normal and thus the mean scores are well representative of the population.

On the other hand, in the case of the factors directly related to English language skills, considering the mean scores and the ranking (1 to 4), there are four factors equally important to both English and Bengali medium students including *to improve my spoken English*; *to*

improve my written English; to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams; and *to improve my understanding English texts.*

Again, both English and Bengali medium students have placed similar lower importance on two motivational factors, such as *to participate effectively in classroom activities;* and *to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs.*

However, in the case of the motivational factors directly related to English language skills too, standard deviations of the scores for English medium students are very high (the values ranging from 0.803 to 1.306; out of 10 cases, in 6 cases SD>1), which means that in most of the cases, the distribution is skewed and thus the mean scores are not well representative of the population. Nevertheless, in the case of Bengali medium students, standard deviations of the scores are not very high (the values ranging from 0.450 to 1.147; out of 10 cases, only in 1 case SD>1), which means that in most cases, the distribution is normal and thus the mean scores are well representative of the population.

4.5 The differences in motivation and skills between the students from Bengali medium and English medium in terms of their vocabulary development

The empirical results depict that there are a number of differences in motivation and skills between English medium and Bengali medium students although they are from two different streams of education.

Among Bengali medium students, *to study abroad* (mean score 4.73; SD 0.450) and *to build a better career* (mean score 4.67; SD 0.479) have been found to be the two most important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills; however, to their English medium counterparts, *I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary* (mean score 4.13; SD 0.681) and *to get chance in a good university*

(mean score 4.13; SD 1.106) are the two most important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills.

Conversely, among Bengali medium students, *to impress my friends/acquaintances* (mean score 2.93; SD 0.785) and *to impress my teachers* (mean score 2.90; SD 0.923) have been found to be the two least important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills; however, to their English medium counterparts, *to play video games* (mean score 2.67; SD 1.213) and *my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* (mean score 2.50; SD 1.042) are the two least important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills.

Moreover, considering a mean score above 4 to be indicative of higher importance of a motivational factor to develop English vocabulary, some of the motivational factors not directly related to English language skills are perceived as important by Bengali medium students but not by their English medium counterparts. Some of those factors include *to learn more about other countries/cultures/people; to make better use of Internet/information technology; to develop my computer skills; an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary; it will make me a more knowledgeable person;* and *my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary.*

On the other hand, among Bengali medium students, *to improve my spoken English* (mean score 4.73; SD 0.450) is the most important motivational factor related to English language skills; however, to their English medium counterparts, *to improve my written English* (mean score 4.23; SD 1.040) is the most important motivational factors directly related to English language skills.

Conversely, among Bengali medium students, *to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs* (mean score 3.90; SD 0.759) has been found to be the least important motivational factors not directly related to English language skills; however, to their English medium counterparts, *to get good marks in English Language / Literature* (mean score 3.47; SD 1.306) is the least important motivational factors directly related to English language skills.

Moreover, considering a mean score above 4 to be indicative of higher importance of a motivational factor to develop English vocabulary, some of the motivational factors not related to English language skills are perceived as important by Bengali medium students but not by their English medium counterparts. Some of such factors include *to meet and converse with foreigners; to understand and enjoy English Literature; to get good marks in English Language / Literature;* and *to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly.*

Interestingly, the average of the mean scores of the motivational factors not related to English language skills (3.96) of Bengali medium students is higher than that of English medium students (3.44). Also, the average of the mean scores of the motivational factors related to English language skills (4.28) of Bengali medium students is higher than that of English medium students (3.80).

Chapter-5: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Discussion on findings

In this study, it has been found that there are similarities and differences in motivation and skills for English vocabulary development among English and Bengali medium high school students although they are from two different streams of education.

Interestingly, both the English and Bengali medium students have placed higher importance of motivational factors related to English language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening than those not directly related to.

Among the motivational factors not directly related to English language skills, *I think English is a global language, and that's why I need strong English vocabulary* has been found to be one of the most important motivational factors. This finding suggests that irrespective of the stream they are enrolled in, both English medium and Bengali medium high school students have realized the importance of English as a global language. This finding is supported by many other authors, such as Read (2007) and Juan (2010) who have studied the motivational pattern of high school and college students in different countries or region where English is the second language.

In the era of globalization, a higher level of English skill has been considered very important by people to whom English is the second language to explore other cultures, countries and people. In this study, for Bengali medium students, *to learn more about other countries/cultures/people* has been found to be one of the most important motivational

factors. A number of studies, such as Leontovich (2005) and Asfour (2006) support this finding.

This study points to the fact that highly motivated learners from both English and Bengali medium develop their English vocabulary skill from their inner urge and personal interest; that is why motivational factors, such as to *impress my friends/acquaintances*, *to impress my teachers*, and *my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary* have been given very low scores by students from both the streams. Multiple studies, Graham et al. (2005) and Zheng at al. (2009) such as suggest the importance of personal interest and self-motivation in second language acquisition as well as English vocabulary development.

Interestingly, while *to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly* has been ranked as one of the most important skills-related motivational factors by English Medium students (the 5th out of 10), Bengali medium students have placed it at the 8th position, and they have placed higher value on *to understand and enjoy English Literature*. However, these findings, of course in other cultural settings, have been supported by the studies, such as August et al. (2005) and Kieffer (2007).

While the most important motivational factors related to English Language skills for Bengali Medium students to develop English vocabulary is *to improve my spoken English* (mean score 4.73 and SD 0.450), English medium students have placed the highest importance on *to improve my written English* (mean score 4.23, SD 1.040). English medium students have placed *to improve my spoken English* at the 2nd position in the rank. Placing higher emphasize on *to improve my spoken English* than *to improve my written English* by Bengali medium students suggests that they face more difficulty in improving spoken English than their English medium counterparts due to different instructional and educational environment. English medium students have the advantage of interacting among themselves as well as with

teachers in English. However, this study has revealed that irrespective of medium, high school students develop their English vocabulary mainly *to get chance in a good university* (mostly in developed countries), *to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams* and *to build a better carrier*. These findings are supported by various studies, such as   August et al. (2005), Liu (2007), Milton (2009).

Finally, the average of the mean scores of Bengali medium students of the motivational factors, whether they are related to English language skills or not are higher than that of English medium students, which indicates that Bengali medium students are more concerned about their progress in the acquisition of this second language than their English medium counterparts, and to them enhancing performance in English vocabulary development is comparatively more challenging. MacIntyre (2002), Clément et al. (2003), and Matsuda and Gobel (2004) have reported that English language learning anxiety lead to poor performance of many learners in the areas of various language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing and listening.

5.2 Conclusion and recommendations

The similarities in motivation and skills for English vocabulary development among senior high school students in Bangladeshi Bengali and English medium students can be related to globalization and an ever increasing importance of English language in the global and domestic context. Conversely, the differences are rooted to some micro level environmental contexts, for example, English medium students have more opportunity to access more resources to develop English vocabulary skills and use the words they learn more frequently. Also, English medium students have extra pressure from their parents and teachers to develop English skills for academic achievement. However, the differences in motivational factors

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among Bengali medium and English medium students are narrowing day by day thanks to the increasing dominance of English and the spread of information technology.

The findings of this study may be useful to educators in teaching English language to Bengali medium and English medium students in Bangladesh through adopting appropriate strategies as this study has identified most important and least important motivational factors influencing their vocabulary development. This study has also provided important insights about what language skills Bengali medium and English medium students want to develop via improving their stock of English Language vocabulary.

Also, learners' advancement in English language acquisition depends on individual efforts, student-teacher relationship, parental influence, the degree of exposure to the language, institutional environment, cultural aspects, educational policy environment and last but not the least national as well as global factors.

Finally, this study recommends that it is essential to review the English Language teaching-learning processes adopted in Bengali medium so that the learning environment is more supportive. The students should be given more opportunity to communicate in English among themselves as well as with teachers. Also, the curriculum needs to be updated so that students can engage in various types of interesting learning activities and thereby improve their self-confidence.

5.2 Limitations and Directions for future research

Clearly, this study has explored some important similarities and differences in motivation and skills for English vocabulary development among English and Bengali medium high school students in Bangladesh. However, this quantitative research design has some limitations, such as it is a cross-sectional study that provides only a snapshot; the sample size is small (60); the

respondents have been chosen using a snow-ball sampling method from the schools in Dhaka only; and lastly, the scales used in measuring responses have not been validated through rigorous statistical techniques.

Therefore, future research is necessary for a number of reasons, such as to validate the scales to choose more reliable variables to measure differences in motivation and skills for English vocabulary development; to deal with a large sample size; and to undertake a longitudinal study capable to capture contextual information.

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Appendix: The Research questionnaire

MA (ELT and Linguistics) Programme
Brac University

English vocabulary development of senior high school students: A study on the similarities and differences in motivation between English Medium and Bengali Medium learners

Researcher:

Sohag Biswas

Survey Participants:

Senior high school students from Bengali and English medium (year 9 to 12)

Part A (General Information)

1.	Your name (optional):	
2.	Your class:	**Nine/ Ten / Eleven / Twelve**
3.	Your school:	
4.	Gender:	**Male/Female**
5	Your medium of education:	**English Medium/Bengali Medium**
Date:		

Part B (Survey)

Instruction: Using the scale (1 to 5), please show your agreement/disagreement with each of the statements below in relation to your English vocabulary development. Please tick (√) the box (□) that best corresponds with your view. Please answer all the questions to the best of your ability.

					I do not agree at all	I do not agree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
					1	2	3	4	5
	I learn new English words....								
Q1	to improve my spoken English				□	□	□	□	□
Q2	to improve my written English				□	□	□	□	□
Q3	to get good marks in English Language / Literature				□	□	□	□	□
Q4	to improve my understanding English texts				□	□	□	□	□
Q5	to improve skills in subjects other than English				□	□	□	□	□
Q6	to participate effectively in classroom activities				□	□	□	□	□
Q7	to do good in SAT/TOEFL/IELTS exams				□	□	□	□	□
Q8	To get chance in a good university				□	□	□	□	□
Q9	to study abroad				□	□	□	□	□
Q10	to build a better career				□	□	□	□	□
Q11	to develop my computer skills				□	□	□	□	□
Q12	to make better use of Internet/information technology				□	□	□	□	□
Q13	to understand English movies, TV/radio programs and songs				□	□	□	□	□
Q14	to play video games				□	□	□	□	□
Q15	to solve crosswords (word game)				□	□	□	□	□

		I do not agree at all	I do not agree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5
	I learn new English words....					
Q16	to read English newspapers/magazines effortlessly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q17	to understand and enjoy English Literature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q18	to meet and converse with foreigners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q19	to use social networking site, such as Face book and Twitter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q20	to impress my teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q21	to impress my friends/acquaintances	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q22	to learn more about other countries/cultures/people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I learn new English words because....						
Q23	learning new English words often makes me happy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q24	a strong English vocabulary will make me smart	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q25	it will make me a more knowledgeable person	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q26	an educated person is supposed to have a strong English vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q27	I think English is a global language, and that's why I need a strong English vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q28	my parents encourage me to develop a strong English vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q29	my English teachers encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q30	my friends encourage me to develop a strong vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you so much for your time!