

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY BANGLADESHI IELTS TEST-TAKERS

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Declaration

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The thesis/project titled “Challenges Experienced by Bangladeshi IELTS Test-Takers” submitted by Khondaker Sumaiya Sultana (19163012) of Fall, 2020 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Arts in English on 9 January, 2021.

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Abstract

This study explored the challenges Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test, and to investigate this matter the researcher adopted a qualitative multiple case study approach. In addition, to conduct this study the researcher used purposive data sampling techniques to select eight participants where each of the participants was considered an individual case and semi-structured interviews were conducted with them. The researcher used Cummins quadrant model theory 1984 (p.12), to find out the challenges faced by the researchers and the findings of the study revealed that among four modules of IELTS test, reading was the most challenging part for them. In addition, time management, fear of repeating the test, continuity of the test and examiner's unfriendly attitude in speaking part were reported to be the most challenging part for Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers. The study also found that the examinees faced problems due to the lack of critical thinking skills, vocabulary knowledge and grammar. This study is notable as it highlights the gap of knowledge regarding the challenges test-takers face while taking IELTS test in an ESOL context as Bangladesh. It also recommended some plausible solutions to overcome the challenges mentioned by the participants.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents and to my sisters Tony and Riti.

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List of Acronyms

IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
IPR	Interview Protocol Refinement

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Due to the growing importance of English language, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) has become important for non-native English speakers to demonstrate their “linguistic credentials” (Pearson, 2019.p.1) for educational and vocational purposes. IELTS test result creates a platform for those who want to go to “anglophone countries, such as USA, UK, Australia, and New Zealand” (Kabir, 2018.p.77) as it is considered as a benchmark for university admission and immigration purposes. IELTS is developed and conducted jointly by British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge Assessment English and like any other high-stakes tests “IELTS condensed into single scores matched to brief descriptions of proficiency, requiring interpretation from both test-users and test-takers” (Pearson, 2019.1). As per Kar (2013), IELTS test has started to become popular in Bangladesh since the 1990s (as cited in Kabir, 2018) and the cause behind getting popularity of this high stake test in Bangladesh or any other ESOL country as it gives the scope to test-takers to enter into the global arena.

IELTS test is divided into 4 sections called ‘module or subtest’ (Chowdhury, 2010) and every module has different goals. The modules are the listening module, speaking module, reading module and writing module, and the time for an individual module is 3 hours. However, IELTS test is divided into two categories, general category and academic category. The academic category is designed in such a way which assists “teachers, educational experts and other service providers” Harvey and Nancy (1999), to evaluate a test-takers communication skill in the English language whereas, general category is designed for those test-takers who intend to go abroad for vocational purposes (as cited in Ahmadi Riasati,

Bavali 2019.p.18). Most students from Bangladesh who have attended private coaching centres and training session generally sit for academic module test, not for the general module. According to the test-takers' performance report (2016), 80.7% test takers attend the IELTS academic module whereas, 19.3% test-takers attend the general module section (Kabir, 2018). In addition, IELTS groups are divided into four categories, for instance, IELTS for postgraduate/higher education, IELTS for undergraduate learners, IELTS for immigration purposes and IELTS for personal reasons and self-assessment purposes but most of the test-takers from Bangladesh attend the IELTS test for postgraduate/higher education. Around 90% of candidates from Bangladesh intend to go abroad for seeking post-graduation or PhD degree (Khan, 2006).

1.2 Importance of IELTS Test

IELTS test plays a crucial role in any second language learners' life as this test is designed for evaluating second language learners' skills in the English language. The demand of English language is unquestionable in this new era because IELTS test is not only important for some particular persons who are planning to go abroad for educational or professional purposes rather it is inevitable for any non-native citizen from Australia, UK, the USA where the medium of instruction is English. People who are living in those countries are bound to speak in English to communicate with others. This is why, IELTS test is no longer considered as a "linguistic proficiency" test only; it is considered as a "comprehensive test" also, which evaluates the "communicative competence" of the test-takers (Ata, 2015).

Attending IELTS has become a trend to get admitted to a university. Almost 130 universities around the whole world accept the score of IELTS test for admission purpose (What is IELTS, 2019, para.1). Nowadays IELTS test is not only used for educational purposes it assists a candidate to prove his/ her calibre in English. In Bangladesh, almost all the job circulars mention that the candidates need to have a command in the English language and

the process of IELTS test assists a test-taker to build a good command in the English language.

1.3 Challenges of IELTS Examination in Bangladesh

IELTS test is challenging for most of the Bangladeshi test-takers as they are not accustomed to the question pattern of IELTS test. The IELTS test question pattern is completely different from our secondary and higher secondary examination processes, and even the university examinations also focus on students' theoretical knowledge as opposed to their practical knowledge in how to use the English language. On the contrary, the IELTS test puts more emphasis on test-takers' analytical knowledge as the aim of this test is to assess non-native speakers' English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in an academic and real-life context (Khan, 2006).

In Bangladesh, English is used as an ESL/EFL language and the students who attend the IELTS test has completed 12 years of formal education.

Despite this Bangladeshi test-takers find difficulty in IELTS test and one of the significant causes behind this difficulty is that test-takers are not familiar with the examination process of IELTS test. In Bangladesh, learners' English language knowledge is ascertained through MCQ questions, essay writing, paragraph writing (Chowdhury, 2010). Even, the secondary and higher secondary certificate examinations only focus on students' writing and reading skills. While there is little scope or no scope for developing learners' English language knowledge in particular, speaking and listening skills are not developed at all because the curriculum does not have any assessment system for assessing these skills (Khan, 2006). Furthermore, reading and writing materials are organised in such a way that students can memorise some particular topics and they will have their desired score. It is to be noted that in many Asian and South Asian countries "memorisation and imitation" (Khan, 2006) is considered as a learning strategy.

Along with this, coaching centres play a pivotal role to create challenges as they try to allure test-takers by giving false hope. Coaching centres affirm that it is possible to achieve band 7 or above by attending 3/6 month preparatory course without having any knowledge about the test-takers' linguistic knowledge. This is why most of the examinees attend IELTS test without any proper preparation and they face challenges and due to this reason, they do not get good marks in IELTS test. Sometimes they attend IELTS test more than one time which costs money and it is challenging for examinees who are not financially solvent (Kaur, 2013). Many other challenges that students face are yet to be explored.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

At present, a remarkable number of students from all around the world choose IELTS test as they aspire for having an academic or professional life outside their countries of origin. Every year around 3 million test-takers around the world attend IELTS test and 10000 educational institutions from 140 countries throughout the world rely on the band score of IELTS test for academic admissions (What is IELTS, 2019, para.1). However examinees from non-native (ESOL) countries experience difficulties in IELTS test because they are often not fluent in English. Various literature have focused on numerous problems of IELTS test for instance, cultural bias in IELTS test (Freimuth, 2016; Freimuth, 2013; & Khan, 2006), examiners gender on test-takers' performance (Altakhaineh et al. 2019), influence of test-takers sociocultural background in IELTS test (Pavlovskaya, & Lord, 2018) and many other aspects. Bangladeshi IELTS test takers also experience challenges while taking IELTS test. As per a news published by *The Daily Star*, 10000-15000 test-takers from Bangladesh take IELTS test each year (Kaur,2013) and most of the IELTS test-takers fail to achieve their desired score when they attend the examination for the first time. Even some test-takers fail to achieve the score in the second round. Around 2000-2500 test-takers attend preparatory courses under the

British Council and the rest of the examinees take tuition from private tutors or coaching centres to achieve their desired band score (Kaur, 2013).

In order to find out the main reasons behind difficulties of test-takers, one must know why the test-takers fail to achieve the score. Moreover, to provide solution to this problem, first the reasons are to be identified so that solutions can be devised around those issues. The test-takers' perspective and IELTS test-takers' perspectives on the solutions of these difficulties are very important to look at so that the issues related the IELTS difficulties can be minimised. However, there are limited studies on challenges faced by learners of ESOL context in IELTS test for instance, Bangladesh and this study aims to find out the challenges faced by Bangladeshi test-takers in IELTS test in all four modules. The findings will be beneficial of the future test takers to prepare well for the test and focus more on their prominent problem.

To date, limited studies have been conducted on finding out the challenges IELTS test-takers face while taking the test. There is a significant gap in the literature on what kind of difficulties the examinees of Bangladesh are facing in IELTS test.

1.5 Main Objectives of the Study

The focal purpose behind conducting this study is to investigate the challenges IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test on all sections as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Furthermore, this study also attempts to explore what steps test takers take to overcome these challenges in attending the IELTS test.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research-questions have been formed to answer main objective of the study throughout the whole study-

1. What kinds of challenges do Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers face while taking the test?
2. How do they feel about the entire process of taking preparation of IELTS, attending the examination, and applying for various universities from the beginning till the end?
3. How do the test-takers overcome these challenges to achieve their desired score?

1.7 Nature of the Study

This study follows qualitative method in nature for investigating the main objective because this method will allow the participants to share the problems they experience in IELTS test. A qualitative study assists a researcher to explore any problem from the participants whenever he/she might have a little knowledge about the topic and wants to explore more through the participants (Creswell, 2012.p.16). Furthermore, participants' comments on the challenges they have experienced in IELTS test are more suitable to analyse in qualitative method rather than in quantitative method because the study is looking at the attitude, feelings and opinions of the participants (Trần, 2018).

1.8 Significance of the Study

To date, few studies have been conducted to investigate the challenges of ESOL country's examinees' experience in IELTS test, and this study fills the gap of knowledge on what kinds of challenges IELTS test-takers experience in IELTS test.

The participants who have been interviewed through the interview session were from Bangladesh, and in Bangladesh, English is used as an official language. Hence, this study can be useful for test-takers who attend IELTS test from ESOL country. To investigate the research problem the researcher uses Cummins' quadrant model theory, and the theory assists the researcher to discover what makes English language testing system difficult for ESOL countries examinees. Moreover, the strategies which are mentioned in this study can be used by any other ESOL countries test-takers to overcome the barriers while taking the test.

Previous studies which have been conducted on IELTS test focuses on various aspect of IELTS test for instance; what types of challenges teachers experienced in teaching IELTS students (Roza,2019), the impact of examiner's gender (Altakhainh, 2019), and test-takers socio cultural backgrounds (Pavlovskaya, Lord 2018) on an examinees performance as well. The current study will expand some new knowledge in this sector by illustrating that what kinds of challenges Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test in all four modules.

The result of this study might be favourable for IELTS examinees, trainers of IELTS examinee's to develop the teaching processes and learning strategies. In line with, the plausible outcome of this study will provide guidelines for further studies in this field, and it also shows a glimpse to further IELTS test-takers to understand what types of challenges they face in IELTS test.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The prime focus of this study is to investigate the challenges which are faced by Bangladeshi examinees in IELTS test. This section discusses the scholarly works related to IELTS test difficulty, what has been experienced by test-takers in IELTS test. Along with this, this section tries to find a gap in the existing literature regarding IELTS test difficulty. However, the whole literature review section is divided into 4 parts and these are discussed in the following sections.

2.1 Overview of IELTS Test

IELTS or International English language Testing system acts as a standardised testing process to who wants to pursue their career or live in such a country where English is used as a way of interaction (Zhang & Graham, 2020). Every year around 3 million test-takers from different countries sit for this high-stake test, where their English language proficiency is measured. Moreover, IELTS test is divided into four sections; listening, speaking, reading and writing and the test scores are reported on a band scale where band 1 is considered the lowest and band 9 is considered the highest band score. More than 10000 institutions from 140 countries have approved the score of IELTS test for college or university admission (What is IELTS, 2019, para .1).

2.2 Listening Challenges Encounter by Examinees

Listening skill is considered as one of the effective and challenging skills for language learning and due to some reasons test-takers in IELTS test experience challenges in IELTS listening section and the reasons are mentioned in here:

2.2.1 Tempo of Speech

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of the tempo of speech in IELTS listening section, and Ata (2015) has conducted a quantitative study over 200 students and the study has found that 60% examinees dislike the tempo of the speed in the listening test. In the same vein, Tran & Nguyen (2018) have found in their study that, due to the tempo of the speech 78.7% examinees face challenges in IELTS listening section. Examinees from L2 background cannot digest when the speaker speaks too fast without any break or pause (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Azmi, Celik, Yidliz & Tugrul (2014) have mentioned that low quality of listening materials; cultural unfamiliarity, unfamiliar lexical resources and the tempo of the speech create challenges for learners to grasp listening materials (as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

2.2.2 Confidence

Traditionally, it has been argued that examinees might feel low confidence in the high-stakes test but a study has been conducted by Phakiti (2016) where the writer narrates that test-takers feel overconfident to answer all four sections in IELTS listening test and it is also marked in the study that their confidence level is much higher than their performance. The author has also found that test-takers feel 25% more confident in difficult tasks rather than an easy task. In contrast to Phakiti (2016), Tran & Nguyen, (2018) have mentioned in their study that test-takers experience low confidence in IELTS listening section and the mean score of confidence level is 3.84 as well as, examinees experience a low level of confidence in section 4 than the other sections.

2.2.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is considered as one of the difficult factors which have an impact on IELTS listening test. A study has attempted to investigate this matter by Dabbagh (2016) where the authors have found that the depth of vocabulary knowledge is important for L2 learners to deal with listening activities and listening materials even it is more important than vocabulary breadth as “L2 listeners need paradigmatic as well as syntagmatic knowledge about the individual words heard in an aural context so that they can attach the best meaning to them (p.8). In the same vein, Namaziandost et al. (2019); Juan and Abidin (2013) have mentioned in their study that learners from the second language often found difficulties in the listening test due not to understand the meaning of vocabulary.

IELTS listening test is such type of test which demands a listener’s deep knowledge of vocabulary (Dabbagh, 2016). This view is supported by Farshad & Effatpanah (2018) who write that lack of knowledge about lexical resources and syntax creates an obstacle for listeners in IELTS test.

2.2.4 Anxiety

Several attempts have been made to investigate the relationship between anxiety level and test-takers' performance in IELTS test. A recent study by Hartono (2019) has found that anxiety does not have any remarkable relation with test taker's performance in IELTS listening test, but the study has also mentioned that respondents experience a moderate level of anxiety during the IELTS listening test than the other sections. In contrast, Golchi (2012) has mentioned in his study that there is a significant negative correlation among listening anxiety, listening strategy and listening comprehension. When examinees experienced anxiety their listening comprehension ability became low and they become unable to use more metacognitive strategies than the low anxious learners. As per Sioson (2011), metacognitive strategies can alleviate the fear of communication and the general feelings of anxiety (p.124) (as cited in Golchi, 2012).

2.3 Writing Challenges Encounter by Examinees

Writing is considered as the most difficult part in IELTS test and there are many reasons behind it (Ata, 2015). The causes are broadly described below:

2.3.1 Vocabulary Knowledge

A good number of studies have been published on the importance of vocabulary knowledge for IELTS test. In 2019, Maharani & Setyarini has published a paper in which they have described that the biggest challenges arise due to the lack of vocabulary knowledge. Respondents have opined that IELTS examinees require writing an enormous amount of words within a limited time frame and it impossible for examinees to fulfil this requirement without having sound knowledge of lexical resources. Along with this, examinees have faced challenges to construct the main ideas in writing, due to limited vocabulary knowledge. Similarly, Ata (2015) has mentioned that the length of the text, having abundant knowledge about grammar and lexical resources are the reasons examinees dislike writing section than

the other sections. This view is supported by Awwalia & Suhardi (2020) who tries to investigate the most common lexical resources has used by examinees'. And the research has found that the most common lexical cohesive devices used by the test takers are the repetition of the same word and the reason behind it, a little amount of vocabulary knowledge. In the same vein, Divsar & Heydari (2017) have mentioned in their study that word choice errors or lack of knowledge about lexical resources are the main mistakes that have occurred by test-takers during IELTS writing test.

2.3.2 Challenges Faced by Test-takers in Writing Task 1

A study by Ahmadi, Riasati & Bavali (2019) has revealed that examinees performed well in writing about the chart than a table with numerics though the score of coherence and cohesion in table and chart did not show any remarkable difference. Moreover, examinees performed well in chart topic than table topic in terms of lexical resources, grammar and vocabulary (Ahmadi, Riasati & Bavali, 2019). This study has mentioned that IELTS examinees are skilled at task achievement and grammar range and accuracy both in bar chart and table writing respectively. The study has also mentioned that test-takers' have shortcomings on coherence and cohesion part in table writing, on the contrary, in bar chat writing examinees have shortcomings on lexical resources (Ahmadi, Riasati, Bavali & Lu, 2019). Farid & Saifuddin (2018) have stated that all the participants' express their view that essay structure is considered as the most common problem for both task 1 and 2. Moreover, except essay structure examinees also face problems in task 1 such as; "run-on sentence, conjunction, determiner, preposition, agreement, tense, countable/non-countable, overlapping and missing verb" (p.59). The most usual mistakes are made by examinee in task 2 such as; "conjunction, word form, agreement, run-on, fragment and determiner" (p.59).

2.3.3 Cultural Bias

Several studies have attempted to investigate the cultural bias in IELTS test. Freimuth (2016) has stated that cultural bias is presented in the IELTS writing test. The study has found that topics of the writing test related to social science and geographical locations are referring to western countries. 79% of the geographical locations which are mentioned in the question paper related to western countries whereas 58% subject matters related to social sciences (Abstract).

2.4 Speaking Challenges Encounter by Examinees

Speaking is considered a more challenging part than the previous sections, and these challenges arise from examinees' lack of confidence at the interview board, interviewer's pronunciation, and answered an enormous amount of questions within a limited time frame (Ata, 2015). Except this, examinees experienced numerous problems also which are mentioned below:

2.4.1 Examiners Gender and Culture

To determine the effect of examiner's gender on examinees' performance, Altakhaineh, Tkhayneh & Rahrourh (2019) have conducted a survey and discovers the fact that IELTS examiner's gender and culture may have an impact on examinees' "linguistic behaviour" (p. 47) and performance on IELTS test. The author writes examinees can discover him/her in an uncomfortable place due to the examiner's gender and it will affect their performance. Similarly, Ata (2015) has conducted a quantitative study of over 200 examinees from Arab, India and Chinese and the study has demonstrated that examiner's gender has an impact on test-takers performance.

2.4.2 Examinees Socio-Cultural Background

The socio-cultural background is one of the principal factors impacting on test-takers performance in IELTS speaking section. Pavlovskaya & Lord (2018) has demonstrated that examinees language knowledge is not enough to perform well in IELTS test; rather there are

other factors like examinees socio-cultural background and behavioural patterns influence examinees' performance on IELTS speaking test. The way examinees provide answers during the IELTS test which are influenced by their socio- Cultural tradition.

2.4.3 Pronunciation and Word Choice

In IELTS speaking section test-takers usually have problems with pronunciation and word choice. To determine the effects of pronunciation and word choice in speaking test Dashti & Razmjoo (2020) have conducted a mixed-method study over 59 IELTS examinees and the quantitative aspect of the study has demonstrated that test-takers experience challenges on pronunciation whereas the qualitative aspect has mentioned that not only pronunciation but also the incapability of word choice creates a constraint for examinees in IELTS speaking section

2.5 Challenges Experienced by Examinees in IELTS Reading Test

Reading test is one of the difficult parts in IELTS test and examinees experience a range of challenges while taking the test. For instance, time management, lack of ability to use appropriate reading strategies, inability to find out the meaning of a lexical item from a text, and insufficient knowledge about the topic of the exam (Holi et al., 2020). Along with this, test-takers also experience difficulty for an unfamiliar topic, the shortcoming of critical reading ability. Except these test-takers face some other challenges also which are discussed below.

2.5.1 Vocabulary Knowledge

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the significance of vocabulary knowledge for IELTS reading comprehension test. For instance, Chen & Liu (2020) have mentioned that there is a correlation between ESL students' vocabulary sense and their performance in the IELTS reading test. True/ false/ not given is mostly correlated with vocabulary breadth whereas multiple-choice and matching headings are related to vocabulary

depth and vocabulary breadth is considered more important than vocabulary depth. Similarly, Alrasheed (2019) states that ESL students have encountered a wide range of difficulties in academic reading, but lack of knowledge about lexical resources is considered the most difficult aspect learners encountered in reading. Unlike Alrasheed, Guntur & Rahimi (2019) argues that grammar and vocabulary are not the main aspects of becoming a master of reading comprehension. They rather suggest that background knowledge plays a more significant role in becoming a good reader. Poulaki, Dowlatabadi, Ahmadian, & Yazdani (2020) have identified the difficulties mainly faced by examinee in IELTS test and these are 1) examinees' inability to detect some particular information, 2) unable to catch the explanation of any word or phrase 3) unable to catch the main idea from a paragraph or any kind of writing 4) inadequate power to surmise 5) inability to catch the writer's outlook

2.5.2 Summarising

Summarising is considered as one of the crucial elements for reading comprehension and study by (Mirzaei, Vincheh & Hashemia, 2020) have demonstrated that 47% examinees have found summarizing as one the most difficult attributes for IELTS reading. According to Grabe (2009), examinees face difficulty in summarising as they try to focus on details rather than main ideas (as cited in Mirzaei, Vincheh & Hashemia, 2020).

2.5.3 Anxiety

Some writers have attempted to draw a fine distinction between examinees' anxiety level and their performance in IELTS reading test. Barzegar & Hadidi (2015) have stated that IELTS reading comprehension items and reading anxiety level have a significant relationship with each other and skimming is considered the most dominant items which increase the anxiety level of examinees. Other items are Scanning, classification, table-completion, and true/false and "task difficulty, task familiarity and sequencing" are the causes which makes these items difficult. Moreover, Barzegar, Hadidi (2016) mentions that IELTS reading test and test-takers

anxiety are correlated with one another and the anxiety can affect examinees performance and the value of the effect is -0.502.

2.5.4 Cultural Bias

In an analysis of cultural bias Freimuth (2013) has found that cultural biases exist in IELTS reading test and due to this cultural bias, test-takers are bound to experience topic unfamiliarity in IELTS reading section. Through the analysis of the reading test, it has been shown that only 4% of places of the whole Middle East country are referred and there is no sign of UAE country. Due to the unfamiliarity or background knowledge of topics test-takers need to re-read the passages which consume their time. Similarly, Freimuth (2014) has mentioned in another study that cultural bias exists in IELTS test though IELTS organisation denies it (Abstract).

2.5.5 Inferring and Critical Thinking

In an investigation into inferring and critical thinking Ghanizadeh, Pour & Hosseini (2017) have found that examinees' inferring capability and critical thinking ability have significance on examinees' IELTS reading score. The study has demonstrated that examinees' inferring capability and critical thinking ability has 10% impact on examinees whole score on reading test. This study is in line with the study which has conducted by (McIntosh, 1985; Farr, Carey & Tone, 1986) where the writers have mentioned that inference is paramount for reading comprehension (as cited in Ghanizadeh, Pour & Hosseini, 2017).

2. 6 Challenges Bangladeshi Examinees Experience in IELTS test

2.6.1 Challenges in Reading Test

Very few studies have attempted to explore the difficulties experienced by Bangladeshi examinees during IELTS test. A study has conducted by Chowdhury (2009), she has described unfamiliar words, examinees inability to grasp the meaning of a paragraph after reading, sentence structure, examinees' lack of knowledge about grammar and punctuation,

lack of knowledge about technical and sub-technical vocabulary play a significant role to make a reading test difficult for examinees.

In addition, cultural unfamiliarity, time management and examinees lack of practice on IELTS reading test are the factors which make the reading comprehension tasks difficult.

2.6.2 Challenges in Writing Test

Very few studies have attempted to explore the difficulties experienced by Bangladeshi examinees during IELTS test. A study has conducted by Kabir (2018) has mentioned that Bangladeshi examinees face difficulty due to culturally not familiar topics in writing part 2. In addition, the study has stated that “IELTS test has lack of regional and social variations in terms of content and linguistic features”. This view is supported by Khan (2006) who writes that Bangladeshi test-takers face an obstacle in IELTS test due to culturally unfamiliar texts. His study has stated that cultural bias is inherently presented in the question pattern of IELTS test, topic and vocabulary section (as cited in Roshan, 2013). In this regard, Freimuth (2014) has stated that the test-takers band score has also affected due to unfamiliar text (as cited in Kabir, 2018).

2.6.3 Challenges in Speaking Test

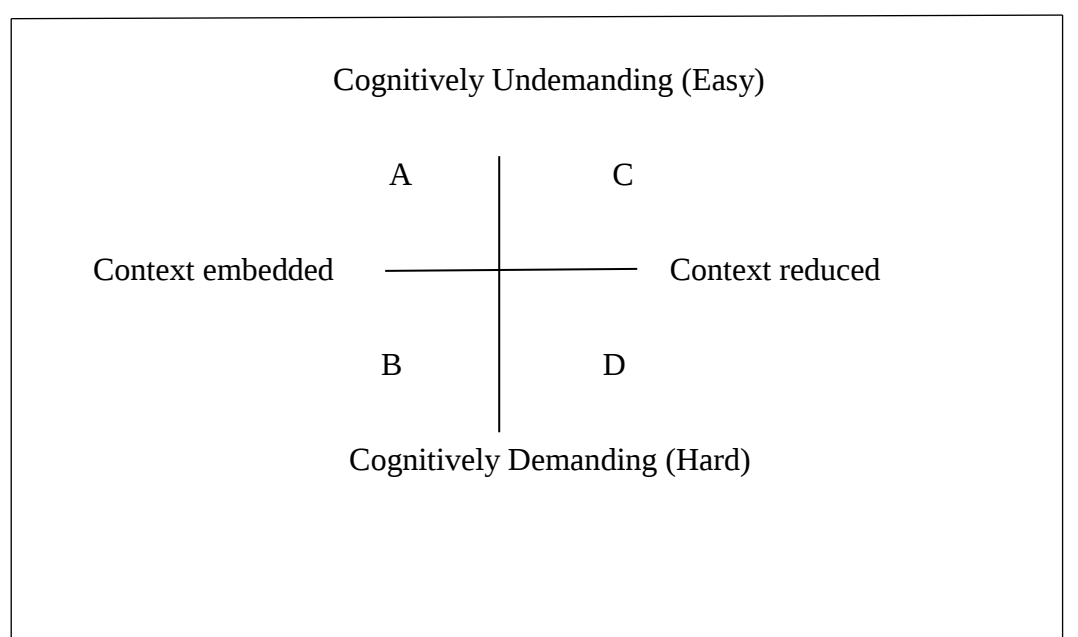
Studies have attempted to investigate the cultural bias in IELTS speaking test and this study mentioned that Bangladeshi test-takers experience challenges in IELTS speaking test due to the culturally unfamiliar topic, unfamiliar lexical resources. It reveals that the topic of the speaking test, lexical items and some language which are used in the speaking test has a reflection on western society, which are not familiar to local examinees, and it also affects their performance on speaking test (Khan, 2006).

To summarise, very few studies have attempted to explore the difficulties experienced by IELTS test-takers of an ESOL context such as Bangladesh. That is why this study attempts to

bridge the gap of knowledge regarding IELTS test-takers' challenges in the context of Bangladesh.

The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded on Cummins' quadrant model theory 1984 (p.12). As per Cummins' theory, learners need different kinds of support and instruction on different levels to learn the English language. Cummins has created a model to make understanding what makes English language learning challenging or easier and this challenge depends on the "relationship between the cognitive demand of the task and the amount of available contextual support" (Cummins, 191984.p.12). Cummins' quadrant model has four quadrants which are divided into two intersections.



Source: Cummins. J (2000): p.68

The first quadrant context embedded/context reduced evaluates the significance of context in language learning. Context assists a learner to predict the meaning of the word especially, "the more spoken and written words are supported or embedded in context, the easier they are

to understand” (P.12). In spoken and written, facial expressions, gestures, body language, images, charts, graphs can play the role of context. Tasks which are only combined with spoken and written words are called context reduced tasks.

The second quadrant of Cummins’ theory talks about the cognitive challenge, and the degree of the cognitive challenge is easy and hard. The two upper quadrants represent speaking and written task which is undemanding (easy) in socially and academically. On the other hand, the two lower quadrants task which is cognitively demanding. These tasks are cognitively challenging and need higher-order thinking and advanced language skills.

Methodology**3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology which has adopted for investigating this study. The prime aim of this study is to explore the challenges test-takers experience in IELTS test, and this exploration will be done by using multiple case study method. In addition, this chapter discusses the causes of selecting qualitative study and how it assists to answer the present research questions. The first research question attempts to identify what kinds of challenges Bangladeshi test-takers experience while taking the test. The second research question aims to discover the procedures of taking preparation for IELTS test. Eventually, the third research question tries to disclose the strategies to overcome the challenges.

3.2 The Qualitative Paradigm and Its Philosophical Assumptions

Qualitative research follows a particular paradigm and the paradigm is based on four philosophical assumptions with regard to ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. Among all these paradigms this study has chosen interpretivism paradigm to find out the challenges test-takers experience in IELTS test. According to Wahyuni (2012) interpretivists hold the belief that “reality is constructed by social actors and people’s perceptions” (p.71), and this reality is not concrete because “these human perspectives and experiences are subjective, social reality may change and can have multiple perspectives” (Hennink et al. 2011). In addition, this research paradigm is fully based on qualitative research methodology to find out the research questions. Wills (2007) asserted that “interpretivists tend to favour qualitative methods such as case studies and ethnography” (as cited in Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

The philosophical assumption which is described in the table is adapted from Wahyuni (2012) “The Research Design Maze: Understanding Paradigms, Cases, Methods and Methodologies” (p.70).

Research paradigm	Ontological	Epistemological	Axiological	Methodological
Interpretivism	Multiple realities exist as multiple cases are involved in this study.	Puts emphasis on the details of the situation behind the reality	Researcher and the research are not separated from one another. Researcher's value will be reflected in research.	Qualitative

According to Wahyuni (2012), the ontological assumption of interpretivism paradigm is multiple realities exist in the society and due to this, the researcher of the current study has interviewed multiple test-takers and multiple IELTS teachers to find out the reality. Here, participants' opinion acts as a means to find out the reality. The second category of the assumption is an epistemological assumption, which holds the belief that to find out the real one needs to focus on the details of the situation. As per the interpretivism paradigm, the researcher should do an in-depth investigation (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). That is why the researcher took the interviews of both the test-takers and their IELTS teachers. The next category is an axiological assumption and it determines the fact that researcher and the aspect which is being researched are not separated from one another. Researcher's belief will be reflected in the study. Finally, the methodological assumption of this paradigm is qualitative. The qualitative method encourages the researcher to take interview of the participants or use

focus group discussion method to collect data. In this study, the researcher will be interviewed the participants to collect data.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is an essential element of a study, as it assists a researcher to select which research method is more appropriate to address the research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). However, the researcher developed the research design approach by considering the previous literature and research questions as well as this study follows interpretivism research paradigm, and interpretivism research paradigm demands naturalistic approach for data collection such as “interviews or observations” and “qualitative study” to investigate the research problem. To conduct this study the researcher has chosen qualitative research design approach, as qualitative study seems more appropriate to answer the research questions. The central aim of this study is to answer the following research questions:

1. What kinds of challenges do Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers face while taking the test?
2. How do they feel about the entire process of taking preparation of IELTS, attending the examination, and applying for various universities from the beginning till the end?
3. How do the test-takers overcome these challenges to achieve their desired score?

Qualitative study is more suitable when “the literature might yield little information about the phenomenon of study” and the researcher wants to know more from participants “through exploration” (Creswell, 2015.p.16). However, regarding the present research topic there is not a significant amount of existing literature, and the researcher wants to explore more through the conversation with the participants this is why the researcher has chosen qualitative approach.

This study mainly focuses on Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers' personal experience, personal perspectives, opinions regarding the challenges Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test, and qualitative research allows a researcher "to understand human behavior and experience" (RESEARCH DESIGN,CH.4,N.D) more closely than quantitative or mixed method research.

3.4 Multiple Case Study Approach

Case study is an "intensive, systematic investigation" where a researcher deeply investigates the variables related to a "single individual, group community or some other unit" (Heale & Twycross 2018.p.7). The purpose of case study is to "elicit discussion" and "analyse a particular situation" as well as it provides scope to learners to assess a problem, and analyses it from multiple aspects ((Naumes & Naumes, p.4.2014).

There are different kinds of case studies for instance; Yin (2003) categories case studies as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive as well as he also differentiates between single, holistic and multiple case studies whereas Stake (1995) categories case studies in 3 different sectors and they are intrinsic, instrumental, or collective (as cited in Baxter, Jack, 2008). Among all these case study research design approaches the researcher has chosen multiple case studies. Multiple-case study is required, if the study has more than one single cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008) and it allows a researcher "for more in depth understanding of the cases as a unit" (Heale & Twycross, 2017.p 7). In multiple case studies the researcher analyses multiple cases to understand the differences and similarities between the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Moreover, the researcher has chosen multiple case study approach as it allows the researcher to investigate the research problem deeply as well as multiple participants are connected with

this study. In addition multiple case studies assist a researcher to find out the similarities and differences among the cases to reach any conclusion.

3.5 Researcher's Role

The researcher has not taken IELTS test yet, but she attended IELTS coaching for 3 months in Mentors, where she found that a significant number of students from Bangladesh joined coaching centers for taking preparation on IELTS test. Whereas the majority of the students who have attended IELTS coaching already sat for IELTS test, even the researcher has met some students also who attended IELTS test more than two times. The students have shared their experiences that they faced different kinds of difficulties while taking the test, and they could not achieve their desire band score which forces them to attend IELTS test again and again. The situation has made the researcher being terrified and encouraged her to conduct this study on what kinds of challenges Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experience in IELTS test.

In this study, the researcher uses 3rd person pronoun to ensure the aspect that the researcher does not have any personal bias towards the topic. Apart from this to ensure the reliability and validity of the study the researcher has send the data to the inter-rater to check the theme of the study. Throughout the whole study, the researcher plays a facilitators role, and never tries to put her own opinion.

3.6 Setting

The setting of the study is Bangladesh and the reason for choosing Bangladesh is that every year a significant number of students from Bangladesh attend IELTS test for pursuing higher degree or immigration purposes. In Bangladesh English is used as an official/second language, and examinees who attend IELTS test from Bangladesh spend 12 years of formal

education in school and college before attending IELTS test. Despite this fact students from Bangladesh face some challenges in IELTS test, and the prime aim of this study is to find out what kinds of challenges Bangladeshi test-takers experience while taking IELTS test.

3.7 Selecting the Participants

To gain the appropriate data the researcher needs to select an appropriate data sampling techniques, and to conduct this study the researcher has chosen purposive data sampling techniques. This type of data sampling techniques falls under non-probability sampling methods and non-probability sampling techniques is considered as more appropriate for qualitative study (MC Combes, 2019). In purposive sampling researchers' opinion plays crucial role for selecting participants who can join as a participant.

The researcher has collected data until she found that the participants repeat the same issues and there is no possibility to arise new themes from further discussion. This is called data saturation, and data saturation or repetition of themes certifies that the researcher has collected enough relevant data (Faulkner & Trotter (2017). In this regard Saunders, et al. (2018) has mentioned that “further data collection or analysis is unnecessary” (p.1893) if there is no probability to arise any new themes.

The main criteria for selecting participants for this study who had attended IELTS test at least once a time, and whose band score is not less than 6. As per the characteristics of IELTS test band 6 English scorers are considered as “competent user” who has good command in English language though he/she has the tendency to do mistakes.

3.8 An Overview of Data Collection Procedures

There are number of ways to collect data for qualitative study and for this study the researcher chose interview method for data collection and the following sections will be

describing the procedures of data collection broadly. According to Creswell (2015) in both qualitative and in quantitative the researcher can collect data through observation, document analysis and interviewing the participants (p.205).

3.9 Semi-Structured Interviews

In qualitative studies, different kinds of interviews are conducted to collect information from the respondents and they are structured, semi-structured, unstructured, focus group discussion and group interviews (Lowe, 2007.p.81). Among all the interview types, the researcher has chosen semi-structured interview to collect data from the participants. As per Flick (2009) semi-structured interview is considered as one of the best methods for qualitative research data collection, and it is valuable because it allows the researchers to explore the “subjective viewpoint” and “gather in depth accounts of people’s experience” (as cited in Evans, 2018.p.2). Though, this process allows the researcher to set the interview questions before the interview session begins, but the researcher has the scope to raise follow up questions as per the participants’ response (Lowe, 2007. p.81).

3.10 Designing the Interview Protocol

Interview protocol is considered as one of the most important aspect for qualitative research and the researcher has adopted the four-phase interview protocol refinement (IPR) to design the interview questions for semi-structured interview session (Castillo-Montoya, 2016. p.812). The interview protocol is consisted of four phases and this are-

Phase 1: Ensuring interview questions aligned with research questions

Phase 2: Constructing an inquiry-based conversation

Phase 3: Receiving feedback on interview protocols

Phase 4: Piloting the interview protocol

Phase one put more emphasis on the relation between interview questions and research questions as, this relation helps to understand the importance of interview questions in the whole research process. The researcher has tried to make an alignment between research questions and interview questions.

The second phase of this interview protocol has tried to ensure the thing that the interview questions need to be different from the research questions. In addition, the second phase of this interview protocol allows the researcher to follow the pattern of normal conversation, it means that the researchers asks only one question at a time and give some time to answer it. Researcher asks different type of questions and he/she will be prepared to ask follow up question to make the interview session more communicative.

Third phase of the IPR interview protocol is collecting feedback. The purpose of collecting feedback is to enrich the “reliability” and “trustworthiness” of the interview (Castillo-Montoya, 2016. p.824). In this regard, Patton, 2015 has stated that feedback is crucial for a researcher to understand how much the participants understand the interview questions, and is their understanding is close to what the researcher has expected from them.

The fourth phase of IPR framework is piloting the interview, where the actual interview is held, but in a small way. Piloting assists the researcher to gather some knowledge about how long the interview session will be held, and whether the participants will be able to answer the questions the researcher intends to find out. In this regard, Merriam (2009) has stated that “the best way to tell whether the order of your questions works or not is to try it out in a pilot interview” (p.104).

3.11 Piloting the Interview Session

The fourth stage of IRP framework asks the researcher to take interview of some participants before conducting the final interview session. This is called piloting the interview, and to pilot the interview the researcher has taken Aparajita (pseudonyms) and Rakib's (pseudonyms) interview. The reason for choosing them as a participant as both of them has attended IELTS very recently and Aparajita who has obtained good band score in IELTS test whilst Rakib has obtained moderate band score in IELTS test. The researcher has attempted to get information from two different band score's participants so that she could gather clear information about what she has intended to know. Moreover, it is absurd if the researcher has taken random examinees interview who have attended IELTS test long before and both of them share the same band score. Apart from this the researcher decided to keep the data aside from the main study which has obtained from pilot interview session as piloting is considered as a demo interview session which has assisted the researcher to understand how much the research question is fruitful to get the data what the researcher has intended to know from the participants as well as it allows the researcher to add/omit question if needed based on the participants answers (Gani et al.2020). Therefore, pilot study has helped the researcher to collect small feedback before conducting the final interview session and based on this feedback researcher has made "adjustments to and refine the research methodology" (Ismail et al. (2017).

3.12 Final interview Session

Interview is considered as a "backbone of data collection in qualitative research design" (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017.p.2), and for final interview session of the study the researcher has followed semi structured interview pattern as well as group interviews. The purpose of conducting interviews in two ways is to get rich information from the participants. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), group interview is effective at the beginning of the research as

it assists a researcher to “identify the potential lines of inquiry” (as cited in Lowe, 2007.p.81) whereas the semi structured interview tries to investigate the participants experiences very deeply (Adams, 2010). The procedures of conducting the interview session are given below.

Due to the coronavirus problem the researcher conducts the whole interview session on zoom and the researcher has fixed the time of interview by talking with the participants. Each group interviews take 40-50 minutes and each group has two participants. The researcher has taken two group interviews where two participants are being interviewed by the researcher, and the rest of the participants are interviewed individually.

To conduct a successful interview session a researcher needs to follow some general skills while taking interview such as “listening carefully, managing silence, being non judgmental, allowing the participant to guide” (Adam, 2010. P.20). The researcher also follows these guidelines, the researcher has silenced during the interview, and encourages other participant to become silent in group interviews as well as the researcher has taken pause after asking any questions so that participants can response. Researcher listens to the participant’s response very carefully and she has never tried to jump on the conversation before finishing participant’s response. Moreover, before starting the interview the researcher has announced the purpose of the research and told the participants about the role of interviewee so that they can express their view about regarding the research problem without any hesitation. The researcher also motivates the participants by saying “yeah, right, uh”

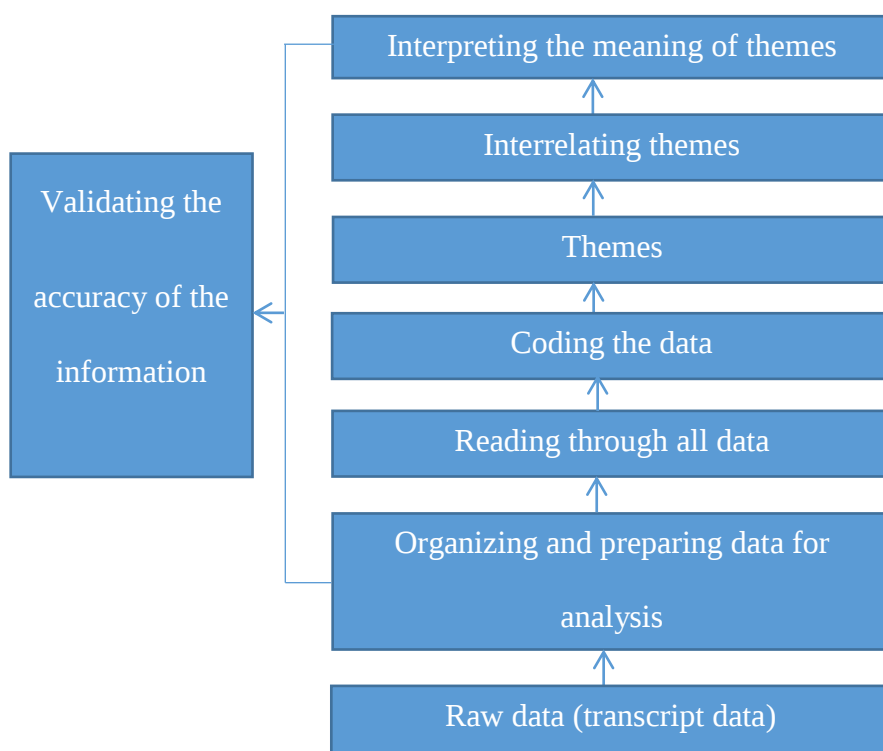
3.13 An Overview of Data Analysis

The data analysis chapter will broadly discuss the procedure of how the researcher analyses the interview data step by step. To analyse the data the researcher has adopted Creswell’s qualitative data analysis framework (2018.p.269) and the following section will be described the data analysis procedures broadly.

3.14 Data Analysis Framework

Selecting an appropriate data analysis framework based on the research questions is very important to conduct a research study appropriately. To conduct this study the researcher has chosen qualitative thematic analysis. As per Braun & Clarke (2006) & King (2004) thematic analysis is efficient when the researcher intends to discover the different participants' perspectives, highlight the similarities and dissimilarities among the participants' perspectives as well as produce unanticipated insights (as cited in Nowell et al. 2017). In line with, the researcher has collected different participants' opinion through the interview session, discovers the similarities and dissimilarities among their perspectives, and create themes.

To analyse the data the researcher adapted Creswell's data analysis qualitative framework (2018,p.269) and the following section will describe the data analysis procedures broadly.



Organize and prepare the data for analysis: In the first phase, the researcher has transcribed all the interviews as well as calculated them. Then the researcher has sorted and arranged them based on the sources of their information.

Read or look at the data: The second phase has provided a general view to the researcher about the information as well as creates scope to get the overall meaning of the data. For example, what is the general view of the participants' interview? What is the tone of the interview? What is the overall impression of the validity and credibility of the information? To sum up, the second phase has provided a clear tone of the interview to the researcher.

Coding the data: In the third phase, the researcher coded all the interview data. As per (Rossman & Rallis, 2012) coding is a procedure of collecting data and selects a particular word that represents the category of the information. The researcher has maintained in vivo term to code all the data it means the researcher has used raw data for transcription.

Generate a theme: In this stage, the researcher used the coding data to generate a small number of themes and the researcher has found multiple themes for this study, which is used in the findings section to highlight the findings. In this regard, Creswell (2018) has mentioned that theme is considered as a crucial element for qualitative study as these themes are the major findings in the qualitative study as well as these themes are often used as headings for the findings section (p.269).

Representing the themes: In this stage, the researcher tried to make sure that the themes she selected for each category have represented the category appropriately. The researcher discussed the detailed description of the themes, find out the subthemes, and try to interconnect themes.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

The researcher tried her utmost to follow all the ethical issues, and the ethical issues were taken into consideration before starting the data collection procedure. The researcher

interviewed those participants who showed their willingness to join in this study. Before starting the interview session the researcher has asked the participants to read the interview consent form and put their signature in the consent form. In addition, the researcher has declared to the participants that their responses would be recorded as well as it would be used for research purposes only and their personal information such as name and personal details will not be revealed. All the names which has used in this study were pseudonyms. Along with this, the researcher becomes cautious to use the language while asking questions to the participants so that her language does not show any bias towards the topic.

3.16 Trustworthiness of the Study

Qualitative study is often criticized due to its “assessment quality” (Pandey, 2014.p.5745), but it can be credible and trustworthy if the researcher follows some instructions. In a qualitative study, trustworthiness depends on four factors and these are credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985)

To prove the credibility of this study the researcher adopted member checking and thick descriptions techniques. Member checking is considered as the “single most important provision” (Pandey, 2014) that helps a researcher to prove the credibility of the study. To complete the member checking procedure the researcher has sent the copy of transcript interview data to the participants so that they could review their interviewees and provided their opinion if they have any disagreement with the information.

For assessing credibility thick description techniques is considered as one of the important elements to acquire the credibility in qualitative research (Tracy, 2010).

Along with this, the researcher has maintained triangulation of sources technique to examine the credibility. The researcher has taken the interview in groups and individual where 2

participants belong in a group as well as she tried to compare the participants experience from another participant's experience (Pandey, 2014).

Eventually, the researcher has used the procedures of intra-coder and inter-rater reliability to prove the reliability of the study. In case of first round of intra-coder the researcher has coded all the data and did not have a look on the data for two days. After three days the researcher has coded the data again and matched the information to the previous information to check how much is it correct. Along with this the researcher has sent the transcript data to an expert to judge the theme of the transcript data and the raters' agreement is calculated in percentage in order to find out the reliability of the theme.

To sum up, the researcher has maintained all the above-mentioned techniques to prove the credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability which help to acquire the trustworthiness of the study.

3.17 Profiles of the Participant

This is the profile of the participants who are interviewed by the researcher to conduct this study. Here is their background information.

No	Name, age and gender	Academic Qualifications	IELTS Overall Band	Participants educational background	Reason for attending IELTS test
1	Riti 21(F)	Studying BA Honours in Management	6	Bangle Medium	Undergraduate
2	Monir 24 (M)	CSE in Engineering	7	Bangla Medium	Undergraduate

3	Ishak 24 (M)	CSE in Engineering	8	Bangla Medium	Undergraduate
4	Goghon 24 (M)	BBA in Accounting	7	Bangla Medium	Undergraduate
6	Rakib 23(M)	BA Honours in English	6	Madrasa background	Undergraduate
5	Bikale 24 (M)	BA Honours in English	6.5	Bangla Medium	Undergraduate
7	Sumi 23(F)	MA in English	8	Bangla Medium	Post-graduation
8	Jasin 22 (F)	BBA in Marketing	7.5	Bangla Medium	Undergraduate

3.18 Percentage of Rater

After selecting the themes the researcher has sent the information to a rater to check, are the themes of this study can provide the correct information or not what the researcher intends to investigate through this study. This is the sample of the percentage which is rated by a rater.

1. Due to poor time management skill how many examinees face difficulties?

	Percentage of Agreement
Inter –rater 1:	$(6/6)*100$ 100%
Average	100%

2. Due to examiner's attitude how many test-takers experience difficulties?

	Percentage of Agreement
Inter –rater 1:	$(4/4)*100$ 100%
Average	100%

3.19 Chapter Summary

At the very beginning of the study the researcher has discussed the philosophical assumptions of the study, interpretivism research paradigm, described the reasons behind choosing the multiple case studies, and the researcher's role in this study. In addition, the researcher has also discussed data collection procedures, explained the procedures of analysing the data. Eventually, the researcher has described the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the results of this study and the result of this study is organized in such a way that it addresses the research questions and the research questions of this study are:

1. What kinds of challenges do Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers face while taking the test?
2. How do they feel about the entire process of taking a preparation of IELTS, attending the examination, and applying for various universities from the beginning till the end?
3. How do the test-takers overcome these challenges to achieve their desired score?

The first section of this chapter discusses what kinds of challenges Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test. Secondly, this chapter talks about the procedures of taking the preparation for IELTS test, and finally, this chapter concentrates on the solutions for overcoming these challenges while taking the test.

4.2 Section One: Key Challenges Experience While Taking the Test

This section answers the research question one where the researcher examines what kinds of challenges IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test. In this regard, ISHAK has mentioned that

...obtaining a good score in the reading part of the IELTS test is difficult, reading was especially bit tougher for me

In the same vein Monir has mentioned that

... it was reading because reading part takes a lot of effort in terms of time

*management, in terms of your critical thinking, in terms of your vocabulary,
everything*

Out of the eight participants four participants have mentioned that they encountered challenges in IELTS reading part, two participants Bobita and Rakib have also opined that they encountered challenges in the listening section. Besides them, another two participants Goghon and Jasin have admitted that they experienced difficulties respectively in writing and speaking part. Goghon has stated that due to having a shortage of knowledge about writing was challenging for me. In this regard, Goghon has stated

*The writing was tough because it requires some skills like critical thinking,
vocabulary and grammar and I have lack of this skill*

It is evident from the statements that test takers have experienced difficulties in all four modules, but it is noted that majority of the test-takers have mentioned that reading is the most challenging part for IELTS test-takers among the four modules, and this study is corresponding with Chowdhury (2009) & Holi (2020). This study is contrasted with Ata (2015) where the researcher has found that writing is the most challenging part in IELTS test. It is observed from the participants' statements that reading is the most challenging part for IELTS test-takers though few participants have mentioned about writing, speaking and listening also. Hence, test-takers need to put more emphasis on reading while taking preparation on IELTS test, but as well as every participant should put focuses on other skills also.

To know more information about this matter, the researcher has asked the participants what have those challenges they experienced among those four modules, and one of the participants Ishak asserted that

*Reading part was difficult because you have to go through a lot amount of
text in a short amount of time.*

In the same vein Bobita has mentioned that

As it was my first time so listening was most difficult because I find difficulties to get answers due to lack of time. Time actually runs then when you write you realize oh time has finished. If you once get distract once you cannot manage your time later.

Another participant Goghon has stated that about the continuity of the exam

you have to attend three module one by another like reading, writing, and listening and speaking is other day. This continuous process creates a mental pressure especially if you do not well in one part and when you have to attend other part just finishing it

Another participant Jasin has stated that,

Speaking part was challenging because the examiner was not at all friendly, I felt uncomfortable due to the way she was asking questions

Reading part was difficult because you have to go through a lot amount of text in a short amount of time.

In the same vein Bobita has mentioned that

As it was my first time so listening was most difficult because I find difficulties to get answers due to lack of time. Time actually runs then when you write you realize oh time has finished. If you once get distract once you cannot manage your time later.

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you do not well in one part and when you have to attend other part just finishing it

Another participant Jasin has stated that,

Speaking part was challenging because the examiner was not at all friendly, I felt

uncomfortable due to the way she was asking questions

Participants' statements have demonstrated that time management, continuity of the examination, fear of repeating the test, and examiner's attitude in speaking part have been the common challenges test-takers experience while taking the test. Out of 8, 6 participants Bobita, Sumi, Rakib, as well, have mentioned that they mostly experienced difficulties due to lack of time management skill. Examinees mostly experience difficulties due to lack of time management skill, and this study is in line with (Chowdhury 2009); Trần & Nguyễn, 2018; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Al-Issa, et al. 2016). Additionally, this study has found that continuity of the exam (Hashemi & Daneshfar, 2018), and the fear of repeating the test (Ata, 2015) have significance also to create challenges for test-takers. Examinees who repeat the examination several times, the chance of getting a higher score is low (Rowling & Trenkic, 2019) and the repeat of examination create extra pressure on examinees that they have to do well at any cost. However, the study has found that examiners behaviour have an impact on test-takers performance also. Out of 8 participants 4 participants have mentioned that Examinees become nervous and feel uncomfortable while they find that the examiner is not at all friendly and the study is corresponding with, (Filipi, 2015; Roger, 2020; Namdar & Bagheri, 2012; Huang & Archibald, 2016).

It is evident from participant's statements that lack of time management skill, continuity of the test, fear of repeating the test are common challenges test-takers experienced while taking the test. However, sometimes test-takers cannot answer all the questions due to lack of time management skill. It happens because examinees sometimes spend a significant amount of

time when they stuck in one question. Hence, test takers need to be cautious about time management to get a good band score in IELTS test. Additionally, the participants need to be confident in any situation because when someone feels nervous, their chance to get good band score is getting low (Hartono,2019; Golchi, 2012).

Afterwards, participants have mentioned that they encountered challenges due to having a shortage of knowledge in lexical resources in IELTS reading and writing part. One of the participants Riti has admitted that her main weak point was lack of vocabulary knowledge. She stated that she used the same vocabulary again and again in the writing part as well as, lack of vocabulary knowledge has created hurdles for them in reading part also. She read the passage again and again as she could not grasp the idea due to lack of vocabulary knowledge. In addition, another participant Goghon has mentioned that critical thinking power, vocabulary knowledge is important to do well in IELTS test. This result is similar with (Awwalia & Suhardi, 2020; Chowdhury,2009; Divsar & Heydari 2017; Farshad & Effatpanah,2018). On the contrary (Guntur & Rahimi, 2019; Chen & Liu, 2020) has mentioned that background knowledge, multiple-choice questions play a more important role than vocabulary knowledge to achieve good band score in IELTS test.

Except this two participant Monir and Goghon has stated that due to lack of critical thinking power, lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge they have experienced challenges in IELTS writing part 2. This study is in line with (Guntur & Rahimi, 2019; Dabbagh, 2016) whereas 2 other participants Jasin and Sumi have mentioned that they experienced difficulties due to the “bar chart/graph chart in writing part 1. It means critical thinking (Farid & Saifuddin, 2018) and graph/bar chart (Ahmadi, et al.2019) also creates problems for test-takers.

It is evident from the above-discussed analysis that test-takers also face challenges due to lack of critical thinking power, shortage of knowledge about vocabulary and due to having

lack knowledge about how to write bar/graph in writing part 1. However, examinees should practice a lot from previous IELTS question to gather knowledge about what type of critical thinking, vocabulary and grammar knowledge is required to get good band score in IELTS test.

4.3 Section Two: Process of Taking Preparation

This section answers the research question two where the researcher explains the procedures of taking preparation for IELTS test as well as this section discusses the importance of IELTS score for getting admission in a university. One of the participants Monir has stated regarding the procedure of taking preparation for IELTS test

I studied by myself, coaching centre is not effective for IELTS test because

they only want to make money, nothing else. YouTube has lot of videos

regarding IELTS test, you can follow this....

Out of the 8 participants only 2 interviewees have mentioned that they joined in coaching centre. Except them, all the other participants admitted that they studied by themselves and they have mentioned that test-takers need not join IELTS coaching centre. However, it is noted that those two participants Riti and Rakib who joined IELTS test their band score is respectively 6 and 6 whereas other participants Bristy, Ishak, Goghon who did not join coaching centre they have acquired respectively, 6.5, 7 and 8. This result is corresponding with (Rowling & Trenkic, 2018) and the study has mentioned that IELTS test-takers do not need to join in any coaching centre as coaching centre is not much effective for taking preparation for IELTS test.

It is proved from the above-discussed analysis that test-takers do not need to attend IELTS coaching centre for taking preparation for IELTS test. Examinees can take preparation by

themselves as well as they can take help from youtube or other sources like Cambridge. Additionally, the mock test is very effective to get a good score in IELTS test as it provides the real experience of IELTS test.

To obtain some more knowledge about IELTS test the researcher has asked the participants about the effect of IELTS score in university admission, and all the participants have agreed with the view that IELTS test score has a significant impact on university admission. Students cannot apply for their desire university if their IELTS band score is low than the university's requirement. In this regard, one of the participants Monir has pointed out that,

It affects a lot because if you want to apply for a university in abroad you have to have particular score for this university. For example I apply for an university in abroad where you can not apply if your score is less than 6

This result is similar to (Feast,2002; MacDonald 2019; Pearson,2019) where the researcher has asserted that students cannot enroll university without a good band score in IELTS test.

It is demonstrated from the statement and the above discussion that IELTS score plays a significant role in university admission. Though it is not only, significant for the educational purpose it has importance for migration purposes also. If a candidate's speaking band score is very low he/she will not be allowed to go such a country where English is the medium of instruction.

4.4 Section Three: Steps for Overcoming Challenges

This section explains the research question three where the researcher describes the procedure of overcoming the challenges while taking the test. Some strategies are adopted by test takers while facing challenges in IELTS test and the strategies are planning, highlighting, note-

taking, underlying the key word, try to become confident. In this regard, one of the participants Sumi has asserted that

When I felt that time is running short at that moment I just highlight the main point

From question paper and start writing without thinking about anything else

Another participant Jasin has mentioned that,

*As I face difficulty in writing so I try to calm myself and start planning how to
organise my writing*

It is evident from the statements that test-takers adopt a range of strategies to overcome challenges and these findings seem to be consistent with other literature (Alghail & Mahfoodh, 2016).

So it can be stated that test-takers adopting strategies assists test takers to overcome challenges, and assists them to acquire good band score in IELTS test.

Except these, every participant has recommended some strategy for future test-takers to overcome the challenges. Most of the participants have mentioned that test-takers need to be cautious about time management and they need to be confident in any situation. One participant Bobita has stated that as in IELTS test there is no scope for memorisation so test-takers should be calm and answer all the questions. Other participants have mentioned some other factors also, for example, put more focus on vocabulary, grammar, critical thinking power. But it is noted that the majority of the participants have recommended that test-takers need to be cautious about time management and being confident in any situation.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This chapter aims at summarising the main findings of the study and discusses the implications of this study in ESOL context as well as recommend some strategy for teachers and test-takers to overcome these challenges. The prime aim of this study is to fill the gap of knowledge on what kinds of challenges IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test, as well as it recommends some solution how test-takers can overcome these challenges.

5.1 Major Findings of the Study

The findings have demonstrated that Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers experienced a range of challenges while taking the IELTS academic test, but the most recurring challenges they encountered in due to having lack of time management skill, continuity of the examination and fear of repeating the test. Test-takers have encountered difficulties to answer all the questions within the allotted time as well as they have experienced challenges as they are bound to attend the three modules continuously without any break. It is also evident from the findings chapter that examiners good/bad attitude in IELTS speaking test have an impact on test-takers performance. However, there are some other challenges which have been mentioned by a few test-takers and these are vocabulary knowledge, critical thinking power, lack of skimming ability, and bar/graph writing in writing part 1.

3.19 Contributions of the Study

3.19.1 Pedagogical Implication of the Study

Due to the global demand of IELTS test, a significant number of graduate and undergraduate and postgraduate students from Bangladesh and other countries attend IELTS test every year.

In the case of Bangladeshi test-takers, they often encounter numerous problems while taking the test. However, most of the times test-takers and the instructors of IELTS do not have adequate knowledge about what kinds of challenges IELTS test-takers face while taking the test.

At this point, examinees cannot achieve good band score in IELTS tests as well as they also sit for IELTS tests for several times (Hamid, 2015, Rowling& Trenkic,2019). This is why this study provides information about the challenges IELTS test-takers experience while taking the test, and the strategies for overcoming the challenges for test-takers as well as for their instructors also. Even though this study focuses on Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers, but examinees and instructors of any ESOL context can utilize the findings of this study to get a glimpse of what are the challenges examinees to experience in IELTS test as well as how to overcome these barriers.

5.2.2 Implications for Knowledge

Current studies regarding IELTS tests cover different aspects of the study for instance; cultural bias in IELTS test (Khan, 2006; Freimuth,2013; Freimuth 2016) whereas some scholars discuss the relationship between test-taking anxiety and test-takers performance in IELTS tests (Golchi,2012; Hartono, 2019; Barzegar & Hadidi; 2016). Some other scholars examine the role of vocabulary breadth and depth in IELTS academic tests (Chen, & Liu, 2020; Dabbagh, 2016; Zhang & Graham, 2020). However, very few studies have attempted to investigate the challenges test-takers experience while taking the test and the strategy to overcome the challenges. It is important to investigate the issue and this study bridge the gap of knowledge in this field by investigating this aspect. In addition, this study sets in Bangladeshi non-native ESOL context where both the IELTS test-takers and their facilitators are non-native hence, it fills the gap of knowledge what types of challenges non-native speakers experience in IELTS test.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study the researcher provides a number of recommendations for IELTS test-takers:

1. Facilitators and test-takers should put more emphasis on time management skill and to adopt the strategy of time management skill test-takers can attend mock test before appearing the main IELTS test. Mock test not only assists a test-taker to adopt time management skill but also helps a test-taker to reduce test anxiety.
2. The IELTS test is all about strategies and techniques, so test-takers should practice a lot to build more knowledge about the techniques and strategies. In addition, as the question pattern of IELTS tests is different from high-stakes tests in our educational system so test-takers need to practice a lot to adopt strategies and techniques to acquire a good band score in IELTS test.
3. IELTS test related courses like speed reading and critical thinking courses should be introduced early and go side by side with the degree programs to help the test-takers to develop their critical thinking and fast reading skill.

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2. The IELTS test is all about strategies and techniques, so test-takers should practice a lot to build more knowledge about the techniques and strategies. In addition, as the question pattern of IELTS tests is different from high-stakes tests in our educational system so test-takers need to practice a lot to adopt strategies and techniques to acquire a good band score in IELTS test.

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Appendix A.

Sample of Interview Consent Form

Interview Session

You are invited to attend an interview session with me on ZOOM or over mobile phone to talk about the challenges you faced while taking your IELTS examination. This interview and the discussion will be recorded, but this will only be used to fulfill the purpose of this study and for zoom participants you have the chance to put off your camera, if you want. This information will not be shared with anyone, and the researcher will use pseudonyms for keeping your identity confidential.

If you are ready to be a part of this study, please read the details thoroughly and give your approval by signing on the consent paper. Your kind cooperation in conducting the study will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours

Khondaker Sumaiya Sultana

MA in ELT

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Department of English and Humanities

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E-mail: k.sumaiyasultana24@gmail.com

Research Participation Consent Form

Please read the following statements thoroughly and put your signature on the signature section, if you are ready to be a part of this interview.

1. I have read all the description and understood what this study is about and the data collection procedure

2. My participation is voluntary and I feel free to withdraw at any time
4. I give my consent for video and audio recording for my voice and face
5. The researcher has my permission to contact me through the following phone number or email address for any clarification after the completion of data collection

Md. Ishan Arefin Hossain

Ishan

.....

.....

Name

Signature

Date

Phone No. 01926255256

Email address: ishan.arefin@seu.edu.bd

Appendix B

Sample of Interview Questions

SI	Interview questions (IQS)	Background information	RQ1	RQ2	RQ3
1	What do you study, which school and college are you from? Why did you attend IELTS exam	X			
2	Would you like to share with me when did you attend IELTS test, what was your score and how was your experience?			X	
3	Did you experience any challenges during IELTS test?	X	X		

4	What kinds of challenges did you experience, could you explain it?		X		
5	What was the most challenging part you had encountered among all the four parts (listening, speaking, reading & writing)?		X		
6	Do you think IELTS test is challenging because it requires some higher level skills, for example critical thinking and evaluation power to grasp the idea what the text actually tries to convey?				
	Do you find difficulty to answer all the questions within the allotted time?			X	
7	Did you find challenge to answer any question due to having less information about the context or background knowledge?	X			
8	Did you find everyday vocabulary or topic specific vocabulary in IELTS test? Did topic specific vocabulary create challenges for you to answer any question?	X			
9	Did the cultural context of the listening, reading and writing text's topic affect your examination?				
10	Did the accent and the speed of the listening text create any problem for you?		X		
11	Did you find any problem with facing the IELTS exam because of the unfamiliarity of				

	the topic? Vocabulary? Concept?				
12	What kinds of challenges did you experience during your IELTS writing part?		X		
13	What do you think; does your mother tongue create difficulty in face to face speaking part?				
14	Did you experience any challenges due to the gender and the speech style of IELTS examiner?		X		
15	Could you identify the reasons behind facing these difficulties?		X		
16	What were the steps had you taken to overcome those challenges, and what should they do to overcome these challenge who wants to take IELTS test in-future?				X
17	How did you prepare yourself for IELTS test? Did you join any coaching centre or take preparation by yourself?			X	
18	How many hours did you spend every day for taking IELTS preparation?			X	
19	How IELTS score affect for university admission?				X
20	How are you coping with the studies abroad? Initially, did you find it difficult?				X
21	Did you experience challenges due to the continuity of the test?		X		
22	Did you experience challenges due to the fear		X		

	of repeating the test?				
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Appendix C

Interview of Participants

Notational Conventions of the Interview Transcripts

	Notation	Meaning
1.	DU	Discourse Unit
2.	I	Interviewer
3.	[]	For showing action [Laughs]
4.	,	Small pause
5.	...	Long pause (if in the middle of the sentence)
6.	Umm/uh	Hedging in speech
7.	DU MON 8 DU	student name's first three alphabets DU number DU MON 8 refers to Monir's DU number 8

Appendix D

Sample Interview of Monir

DU	Participant	Questions and Answers
1	I	My first question is that what do you study now, what was the medium of your instruction in your school and college were?
2	Monir	I completed my undergraduate few months ago and currently I am doing a

		job in a private bank. I am a Bangla medium student.
3	I	When did you attend IELTS test, and why did you sat for IELTS test?
4	Monir	I sat for IELTS test in November last year, that's in November 2019.
5	I	Okay, How was your score?
6	Monir	My score was pretty mediocre, it was seven.
7	I	Uhh it was good
8	I	Okay, my next question is that did you experience any challenges while taking IELTS test?
9	Monir	Well, as a whole, I think the whole IELTS exam was challenging. Because if you aim for a high score, like 7, 7.5 or eight, I mean, you have to give a lot of effort. So that's very challenging as a whole.
10	I	What was the most challenging part you had encountered among all the four parts (listening, speaking, reading & writing)?
11	Monir	For me, I mean, if you talk about which part is really most challenging, I think it was reading because reading part takes a lot of effort in terms of time management, in terms of your critical thinking, in terms of your vocabulary, everything.
12	I	You mentioned that analytical knowledge is needed for reading part. Why analytical knowledge is required for reading portion?
13	Monir	You have very limited time in solving the problems that are given for reading part. For to say the least I think it's mostly about time management. And even if you can manage the time, the answers are not always given directly. There are several lots of synonyms and antonyms are being used. And you have to have sound knowledge in linguistics in language. You have to have a wide knowledge on vocabulary to figure out

		that actual answer. So it is really a painstaking to some extent, you have to keep up with the time and you have to you have to again, use your full linguistic knowledge to come out with a positive result in reading first. So that's why I think, in general, I, I also talked with some other candidates and asked about them about their problems out of curiosity and they also said that the reading is something that they found a little much difficult.
14	I	Okay, Muntasir. You mentioned that vocabulary is also a challenging part in reading section. So my question is that did you find unfamiliar vocabulary while taking the test?
15	Monir	I didn't find many of them. But I found one or two. To be precise, one or two. But the issue is the sentence structure, sentence structure and at the same time, that question pattern, everything accumulatively put some pressure on your brain. I mean, it's not that the vocabularies are extremely hard and very unfamiliar. That's not the issue, even the vocabulary was unfamiliar you can answer.
16	I	It means that you did not experience challenges due to unfamiliar vocabulary. You face challenges due to time management, am I right?
17	Monir	Exactly, time management. I think to solve three different passages 20 minute each is something uhh I mean, only some people who have good knowledge.... solving all of them in time. If you have lack of preparation it will be difficult for any candidate to solve all the question and answering all the questions convincingly. I mean, you can put your answer, you can write anything at your answer sheet you can get some number by throwing stone into darkness. But if you want to answer them

		convincingly, I think it takes lots of preparation, and you have to be very much careful about your time management.
18	I	Okay, did you experience difficulties for time management in other parts also?
19	Monir	Of course, time management is important for all the four modules. But I particularly mentioned about reading part because that's where I think Time management is much more important than the rest of the module.
20	I	Okay, the next question is that did you find challenge to answer any question due to having less information about the context or background knowledge?
21	Monir	I didn't found the overall process very unfamiliar because the people who actually make these questions they don't put vocabularies from particular field They don't use many register or many vocabulary that belongs to a particular profession. They make the question in such a way so that people from all background can be familiar with the vocabularies at least, to a minimum level. So I think the passages are okay, those are not that hard.
22	I	Did you find everyday vocabulary or topic specific vocabulary in IELTS test? Did topic specific vocabulary create challenges for you to answer any question?
23	Monir	Answer
24	I	Do you think IELTS test is challenging because it requires some higher level skills, for example critical thinking and evaluation power to grasp the idea what the text actually tries to convey?
25	Monir	Yes, analytical skill is very important even keeping the speed of reading part beside, I think, when it comes to writing part analytical skill is also important. You have one or two pages allocated for you and you have to

		answer in details of course, the answer must have to be relevant to what has been asked. So, analytical skill is important both for reading and for writing speaking and listening for listening, I think analytical skill is there is it has much to do it, because you have to answer what you hear and for speaking, but not that much, but for reading and for writing and illegal This is must have played a very important role.
26	I	Does analytical skill and critical evaluation power is needed for speaking and listening part also?
27	Monir	I think critical skill is mostly needed for reading or writing part because in listening and speaking you have to answer what you hear and for speaking, but not that much, but for reading and for writing and illegal This is must have played a very important role.
28	I	Analytical skill is important for writing. But for which writing portion is it more needed?
29	Monir	For both part, but in part one everything is given you have to add it in the answer in a sequential way. Which one is most important that will come first and whichever is less important will come second and third. But for the second part I think analytical skill is much more important because you have to elaborate your answer based on what you have in your brain.
30	I	Did the cultural context of the listening, reading and writing text's topic affect your examination?
31	Monir	I would say, I retreated my one of my previous statement the people who make these questions, they actually design it in a way so that students from different countries can understand it but the accent sometimes creates problems, because the way we pronounce a word is sometimes

		totally different from the American or the British people. When the listening part goes on third or fourth the speaker actually talk very fast. And the answer becomes pretty much hard to find. People mostly get a struggle to actually catch some particular vocabulary that which is pronounced differently in our cultural context.
32	I	Did you experience any challenges due to the gender and the speech style of IELTS examiner?
33	Monir	No, I would especially mentioned her because for her kindness, and she was very professional. I mean, they were I heard that they were trained in that way so that the candidate doesn't feel any nervousness. I mean, she used one or two very funny jokes at the beginning so that I I feel comfortable I feel at home and that's how she actually skipped all the nervousness hour from me. So I think no examiner's did they always do a very good job in comforting and maintaining a sound environment for the candidates.
34	I	What do you think; does your mother tongue create difficulty in face to face speaking part?
35	Monir	No, actually we have to accept that Bengal is our mother tongue and English is not. And that's why we sit for IELTS test if English was my mother tongue then there was no point in sitting for IELTS test . So I think that's not a valid question at all, because IELTS is for non native candidates and we have to accept it.
36	I	Did you experience challenges due to the continuity of the examination?
37	Monir	No, I wouldn't take it as an excuse because it applies for all the candidates and we all play by same sets of rules. It is also a test for your endurance

		capability.
38	I	Okay, the next question is that does the fear of repeating the examination create any challenges while taking the test?
39	Monir	Yeah, it puts more extra pressure on you. As I was not financially that much solvent when I took this exam this is why I had to become very cautious while taking the examination so that I did not repeat it again on the other hand this pressure helps you to do exam well.
40	I	Okay, my next question is that could you identify the reasons behind facing this difficulty?
41	Monir	In reading part time management was difficult for me and in writing, as i am not a very good at writing and for speaking part needs lot of practice. As I do not find someone whose mother tongue was English or someone who is very good at speaking. So it was difficult for me to practice and in listening I did not experience any challenges. I watched lot of movies and listen English songs so it was very natural for me.
42	I	What were the steps had you taken to overcome those challenges, and what should they do to overcome these challenge who wants to take IELTS test in-future?
43	Monir	My only one strategy was that I did not left any questions, I answered all of them based on my intuition power. My recommendation for those people who took IELTS in future that they should practice vocabulary, grammar. Grammar is important because you can narrate a story from the past by using present tense. So you have to be careful with your grammar that is important for for both writing and speaking, to some extent.
44	I	Okay, the next question is that how did you prepare yourself for your

		IELTS test, Did you go for a coaching centre or did you study by yourself?
45	Monir	I studied by myself, coaching centre is not effective for IELTS test because they only want to make money, nothing else. YouTube has a lot of videos regarding IELTS test. You can follow this
46	I	How many hours did you spend every day for taking IELTS preparation?
47	Monir	Actually, it was not fixed, I took preparation for IELTS test for 3 months and I spend $\frac{3}{4}$ hours everyday
48	I	How IELTS score affects university admission?
49	Monir	It affects a lot because if you want to apply for a university abroad you have to have a particular score for this university. For example I apply for a university abroad where you can not apply if your score is less than 6.

Appendix E

SAMPLE OF INTER-CODING TEMPLATE ON RITI'S RESPONSE TO RQ1

Interview Question (1)	Subordinate key word of questions (2)	Subordinate main point from conversation (3)	Elaboration examples from verbal to support the subordinate (4)	Occurrence main idea transferred into the form as key word (s) (5)	Frequency of occurrence (6)	Ordering of discourse unit (7)
What was the most challenging part you had encountered among all the four parts (listening, speaking, reading & writing)?	*Most challenging part *Among the four parts *Listening, speaking, reading & writing	*Reading *Hardest part	I guess reading one was the hardest part for me	Reading	1	DU RIT 12
What types of challenges did you experience; among the four modules could	*types of challenges *experience	*Vocabulary was difficult	Vocabulary was difficult for me in IELTS exam, we don't actually get so	Lack of vocabulary	1 1	DU RIT 25

you explain it?	*among four modules	*Lack of time *Spelling mistakes *Amount of word * Agree or disagree	much time to think and write. (DU 12). My main weakness was vocabulary; I actually use the same vocabulary for many times. I used to think about the vocabulary the spelling mistakes, and like how much word should I write and the most important part, do you agree? Or do you not agree? and other thing is we actually don't get much time in exam especially in reading and in writing part (DU 25)	knowledge Lack of time		
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Appendix F

Sample Theme Generation Template

Research Question 1	1. What kinds of challenges do Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers face while taking the test?								
Interview Question	What types of challenges did you experience; among the four modules could you explain it								
Riti (B1)	Muntasir (B2)	Goni	Ishan	Bristy	Rubby	Sumaiya	Jahin	Subthemes	Themes
Vocabulary & Lack of Time was most challenging in reading	Poor time management skill and lack of critical thinking	Shortage of critical thinking power, vocabulary create	Lack of time and amount of passages create challenges	Due to lack of time and examiners attitude in speaking test create	Lack of time and examiners attitude in speaking creates	Lot of text and lack of time Writing part 1	Examiner was unfriendly and very professional Writing part	Critical thinking power, Vocabulary, Lot of text, writing part	Poor time management skill, Examiners attitude were most

and writing part also speaking part was terrible for examiner's attitude (DU RIT 25)	power was challenging for reading &writing	challenges in writing part	in reading part	difficulties	difficulties		1	were challenging for test- takers	challenging for test- takers

Research Question 1	What kinds of challenges do Bangladeshi IELTS test-takers face while taking the test?
Interview	Did you experience challenges due to the continuity of the exam?

Question									
Riti	Muntasir	Goni	Ishan	Bristy	Rubby	Sumaiya	Jahin	Subthemes	Themes
Affect test takers performance	No	Yes, I did.	Yes, the continuity of the exam should be considered.	Continuity of the test create challenges	Continuity of the exam is challenging	No	No		Continuity of the exam is challenging
Interview Question	Does the fear of repeating the examination create difficulties while taking the test?								
Fear of repeating the exam Creates extra pressure	It creates challenges	creates some pressure to do well in first attempt	It was not in my mind	Create challenge	Create challenge	No	No		Fear of repeating the exam creates challenges

Appendix G

Rating for Students' Interview by Rater

Challenges Faced by Bangladeshi Test-Takers in IELTS test

Please respond to the following themes by choosing “Agree” or “Disagree”. You can also suggest new themes on the comment's column.

RQ 3	2. How do the test-takers overcome these challenges to achieve their desired score?					
Theme	Main ideas	Discourse Unit	Verbal Support	Inter-Rater		Comments
				Agree	Disagree	
Cautious about time management might help test takers to overcome challenges while taking IELTS test	Cautious about time management might help test takers to overcome challenges	(DU RIT 24)	If you are good at something it helps you to get good marks as you cannot change your weakness overnight and	/		

			become very conscious about time management.			
		(DU MON 43)	Students need to become alert on clock time.	/		
		(Du RAK 50)	Yes, if you want to overcome this problem, then you will have to you will have to know the time management and the using time	/		

			properly then you can otherwise not if you as you say that I am good in English I can speak I can speak fluently and I have a lot of vocabulary knowledge and I can organize properly. It is not enough for you. The main reason is time consuming issue. If you can remember that			
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			then you will you will get a good answer. My recommendation is that an / examinee wants to get out them, they always try to manage time properly and answer the question within time not with			
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Vocabulary learning Helps test takers in IELTS test	Vocabulary learning Helps test takers in IELTS test		them. Okay? My recommendation for those people who took IELTS in future that they should practice vocabulary, grammar. Grammar is	/		
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			important because you can narrate a story from the past / by using present tense. So you have to be careful with your grammar that is important for both writing and speaking, to some extent. Students need to become alert on clock time (DU MUN) My advice will be			
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Become confident helps test takers to overcome any challenges while			put more emphasis on writing part and gather more knowledge about vocabulary. (DU GON) My advice will be put more emphasis on writing part and gather more			
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taking the test			knowledge about vocabulary (DU Jah)			
Put more emphasis on strong point helps test takers to overcome challenges			When I took my exam I actually give more pressure on spoken because I thought I'm good at spoken than the other parts and I can make good points by taking the spoken and			

			some equipment. So I think everyone should give more emphasis on their strong point rather than their weak point. If you are good at something it helps you to get good marks as you cannot change your weakness overnight and become very conscious about			
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			time management.			
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Appendix H

INTER-RATER RELIABILITY CALCULATION FOR

STUDENTS' INTERVIEW

Calculation of inter-raters' Reliability

Percentage of agree/disagreement of research question 1

(What types of challenges did you experience; among the four modules could you explain it)

Due to time-management how many test-takers experience difficulties?

	Percentage of Agreement
Inter –rater 1:	$(6/6)*100$ 100%
Average	100%