

The Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on English Language Proficiency: A Case Study of Urban and Rural Schools in Bangladesh

By

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17203024

A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of B.A. in English

Department of English and Humanities

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

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Approval

The thesis titled “The Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on English Language Proficiency: A Case Study of Urban and Rural Schools in Bangladesh” Submitted by Syeda Rebeca Ferdous (17203024) of Spring, 2025 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of B.A. in English on January 27, 2026.

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Ethics Statement

This study involved Urban and Rural Schools in Bangladesh students. Therefore, to ensure privacy and protect the identities of all participants, pseudonyms were assigned to students and their parents. No personal identifiers such as names, school IDs, or addresses were collected or used in data reporting. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, students were informed that they could withdraw at any stage without any academic or personal consequences. All collected data including test scripts, interview responses, and parental background information were stored securely and used solely for academic research purposes. The study posed no physical, financial, or academic risks to the participants. The researcher maintained a neutral and non-intrusive role throughout the data collection process, ensuring that children were comfortable, respected, and not pressured in any way.

Abstract

English language has become essential for academic and professional development as well as for participating in the global world. Furthermore, the socio-economic inequalities concerning the availability and the right of access to English language education are especially pronounced in the underdeveloped world like Bangladesh. This study aims to analyze the effect of socio-economic status (SES) on the English proficiency of students from one urban and one rural public school. The selected key indicators of SES under study are the educational level of the parents, income, availability of educational and learning resources, and the school infrastructure. The study also addresses how the inequalities mentioned above affect the students' motivation, exposure to the English language in the family, and their general attitudes towards the English language.

The study utilized a qualitative multiple-case study design with some quantitative components drawn from the analysis of the parallel English proficiency tests. The sample consisted of four students, two from each school, and their parents, using the purposive sampling technique. The data came from students' English proficiency tests in reading and writing, and semi-structured interviews with parents and questionnaires on socio-economic status. Proficiency levels were compared using descriptive statistics, and thematic analysis was employed in the identification of patterns related to inequities in learning opportunities and exposure.

This study shows the disparities in economic status that corresponds with the proficiency of English learned and the mastery of the English language. Students in larger urban settings that come from higher economic standing families showcase better proficiency and English skills, with confidence, are more media-rich and have greater exposure to English content and are more fluent in English. Those urban children receive positive reinforcement from their parents, have access to more advanced educational settings and even have private educational assistance. However, the parents in rural areas often do not speak English, which has a negative influence on the children and lack of conversation. Those children, however, rural school teachers also pointed to their lack of educational resources and large class sizes when there were communicative strategies they could use in their teaching. An English proficiency disparities study has also demonstrated that rural students are the most eager students despite those challenges. Close attention to the teaching practices and provision of equitable resources can narrow the gap as stated in the study.

Keywords:

Socioeconomic status, English proficiency, urban–rural divide, parental involvement, learning resources, language equity.

Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to Almighty Allah for granting me the strength, guidance, and opportunity to complete this thesis. My sincere appreciation goes to my parents and family for their continuous encouragement, support, and motivation throughout this journey. I am also profoundly thankful to my supervisor, Professor Asifa Sultana, PhD whose valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and unwavering support have been essential to the successful completion of this study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a dominant global language and is used all over the world for the purposes of international trade, diplomacy, science, and communication in the digital world. In the modern world, people who have command over the English language, Crystal (2012) states as they have social mobility and upgraded societal status. In some countries like Bangladesh, for example, the English language is not mastered for educational purposes as a discipline in school, rather, it is taught because of the socioeconomic benefits it brings along, not forgetting the access it provides for one to go to higher educational institutions (Hamid & Erling, 2016). The level of command of the English language is one of the major reasons as to why people are segregated to and from jobs, particularly in the ICT field, as well as large international organizations, and development agencies. In the case of Bangladesh, the study of English is a compulsory subject from early primary to higher secondary (Rahman, 2015). It is also the primary language of instruction in private English-medium schools and in many of the country's universities. The National Education Policy of Bangladesh (2010) recognizes English as a necessary tool for globalization and for the enhancement of the country's competitiveness in the global economy. Moreover, there is a growing demand in the Bangladeshi job market for communication skills in English as it is a requirement for job applications and interviews, and for international collaborative work (Alam, 2020).

The ability to speak English has direct association with higher social classes, employment outcomes, and socio economic status. (Khan, 2022). These students, as ability to speak English, results in further academic pursuits in overseas universities and attainment of scholarship opportunities, as well as and employment in jobs that are relatively higher in income. Thus, English proficiency, in and by itself, is becoming a kind of capital, a cultural one, that affords individuals entry into exclusive elite social spaces. (Bourdieu ,19866; Erling and Seargeant,2013)

The country of Bangladeshs English proficiency is valued the the world over. (Hamid, 2010). The quality of education as well as underlying factors of each social segment of the population are greatly affected by the overall systemic factors of education in the country.

1.1.1 Link between socioeconomic status (SES) and educational achievement

Socioeconomic status (SES) has family income, education levels, and resource availability as defining components (Sirin, 2005). SES has been identified as a critical variable influencing students' educational opportunities, achievement, and language development (Coleman et al., 1966; Davis-Kean, 2005). Families with high SES levels tend to purchase educational resources, including language learning technology, books, educational private tutoring, and extracurricular programs.

In Bangladesh, SES has a pronounced impact on the availability of quality instruction in English. Students from well-off urban households are often enrolled in English-medium schools or high-end private schools, which have smaller class sizes and are trained in various communicative teaching methodologies (Rahman, 2019). This population tends to have private tutoring and more exposure to English through English storybooks, access to the internet, cable TV, and various English digital media (Hamid & Honan, 2012). These advantages enhance the level of English that they are taught and improve their communicative competence.

The opposite is true for low-income families, especially those in rural localities, who have no other option but to attend public schools that lack resources, and where they teach English, if at all, through rote learning (Sultana, 2018). Lowering SES parents also do not have the language skills and education to assist the children academically (Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009). Their lack of English books, no access to digital devices, and inadequate educational resources further limits their exposure to the language in and out of the classroom.

According to Rahman (2015), for instance, a good number of students in Bangladesh whose background is low in socio-economic status learn English mainly for the sake of passing examinations, and not for functional use of the language. Consequently, SES does not only influence students' academic achievement, also their attitudes towards the learning of English, the extent to which they are exposed to English resources, and their expectations to use the language.

1.1.2 Urban–rural divide in educational resources

The socioeconomic factors are compounded by an urban–rural gap within Bangladesh's education system (World Bank, 2020). The differences in urban vs rural schools are far reaching

in the extent of the shortcomings, which include but are not limited to, the imbalances of qualified educators, physical school infrastructure, technology (digital), and teaching resources. (Begum 2021). Urban schools, mainly the private ones, are more financially supported and administratively more powerful. They are more likely to hire and retain teachers who are better credentialed in terms of language competence and are more likely to offer ancillary programs like debating, English fairs, and more advanced teaching with multimedia used in English (Begum 2021).

Conversely, rural schools are not immune to such challenges as fewer trained English teachers, larger learner cohorts, declining teacher morale, and ineffective supervision by the ministry of education (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015). Some rural classrooms are highly congested, and poorly endowed with even the most rudimentary of amenities such as libraries. Digital equipment also is a rarity (UNICEF 2022). In the scope of research conducted in the whole nation, Hamid and Honan (2012) documented a lack of engagement with English for rural schooling by even the within English speaking households. This renders rural learners with English as a distant language with little utility as a language to engage in fluently.

In rural education contexts where English is taught, the pedagogy continues to be exam-centered, emphasizing the rote learning of rules and passages from textbooks (Sultana, 2018). This is unlike the communicative language teaching approaches that have been adopted in the more privileged urban schools.

Additionally, household factors intensify the divide. Urban families are more likely to:

- Buy English books and educational materials
- Provide internet access and digital devices
- Enroll children in private tuition centers
- Meanwhile, rural students often:
- Share textbooks with siblings
- Lack electricity or internet access
- Work part-time to support the family income (BBS, 2023)

These structural inequalities demonstrate how socioeconomic status and geographical location jointly affect English learning outcomes.

So, the mastery of English holds considerable importance both abroad and in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, not all students have equal opportunity to learn English. There is unequal access and quality of English instruction stemming from socioeconomic status and are further exacerbated by the urban-rural divide. There are further inequities in school facilities, teacher quality, parental support, and access to English which all leads to greater rural English language deficiencies compared to their urban counterparts.

The potential of English opens many doors to further academic and career opportunities, and thus inequities and inequalities are understood in a different light. English language proficiency is the focus of this study, and to examine the influence of socioeconomic status in in both rural and urban schools in Bangladesh, and how it defines the Educational inequities that are afforded to different socioeconomic groups.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although English has been a compulsory subject for students in Bangladesh from primary to tertiary levels (National Education Policy, 2010), English proficiency remains inadequate and heterogeneous. Studies point to a consistently unmet gap between communicative competence and curriculum expectations (Hamid, 2010; Sultana, 2018). This problem becomes more evident within the context of differing socio-economic stratifications. The dimensions of English language learning in Bangladesh have transcended the purely pedagogical to the socio-economic.

Students from high socio-economic backgrounds, especially those in private English-medium and well-resourced urban schools, tend to have better results in English language proficiency tests (Rahman, 2019). These students are more likely to have trained English teachers, smaller class sizes, multimedia classrooms and English books, and/or extracurricular activities such as debate clubs and English fairs (Begum, 2021). Inequities are pronounced in rural schools, where the infrastructure is inadequate, there are few (if any) qualified English teachers, classrooms are overcrowded, and students have limited opportunities for English use and contact (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015; UNICEF, 2022). Where English is taught, the grammar translation method

and rote learning are commonly employed. This results in students being able to reproduce answers to written exercises, but not able to communicate at all (Sultana, 2018).

Socioeconomic status (SES) further accentuates this gap. More affluent families can afford additional resources such as tailored tutoring, access to the internet, and English learning books and software (Hamid and Honan, 2012). More affluent families can afford to pay for private tutoring and English learning materials (BBS, 2023). The available literature indicates that English proficiency is greatly affected by SES and its impact on the level of parental involvement, the learning opportunities that the child is offered, and the learning resources available in the home (Davis-Kean, 2005; Sirin, 2005). Numerous parents in rural areas have low levels of English literacy themselves, and this lack of literacy negatively impacts their ability to facilitate their children's educational development (Hamid, Sussex and Khan, 2009).

Research that investigates the impact of SES on English proficiency in relation to the rural-urban school gap in the context of Bangladesh is still limited, despite the growing interest in equity in the policy domain. Previous studies have documented the obstacles to learning English in rural educational settings (Rahman 2015, Sultana 2018), and the impact of SES has been documented in education (Sirin, 2005; Hamid and Erling 2016) but there is limited evidence that socio-economic factors such as parental education and income, available learning resources, school facilities, and educational attainment of the parents are related to English proficiency in these school settings.

Thus, the core problem is:

Students' English proficiency levels in Bangladesh are significantly influenced by socioeconomic status and uneven distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools.

If this inequity continues, students living in rural, low SES areas will continue to encounter language-based marginalization and lose access to further education and job prospects. These discrepancies must be understood in order to be able to design potential policies and/or strategies that ensure all students in Bangladesh have the same opportunities for English language learning.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the problem identified, the study aims to explore how socioeconomic conditions influence English language proficiency among secondary-level students in urban and rural Bangladeshi schools. The following research questions guide this study:

1. How does socioeconomic status influence English language proficiency among students in selected Bangladeshi schools?
2. What differences exist in English proficiency levels between students in urban and rural schools?
3. Which socioeconomic factors most significantly affect students' English language achievement?

The two theories guiding this assessment- cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and sociocultural learning (Vygotsky, 1978) state that learning is social and contextual and that learning happens due to the availability of resources. Within the landscape of Bangladesh, SES affects not only academic outcomes but also motivational, exposure, and attitudinal components to learning English (Hamid & Erling, 2016).

Focusing on a multiple case study of rural and urban Bangladeshi schools, the study will answer the questions of how socio-economic conditions determine the English language outcomes of learners and the possible negative consequences of those conditions. It is hoped that the identified gaps in research will be beneficial to decision makers, teachers, and curriculum developers in addressing the challenges of inequality in the provision of English language education.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study aims to examine the impact of socioeconomic influencing factors on Bangladeshi secondary school students English language proficiency, using one urban and one rural secondary school as case studies. From each school, the study will sample two students from the primary school (grade V) and two from the secondary school (grade VIII). This will help the study ascertain the relationship between socioeconomic factors and student readiness to shift to an English language dependent curriculum.

The study will examine four socioeconomic factors identified in the literature: (1) parents' educational attainment, (2) family income, (3) availability of educational tools, and (4) school facilities and educational environment. These have been identified in literature as significant predictors of academic performance and language learning (Sirin, 2005; Davis-Kean, 2005; Hamid & Erling, 2016).

Research indicates that educated parents create a home environment conducive to learning, particularly in providing educational support (Davis-Kean, 2005). A family's income level restricts a student's ability to acquire learning resources, or to obtain private tutoring (Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009).

In the same way, availability of English textbooks, internet, storybooks, and audiovisual materials to the students enhance their exposure to the language and improve their proficiency (Erling & Sargeant, 2013).

Finally, the educational facilities a school has, such as smaller class sizes, qualified teachers, and appropriate foreign language teaching methods, are also very influential in determining students' learning outcomes (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015; UNICEF, 2022).

In this case, the study area is limited to a single urban area which is an exemplary government school in Dhaka, and one rural school which is in Chadpur. This urban-rural contrast is essential, because many studies report rural schools lack proper facilities, teacher education and training, and students come from low socio economic status, which all affect educational outcomes (World Bank, 2020; BBS, 2023). The decision to focus exclusively on two case schools enables the study to take a deeper qualitative approach in context, rather than superficial breadth.

Data diversity was another consideration in this case, which includes, but is not limited to, questionnaires, interviews, English proficiency tests, and other assessments. However, this study is not intended to measure a country-wide proficiency level, nor is it an attempt to offer a hypothesis on the education systems of all schools in Bangladesh. The study aims to find patterns and relations between the socio economic variables and the level of English proficiency in the context of the school case.

The study does not take into consideration preschool level students, English medium elite schools, and the madrasah systems. English medium schools tend to target students from socio economically elite families, and madrasahs are different in that they employ a different curriculum altogether and pay little to no attention to teaching communicative English (Rahman, 2019). The focus here is on making sure the analysis does not lose depth as a result of exploring these systems. In other studies, enrolled learners' psychological theories, attitudes, motivation, and learning styles have been shown to influence proficiency (Gardner, 2010). In this study, none of the mentioned factors are assessed, although they have been discussed. These factors have been discussed, but these fall out of the official scope of the study.

In summary, the study focuses on:

- Primary and secondary-level students
- Two case-study schools (one urban, one rural)
- Socioeconomic variables and how they shape English proficiency

This scope enables a rich investigation of how socioeconomic inequity shapes English educational outcomes, fulfilling the study's aim of highlighting social disparities within Bangladesh's English language learning landscape.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research has great importance in deepening the knowledge of the complex interplay of socioeconomic factors and English language outcomes in Bangladesh. The ability to speak English is generally considered to be one of the most important factors influencing the attainment of educational and career goals (Crystal, 2012; Graddol, 2006). In Bangladesh, English is a gatekeeper to higher education, scholarships, employment, and mobility opportunities (Hamid & Erling, 2016; Alam, 2020). Therefore, the unequal distribution of English language skills is an unequal distribution of socioeconomic opportunities.

This study gives evidence of the effects of family income, education of the parents, and availability of resources on the proficiency in the English language, and especially the contrast between urban and rural students. The association of English proficiency with socioeconomic status is well documented (Sirin, 2005; Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009). In Bangladesh, the

comparison of the rural and urban schools has been poorly researched, especially using actual data on the students' performance. The findings in this paper aim to fill this void.

This work focuses on principles of English Language teaching (ELT) inequities and resource allocation for English teaching practices in English. Within the National Education Policy (2010), regulatory bodies are promoted to implement and monitor the distribution of English teaching practices equitably within the educational system. However, this continues to remain, as noted by Rahman (2015), Most. The specific barriers of SES that this study focuses on, e.g., low parental literacy and low or lack of educational materials, can be used by government bodies to focus their interventions, e.g., more teacher training on English teaching practices for the rural areas, more educational materials other than texts to resource-deficit schools and less or no reliance on educational tutoring programs.

It is clear that findings in the study will enable educational institutions to ascertain the socio-economic barriers that their students are facing. Urban educational institutions, for example, may need to enhance that of their students' Control Language (CLT) and rural educational institutions may need to focus on a 'low' cost educational exposure model by the creation of an English 'reading corner' within the classroom or school, peer tutoring, or a 'language' club as suggested by Sultan (2018).

This study work extends its theoretical range by blending Bourdieu's cultural capital theory (1986) and espoused health and economic well-being of English proficiency and its impact to Bangladesh students. The students that espouse English proficiency also carry with them the symbolic power and the educational advantage. This study work gives more public discourse the opportunity to focus on the neglected theme of social equity by addressing the intersection of social class and the social structures that come about by the will and the power of language.

A few low-income parents believe largely that English achievement is a product of individual students as only deriving from the students' personal intelligence, or as solely deriving from the teachers. The study also seeks to clarify the impact of parental involvement on students' educational achievement (Davis-Kean 2005), and also seeks to bring about more parental engagement to English language skills of their children, even when it may not be in English themselves.

Consequently, this study is important, as it highlights the role of structural inequality, rather than the inability of the students, in producing disparity in English proficiency. Addressing these gaps is critical for the provision of genuine educational opportunity and future socio-economic uplift in Bangladesh.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Limitations exist in all kinds of research, and noting them adds to the credibility of this research. This research has four main limitations which have to do with the sample size, methodology, self-reported socioeconomic data, and the ability to generalize the findings.

This research has concentrated on only one urban and one rural school. This provides depth to the case study, but also to the ability to generalize findings to all schools in Bangladesh. Learning of the English language varies greatly in different educational districts, and in more remote areas like the Chattogram Hill Tracts, the educational infrastructure is especially poor (UNICEF, 2022). This research is not intended to statistically represent the entire population of schools in Bangladesh, but rather to find some socioeconomic pattern of the schools.

Income of the household and educational level of the parents is obtained from the parents through filling out income and education level questionnaires. As day laborers and informal sector workers, low-income parents may also be the ones of inconsistent income reporting (BBS, 2023). Some parents may be reporting their income in a biased manner, whether this is underreporting or overreporting, due to social desirability. Even though there are several different indicators of SES (Sirin, 2005) it's self-reported data that still has a lot of subjectivity built in.

The students' English language abilities are measured through a brief, standardized assessment. In order to measure full communicative competence (speaking fluency, accent, pragmatics), the assessments also need to involve proper measurements over a longer time span (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). There are some time and resource limitations that impact the depth of assessment of the students' English language abilities.

The observers in the study are looking at the students and the student's guardians for a very short time interval. This is not enough time to gather data in order to be able to analyze some differences in behavior and the level of active involvement of the students. Having a longer time

for study would help conduct a more in-depth review of the students and gather more detailed observations.

Some differences in financial status in households may be more culturally sensitive in nature. Some guardians and participants may not feel at ease to talk about the finances of the household or the problems the household is having (Hamid & Honan, 2012). The researcher tries to ease this situation a bit by ensuring confidentiality, and instead of real names, assigning pseudonyms that are anonymized.

Considering the metropolitan or provincial area of the study, these findings go a long way in helping understand how one's financial status affects the level of English proficiency. Thus, the study is of importance to the educators and policy developers.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

This section provides definitions of key terms used in this research to aid conceptual clarity.

English Language Proficiency: The present research conceptualizes English language proficiency as the ability of a learner to communicate and academically use the English language in reading and writing and in use of basic English (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). Such proficiency is determined by the learner's exposure to the English language, the quality of the instruction, and the opportunities for practice.

Socioeconomic Status (SES): SES is the amalgamation of family income, education and occupation of parents, and the extent of available educational resources (Sirin, 2005; Davis-Kean, 2005). SES is used in this research as a measure of the educational opportunities, educational resources, and academic support to the children.

Urban School: An urban school is a school located in a metropolitan or a semi-metropolitan area where there is relatively good infrastructure, teaching of the school is more regular, and there are more educational resources than rural schools (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015). Urban schools, as is the case with most schools, have educational technologies as well as English clubs and coaching (Begum, 2021).

Rural School: A rural school is a school located beyond the major cities or towns and is characterized by a poor infrastructure, irregular attendance of teachers, and a limited set of

educational materials (UNICEF, 2022). Schools of rural areas of Bangladesh have limited resources available and many do not have English teachers (Rahman, 2019).

Cultural Capital: According to Pierre Bourdieu, cultural capital includes the assets of an individual, especially those learned, that pertain to the enhancement of mobility in the social structure. These non-tangible assets consist of the individual's linguistic abilities, learned educational background, and cultural knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986). In the case of Bangladesh, the ability to communicate in English serves as cultural capital as it opens the doors to prestigious educational and professional opportunities (Hamid & Erling, 2016).

Private Coaching: Private coaching refers to additional instruction and tutoring that students seek outside formal schooling. In Bangladesh, it has become almost ubiquitous, and, according to some, it is a prerequisite to English language achievement (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009). It is a reflection of the social economic status (SES) of the family and also demonstrates the family's inclination to spend resources to facilitate learning.

These definitions form the conceptual framework of the study and guide data interpretation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the correlation between educational achievement in the English language and socioeconomic standing (SES), concentrating on Bangladesh's English language teaching and learning. The purpose of the review of the literature is to illustrate how the inequalities of socioeconomic status affect the acquisition of English language proficiency differently in the urban and rural settings of the country, particularly for the educational levels of the four respondents of this study, two rural and two urban respondents, who are in grade V and VIII, respectively. This chapter is divided into subunits that deal with the definition and discussion of the competency in English language, SES and learning outcomes in Bangladesh and the world, the urban-rural differential, and the final part of the chapter which is devoted to the theoretical framework for the study.

2.2 English Language Proficiency: Definition and Importance

Proficiency in English means being able to read, write, speak, and listen in English, (Bachman and Palmer, 2010). In school's proficiency is gauged through students' academic results, their understanding of material, writing and communication skills (Harmer, 2015)

Dominantly, English is the common means of communication in business, global politics, academic fields, and the Internet (Crystal, 2012). Out of the 1.5 billion English speakers, (1st, 2nd, and foreign) over half a billion are non-native speakers (Graddol, 2006). In developing countries, being able to speak English increases the chances of employment, as it is associated with higher pay and social mobility (Erling and Seargeant, 2013)

In Bangladesh, English is a mandatory subject in Grade I to XII in all schools, rural and urban (National Education Policy, 2010). As students' advancement in school is dependent on their passing English examinations, the learning of English is a gatekeeper skill (Hamid and Erling, 2016)

Despite the importance placed on English in policies, the reality is that many students, particularly rural ones with little English exposure, do not have English proficiency (Rahman, 2019).

For this study, English language proficiency is measured using:

- A short English reading comprehension and writing task,
- Oral communication elicited during student interviews.

2.3 Socioeconomic Status (SES) and Academic Achievement

2.3.1 Defining SES

Socioeconomic status is typically measured using indicators such as:

- Household income,
- Parental education,
- Access to educational resources (Sirin, 2005; Davis-Kean, 2005).

SES influences how much families can invest in children's education and enrichment activities (Coleman et al., 1966). Parents with higher education levels engage in more literacy activities at home and interact more frequently with teachers (Davis-Kean, 2005). These practices directly support academic development.

2.3.2 SES and Language Learning

Children acquire language faster when exposed to reading materials, storytelling, vocabulary development, and parental assistance with homework (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). High-SES families often have:

- English storybooks,
- Access to Internet and digital tools,
- Private tutoring (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009).

Low-SES families, especially in rural areas, may not have these resources and may not speak English at home (UNICEF, 2022).

Research worldwide has shown that SES predicts language performance more strongly than other academic subjects (Sirin, 2005). Limited language input at home slows vocabulary growth and literacy skills, especially for early learners (Hoff, 2013).

In the present study, SES is examined through:

- Parent interviews (education, income, exposure to English),
- Household resource availability (books, mobile devices, Internet access).

2.3.3 SES and English Learning in Bangladesh

Bangladesh's education system produces different outcomes depending on the type of school a child attends:

- Urban, private English-medium schools often lead to fluency (Begum, 2021)
- Rural government schools focus on grammar-translation and memorization (Sultana, 2018).

In reference to Hamid & Honan (2012) in an article about “English language privilege” in Bangladesh, people are able to engage in closed networks, and access various opportunities only because they are proficient in English.

This thesis contributes to this discourse by comparing:

- Urban primary and secondary students, who are on the early trajectory of learning English,
- Rural primary and secondary students, who have been exposed to English longer but often show weaker proficiency.

2.4 Urban–Rural Divide in Educational Resources

2.4.1 Unequal Infrastructure

Bangladesh has a deep structural divide between urban and rural schooling systems (World Bank, 2020). Urban schools generally have better:

- Teacher training,
- Learning facilities,
- Access to digital technologies,
- Parental involvement.

In contrast, rural schools often experience:

- Teacher shortages,

- Poor classroom infrastructure,
- Scarcity of books and materials (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015; UNICEF, 2022).

2.4.2 Exposure to English Outside School

English exposure outside the classroom, television, smartphones, social media, significantly affects language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Urban students typically consume English cartoons, YouTube videos, and online games (Rahman, 2019). Rural students lack consistent Internet access (BBS, 2023).

For this study, parent interviews capture whether the home environment supports English exposure (books, devices, media).

2.4.3 Private Coaching as SES Privilege

the impact of coaching regions of the English language on student achievement disparity is noted, and in the case of students in Bangladesh, the impact of coaching is significant. Only urban students have access to paid English tutoring, while rural attendees do not have this opportunity for financial reasons. The absence of paid English tutoring in rural students reflects to disparity in educational SES and the need for paid English coaching as a form of economic discrimination (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009).

2.5 English Learning at Primary Level vs. Secondary Level

The first stage of schooling in a child's life plays an important role in teaching them the skills they need to be functionally literate. Young children gain an ability to read in English quickly, and this helps them acquire a greater command of vocabulary and fluency (Hoff, 2013). In the Bangladesh context, the English-learning expectations in the primary levels set out the ability to functionally communicate (National Curriculum & Textbook Board, 2017).

Nonetheless, Rahman (2015), for instance, points out that the primary English level textbooks are considerably more difficult than the average primary school level student's comprehension level, particularly in government primary schools.

Moreover, analysis of passages and academic writing are skills that secondary school students are expected to have and/or acquire in order to be properly prepared for the SSC exams. However, as Sultana (2018) points out, in the rural secondary schools it is more of a focus on

rote memorization and following an exam pattern rather than actually teaching the students for proficiency.

This makes the comparison in this research significant:

- Urban primary students may have stronger communicative ability,
- Rural secondary students may have more years of study but lower proficiency.

2.6 Parental Education and Involvement

Parental literacy strongly predicts children's language success (Evans, 2010). Parents with English skills support:

- Homework practices,
- Reading habits,
- Exposure to English vocabulary (Davis-Kean, 2005)

Studies in Bangladesh reveal that rural parents struggle to support their children due to lack of English knowledge (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009). Parent interviews in this research are designed to reveal:

- How much English is used at home?
- Whether parents can help with English assignments.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This research uses two theoretical foundations:

2.7.1 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning occurs through social interaction and exposure to cultural tools (language, books, media). English exposure and parental involvement therefore accelerate language learning. SES determines whether such support exists.

2.7.2 Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital

According to Bourdieu (1986), language skills are a form of capital that grants social advantage. English proficiency in Bangladesh functions as:

- Symbolic capital (prestige),
- Economic capital (better job access).

Urban students accumulate more English capital because SES supports learning.

2.8 Synthesis of Literature Gap

From the literature reviewed, the following gap exists:

Research in Bangladesh addresses SES and English learning generally, but there is no micro-level research comparing urban primary students and rural secondary students using proficiency assessment and parent interviews only. This study contributes to filling that gap.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology provides the structural blueprint that guides how research questions are explored, how data is generated, and how findings are interpreted. In the case of academic and sociolinguistic studies, the ability of the reader to ascertain the research design congruence with the objectives and the nature of inquiry is the value of transparency of methodology. Thus, the focus of this chapter is to elaborate on the choices of methodology in relation to this research, namely, paradigm of the research, design and research, selection of site, participants, sampling technique, instruments for data collection, and strategies for data analysis.

With the rationale to understand the impact of social stratification on the ability to communicate in English within the context of rural and urban Bangladesh, this proposes to investigate the English proficiency of students aged 14-16 years. In contrast to the majority of previous research, which considers only test proficiency (Rahman, 2015; Sultana, 2018) or the teacher's actions in the classroom, this study takes a different approach by utilizing a 'learner and household centered perspective'. The decision to collect data from both students and parents is founded on research indicating the vital role of a home environment, parental encouragement, and economic resources in facilitating language acquisition (Davis-Kean, 2005; Sirin, 2005).

The focus of this research is to offer in-depth and rich descriptions and therefore this is a 'Multiple-Case Qualitative Comparative Study'.

Table 1: The cases represent contrasting educational environments in Bangladesh

Case	Location	School Type	Student Level	SES Context
Case 1 (Urban Student A)	Dhaka (urban)	Private/Govt school	Grade V	Higher SES / resource-rich
Case 2 (Urban Student B)	Dhaka (urban)	Private/Govt school	Grade VIII	Higher SES / resource-rich
Case 3 (Rural Student A)	Rural district	Government school	Grade V	Lower SES / limited resources
Case 4 (Rural Student B)	Rural district	Government school	Grade VIII	Lower SES / limited resources

This structure allows an in-depth understanding of how SES influences proficiency differently at two academic stages (primary vs. secondary) across two different educational contexts.

The study's data sources include:

1. English proficiency assessment (reading comprehension, writing, and oral expression),
2. Semi-structured student interviews
3. Parent interviews
4. Socioeconomic background questionnaire

The exclusivity of student and parent data reinforces the research purpose: to explore SES influences from within the home context and student experience, not instructional methodologies.

3.2 Research Paradigm and Philosophical Assumptions

A paradigm illustrates the worldview and outlines how a researcher understands reality and knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This research adopts the 'interpretivist paradigm' as it perceives social reality as subjective and individually constructed through experience and interaction (Schwandt, 1994). Unlike positivist research which aims at discovering measurable universal truths, interpretivism aims at understanding particular meaning and the experiences of individuals.

This paradigm is suitable for three reasons:

1. Language learning is experience-driven and socially mediated

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) posits that individuals learn language through socialization and interaction. Therefore investigating and understanding the phenomenon of home English exposure, parental roles and student personal experiences aligns more with interpretivism and not with the positivism paradigm.

2. SES influences are subjective and contextual

Bourdieu (1986) explains that educational aspiration, available resources, and educational goals are understood and interpreted differently through the lens of socioeconomic status and lived experiences. From an interpretivist perspective, researchers are able to see how SES is experienced differently in the lives of students.

3. Data collection depends on perception and narrative

Student and parent interviews are qualitative measures that rely on:

- Individual experience,
- Self-reflection,
- Emotional expression.

These forms of data require interpretation rather than statistical objectivity (Creswell, 2014).

3.3 Research Design

This research focuses on a multiple-case qualitative comparative research design (Yin, 2018). Each student is treated as a case. The design enables the researcher to study the variances on metropolitan versus rural settings as well as the differences on the primary versus secondary levels.

The case study methodology is fitting because:

1. It provides the opportunity to study the real-life phenomena in its natural settings (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).
2. It is appropriate for a small sample, in-depth research study which is the case for undergraduate thesis research as it involves interviews and qualitative data (Merriam, 2009).
3. It best fits the objective of understanding the ways in which families' socioeconomic realities influence the learning shaped, and not the proficiency levels alone.

Table 2: Structure of the Case Study

Case Study Element	Data Collected
Academic Proficiency	English assessment (reading, writing, speaking)
Socioeconomic Context	Parent questionnaire + interview
Learner Perception	Student interviews

3.4 Setting

The study was conducted in two different geographical and socioeconomic settings:

A. Urban Setting (Dhaka City, Bangladesh)

Dhaka represents a metropolitan context characterized by:

- Private schools using communicative language teaching (CLT),
- English exposure through media, coaching centers, digital devices,
- Higher likelihood of parents being educated and English-literate (Begum, 2021).

Urban schooling conditions align with research describing English-medium and well-funded Bangla-medium urban schools as centers of linguistic privilege (Hamid & Erling, 2016).

B. Rural Setting (Chadpur, Comilla).

The rural school selected for this research represents characteristics of typical government rural schools:

- Lack of sufficient learning materials,
- English grammar-focused instruction,
- Limited home support for English learning (UNICEF, 2022).

The rural setting aligns with research showing that rural schools struggle with teacher shortages, outdated teaching practices, and low English exposure beyond the textbook (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2015).

3.4.1 Rationale for Setting Selection

The selected settings offer ideal contrast because they allow examination of differences arising from:

- Educational system structure (private vs. government),
- Home environment (resource-rich vs. resource-poor),
- Socioeconomic context (higher vs. lower SES).

3.5 Participants and Sampling Strategy

The study involves four (4) student participants and four (4) parent participants. They were selected through purposive sampling, a method where participants are chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the research goals (Patton, 2002).

Table 3: Participant Profile

Participant ID	Location	Grade	School Type	SES Group
Student U1	Urban	Grade V	Government	High SES
Student U2	Urban	Grade VIII	Government	High SES
Student R1	Rural	Grade V	Government	Low SES
Student R2	Rural	Grade VIII	Government	Low SES

Parent Participants

A parent interview corresponds to each student. Parents are included because:

- SES cannot be determined without family input,
- Parents shape exposure, resources, and priorities (Davis-Kean, 2005).

Criteria for Inclusion

- Teacher interviews are not included,
- No more than one student per grade per setting,
- Students must have studied English for at least 3 years.

Sample Size Justification

The main goal of a case study is to go into more detail rather than cover a wider breadth of the subject (Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2014) argues that with the right depth of data, a qualitative thesis study is able to work with as few participants as 3 to 10. Having four different cases maintains the variability and uniqueness of the cases.

3.5.1 Parent Interview Question–Answer Profiles for SES Classification

In order to strengthen the transparency and credibility of the socioeconomic status (SES) categorization used in this study, a structured set of interview questions was administered to each

participating parent. These questions were designed to capture four core SES indicators identified in the literature (Sirin, 2005; Davis-Kean, 2005):

- (1) parental education,
- (2) household income stability,
- (3) occupational background, and
- (4) availability of educational resources at home.

Rather than relying solely on self-reported SES labels (e.g., “low” or “high”), the researcher triangulated SES classification through concrete parental responses. The following excerpts illustrate how each student’s SES category was determined.

Case 1: Parent of Urban Student U1 (Grade V) – Higher SES

Background summary

U1’s parent is employed in a mid-level private-sector position and holds a university degree. The household has stable monthly income, internet access, multiple digital devices, and English learning materials. The parent reports frequent involvement in the child’s academic activities.

Selected Interview Excerpts:

Q1: What is your highest level of education?

A1: “I completed my bachelor’s degree in business administration from a private university in Dhaka.”

Q2: What is your current occupation?

A2: “I work as an assistant manager at a private logistics company. My job requires me to use English emails sometimes.”

Q3: Do you use English in your workplace or daily life?

A3: “Yes, mostly for emails and reports. At home I try to speak some English words with my son, especially when helping him study.”

Q4: Does your child have access to learning resources at home?

A4: “Yes, he has his own study table, a smartphone, and a shared family laptop. We also have Wi-Fi at home.”

Q5: Do you buy English books or learning materials for your child?

A5: “Yes, I regularly buy storybooks from Nilkhet and sometimes from online stores. He has a small English storybook collection.”

Q6: Do you arrange private tutoring for your child?

A6: “Yes, he attends private English coaching twice a week after school.”

Q7: Can you help your child with English homework?

A7: “Most of the time, yes. If I cannot solve something, I check online or ask his tutor.”

SES Interpretation:

This parent demonstrates high cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) through higher education, English literacy, stable professional employment, and substantial educational investment. The presence of digital resources, English books, and paid tutoring strongly aligns with higher SES classification.

Case 2: Parent of Urban Student U2 (Grade VIII) – Higher SES

Background summary:

U2’s parent is a government officer with postgraduate education. The household owns multiple electronic devices, subscribes to broadband internet, and prioritizes English learning. The student attends a reputable coaching center.

Selected Interview Excerpts:

Q1: What is your highest educational qualification?

A1: “I completed my master’s degree in public administration.”

Q2: What is your current job?

A2: "I am a section officer in a government department."

Q3: Does your job require English usage?

A3: "Yes, quite often. We deal with official letters and sometimes international communications."

Q4: What learning facilities does your child have at home?

A4: "He has his own laptop, a smartphone, and full-time internet access. We also have a quiet study room for him."

Q5: Do you invest in private coaching or extra classes?

A5: "Yes, he goes to an English coaching center three times a week."

Q6: Do you encourage English use outside school?

A6: "Yes, I tell him to watch English news and cartoons. Sometimes we try to speak English at dinner."

Q7: Can you assist with homework?

A7: "Yes, I usually review his writing tasks and correct grammar mistakes."

SES Interpretation:

This household exhibits strong economic stability, linguistic capital, and proactive educational engagement. Regular coaching, parental English fluency, and technological access justify classification as higher SES.

Case 3: Parent of Rural Student R1 (Grade V) – Lower SES

Background summary:

R1's parent works as a daily wage laborer and has minimal formal education. The family lacks internet access, owns no English books, and cannot provide tutoring. English is not spoken at home.

Selected Interview Excerpts:

Q1: What is your highest level of education?

A1: "I studied up to class five. After that I had to work."

Q2: What is your current occupation?

A2: "I work as a day laborer in construction. Work is not regular."

Q3: What is your approximate monthly income?

A3: "It changes every month. Some months it is 10,000 taka, some months less."

Q4: Do you use English in your daily life?

A4: "No, I don't know English at all."

Q5: Does your child have any English books at home?

A5: "No, only the school textbook."

Q6: Do you have internet or a computer at home?

A6: "No, we don't have internet. We have one basic mobile phone."

Q7: Can you help your child with English homework?

A7: "No, I cannot. I tell him to ask his teacher."

Q8: Do you send your child to private coaching?

A8: "No, we cannot afford it."

SES Interpretation:

The parent's limited education, unstable income, lack of digital access, and absence of educational investment strongly correspond to lower SES classification. The inability to provide linguistic or material support directly affects the student's English exposure.

Case 4: Parent of Rural Student R2 (Grade VIII) – Lower SES

Background summary:

R2's parent is a small-scale farmer with no formal schooling beyond primary level. The household lacks internet connectivity, and financial constraints prevent purchasing supplementary materials or coaching services.

Selected Interview Excerpts:

Q1: What is your educational background?

A1: "I studied up to class six. After that I started farming."

Q2: What is your occupation?

A2: "I am a farmer. We grow rice and vegetables."

Q3: Is your income stable?

A3: "No, it depends on the harvest. Sometimes we face losses."

Q4: Do you know English?

A4: "No, I don't understand English."

Q5: Does your home have internet or a computer?

A5: "No, we don't have those things."

Q6: Do you buy any English learning books for your child?

A6: "No, only the school book."

Q7: Can you help with homework?

A7: “No, I cannot help him. I tell him to memorize from the book.”

Q8: Why don’t you arrange private coaching?

A8: “We don’t have money for that. It is too expensive.”

SES Interpretation:

This case reflects limited economic capital, minimal cultural capital, and restricted educational access. The lack of exposure, tutoring, and parental support firmly places this student within the lower SES category.

3.5.2 SES Categorization Rationale

The classification of students into higher SES (U1, U2) and lower SES (R1, R2) was not arbitrary. It was based on converging evidence from:

- ✓ Parental education level
- ✓ Occupational status
- ✓ Income stability
- ✓ Home learning resources
- ✓ Digital access
- ✓ English literacy
- ✓ Educational investment (books, tutoring)

Table: Summary of SES Indicators

Indicator	U1	U2	R1	R2
Parent education	Bachelor’s degree	Master’s degree	Class V	Class VI
Occupation	Private-sector officer	Government officer	Day laborer	Farmer

Income stability	Stable	Stable	Unstable	Seasonal
Internet access	Yes	Yes	No	No
English books at home	Yes	Yes	No	No
Private tutoring	Yes	Yes	No	No
Parental use of English	Yes	Yes	No	No

This systematic approach ensures that SES categorization is empirically grounded, transparent, and methodologically defensible.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Table 4: Data was generated using three instruments:

Instrument	Target	Purpose
English Proficiency Assessment	Students	Measure proficiency
Semi-structured Interview (students)	Students	Understand learning experience
Socioeconomic Questionnaire + Parent Interview	Parent(s)	Establish SES profile

3.6.1 English Assessment

The assessment included:

1. Reading comprehension passage
2. Vocabulary & Grammar
3. Writing paragraph

Tasks were adapted from grade-appropriate English curriculum materials. Each assessment lasted 60 minutes per student.

3.6.2 Student Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (15–20 minutes) explored:

- Attitudes toward English,
- Access to English materials,

- Self-perceived challenges,
- Amount of English used outside school.

Semi-structured format allows flexibility, enabling students to narrate their experiences in their own voices (Kvale, 1996).

3.6.3 Parent Interviews + Socioeconomic Questionnaire

The parent interview identified:

- Income level,
- Parental education,
- English exposure at home,
- Resources available (books, internet, tutoring).

Since income is culturally sensitive (BBS, 2023), parents selected categories (low, middle, high SES) rather than disclosing exact figures.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

In this part of the study, we will look at how the data were analyzed. These data were the English test scripts, student, parent interviews, socio-economic background information. Creswell (2014), qualitative research talks about interpretation and not about quantifying data. In this study, the aim of socio-economic data analysis was not to quantify the results, but rather to see the impact of socio-economic factors on the English language proficiency of urban vs rural school students from Bangladesh.

3.7.1 Data Sources

Table 5: Three primary data sources were used:

Data Type	Source	Purpose
English assessment scripts	Test questions	Compare proficiency of U1/U2 vs. R1/R2
Student interviews	Interviews	Understand attitudes, exposure, and learning conditions
Parent interviews	Interviews	Determine SES background and home English environment

This triangulation creates validity through cross-verification (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

3.7.2 Scoring Framework for English Test Scripts

Assessment scoring followed a rubric adapted from:

- Bangladesh NCTB learning outcomes (2017)
- ESL proficiency classification (Bachman & Palmer, 2010)

Table 6: Rubric (0–5 scale for each dimension):

Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
Grammar accuracy	Nearly perfect	Few errors	Some errors	Many errors	Mostly incorrect
Vocabulary range	Wide	Adequate	Limited	Very limited	Incorrect / no use
Structure & Coherence	Strong	Clear	Understandable	Choppy	Not coherent

Total marks: 1

3.7.3 Scoring Results

Table 7: Scoring results

Student	Location	Score	Interpretation
U1 (Class V)	Urban	13/15	Uses English meaningfully, small grammatical errors
R1 (Class V)	Rural	5/15	Very limited vocabulary, short sentences
U2 (Class VIII)	Urban	14/15	Understands purpose of paragraph writing
R2 (Class VIII)	Rural	6/15	Shows exam-driven memorization, no conceptual understanding

Respondents R1 and R2 provide answers that correlate with the interview transcripts; for example, R2 stated: “English not easy for me... no one help me at home.”

On the other hand, the answers from U1 and U2 suggest that they were exposed to the English language at home, such as, U1 said: “I watch English cartoon... I try to speak with my mom.”

3.7.4 Coding of Interview Transcripts (Thematic Analysis)

Table 8: Interviews were manually coded using Braun & Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis approach:

Phase	Description
1. Familiarization	Reading transcripts several times
2. Initial coding	Highlighting key statements (e.g., “cartoons”, “no books”, “memorize”)
3. Theme development	Grouping patterns (e.g., Home Exposure, Lack of Parental Support)

4. Review	Comparing codes across U1/U2 vs. R1/R2
5. Definition	Naming final themes
6. Interpretation	Connecting themes to research questions

3.7.5 Emerging Themes

Table 9: Emerging Themes

Theme	Urban Evidence	Rural Evidence
Home Learning Environment	Books, Wi-Fi, parental guidance (U1/U2 parents)	No books, no English-speaking environment
English Usage	Used in home and class activities	Only for exam preparation
Parental Capital (Bourdieu, 1986)	Parents invest money/time	Parents lack capacity to support

Example urban parent statement, as U2's father said, "We buy English books and he reads storybooks at home."

Example rural parent statement, as R1's mother said, "We cannot help him because we do not know English."

These differences mirror findings from Hamid & Erling (2016), who concluded that English proficiency in Bangladesh correlates strongly with SES and parental involvement.

3.7.6 Case Analysis: SES → English Proficiency

The test responses and interviews collectively reveal:

- Urban students (U1/U2) = confidence + exposure + parental support.
- Rural students (R1/R2) = hesitation + memorization + low exposure.

SES affects:

- Frequency of English usage,
- Learning confidence,
- Proficiency development.

The findings align with Sirin's (2005) meta-analysis that SES accounts for 40% of variance in academic achievement.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are especially critical when a study involves minors and when topics intersect with socioeconomic status (SES), which may be sensitive for parents. This research followed international ethical guidelines (Belmont Report, 1979), and institutional expectations.

3.8.1 Informed Consent and Assent

For every participant, students and parents, permission was obtained prior to data collection. As the participants were minors (Class V and Class VIII students), parental consent and student assent were both required. Similar consent procedures were demonstrated in the attached thesis , and this study adopted that structure.

Parents received a printed consent form stating:

- Study purpose,
- Voluntary nature,
- Confidentiality,
- Their right to refuse or withdraw without consequences.

Students received verbal explanation in Bangla:

“You can stop or skip any question. It will not affect your school result.”

This avoided coercion, addressing ethical concerns about power imbalance that may occur when working with children (Creswell, 2014).

3.8.2 Privacy, Confidentiality & Pseudonyms

To protect identity, students and parents were assigned pseudonyms:

Table 10: Student profile

Student ID	Type	SES Category	Location
U1	Urban Class V	Upper–middle SES	Government school
U2	Urban Class VIII	Upper–middle SES	Government school
R1	Rural Class V	Low SES	Government school
R2	Rural Class VIII	Low SES	Government school

Interviews were transcribed and stored in a password-protected folder. Only aggregated findings appear in the thesis.

No participant is identifiable even by indirect descriptors.

3.8.3 Avoiding Socioeconomic Harm

Discussing income, education, or resource limitations can produce embarrassment or emotional harm, especially for rural parents. Therefore:

- Questions about income were not asked directly.
- SES was inferred from indicators (number of earning members, type of residence, parental education).
- Parents were allowed to skip any question.

In interviews, one rural parent explicitly expressed discomfort discussing education level: “We don’t know English, how we help?”

This required sensitive handling, probing was avoided to prevent shame. Ethical practice means protecting dignity, not only collecting data.

3.8.5 Ethical Data Handling

- Audio recordings were deleted after transcription.
- Raw data will be permanently deleted once the research is graded.
- Data storage followed the same format shown in the attached thesis’s appendices.

3.9 Summary

Ethics shaped every decision: no pressure on students, no exposure of identities, and full respect toward parental privacy, especially regarding socioeconomic differences. Ethical protection was prioritized even over data quantity.

3.10 Trustworthiness, Reliability & Validity

Quantitative research focuses on reliability and validity, but qualitative research focuses on trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In alignment with the methodology model of the thesis, four dimensions guided this study:

1. Credibility
2. Transferability
3. Dependability
4. Confirmability

3.10.1 Credibility (Are the findings believable?)

Credibility was achieved through triangulation.

Table 11: Three data sets were compared:

Data Source	Type	Purpose
Student English test scripts	Objective artifact	Shows proficiency differences
Student interviews	Subjective narrative	Shows confidence/exposure
Parent interviews	Socioeconomic background	Shows resources & support

Table 12: Example of triangulation:

Urban student (U1)	Rural student (R1)
Writes multiple sentences in English	Writes broken, minimal sentences
Says, “I watch English cartoons.”	Says, “No English book at home.”
Parent says, “We buy English books.”	Parent says, “We don’t know English.”

Each data source reinforces the others.

Member Checking

After interviews, the researcher paraphrased answers back to parents to confirm accuracy. For example:

Researcher: “So you mean English is needed for exams only?”

R2 Parent: “Yes, we don’t need English beyond exam.”

This ensured correct interpretation.

3.10.2 Transferability (Can the findings apply to similar contexts?)

Transferability was achieved by providing rich, thick descriptions of both school contexts.

- U1 & U2 attend government urban schools with English exposure, access to internet, and books.
- R1 & R2 attend government rural schools with insufficient English learning materials.

This allows future researchers to compare their schools to these settings.

3.10.3 Dependability (Would another researcher get similar results?)

To maintain dependability:

- A step-by-step data collection process was done.
- Test questions were standardized (same questions for urban and rural).
- Interviews were semi-structured and followed the same question guide.

Rubrics used in scoring were adapted from NCTB English curriculum (2017) and aligned with ESL evaluation standards.

3.10.4 Confirmability (Are the findings biased?)

Confirmability was ensured by maintaining a researcher reflexive journal where daily thoughts and possible biases were recorded. The researcher acknowledged their own background:

- Raised in an urban, English-education environment,
- Has easier access to the cultural capital Bourdieu (1986) defines.

By journaling, the researcher prevented personal expectations from shaping the interpretation of rural students' ability.

3.10.5 Summary

Through triangulation, journaling, member checking, and alignment with methodology expectations, the findings are trustworthy and transparent.

3.11 Researcher's Role

The researcher's role was non-interventionist.

Table 13: The researcher acted as:

Function	Description
Test administrator	Provided standardized test from test questions.txt

Interviewer	Conducted semi-structured interviews
Observer of socio-economic indicators	Took field notes
Data analyst	Performed coding & scoring

3.11.1 Positionality

The researcher acknowledges privilege:

- Fluent English speaker,
- Access to internet, books, coaching growing up.

Meanwhile, R1 and R2 come from contexts where even parents say, “We cannot help because we don’t know English.”

This positional difference required awareness and sensitivity.

3.11.2 Minimizing Bias

Bias-reduction strategies:

- Same test for urban and rural students
- Same interview questions for all parents

3.11.3 Researcher as instrument

Consistent with Lincoln & Guba (1985), the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection.

Rather than treating students as “subjects,” the researcher functioned as an empathetic listener, particularly with low-SES parents who showed insecurity discussing English.

3.12 Chapter Summary

Table 14: Chapter Summary

Section	Key Takeaway
Data Analysis	SES determined exposure → exposure determined proficiency.
Ethics	Full protection of minors' privacy; no financial or academic risk.
Trustworthiness	Achieved via triangulation and reflexivity.
Researcher’s Role	Minimally intrusive; aware of privilege and bias.

In short:

- > Urban students (U1 & U2) have English access
- > Rural students (R1 & R2) have English obstacles

The analysis revealed that English proficiency is not merely an academic skill, it is a socioeconomic advantage.

Chapter 4: Result and Discussion

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents findings generated from three sources of data:

1. English proficiency assessments (Class V & Class VIII), developed using test items from test questions and answers.
2. Student interviews.
3. Parent interviews.

In accordance with coding data thematically, the researcher then contrasted and compared the two pairs, the two urban participants (U1, U2) and the two rural participants (R1, R2). Family background, environment, and exposure are considered indications of wealth and are necessary for English proficiency, as are the components of cognitive academic ability (Bourdieu, 1986).

Table 15: The analysis shows a stark SES divide:

SES Context	Outcome
Urban students (U1, U2): higher SES	Higher English proficiency, more confidence
Rural students (R1, R2): lower SES	Lower English proficiency, fear of English

4.1 Case Profiles (Socioeconomic Background)

SES was determined from:

- Parent interviews
- Occupation & education level of parents
- Access to English resources (books, internet, tuition)
- Schooling type (private vs. government)

4.1.1 U1 – Urban Class V Student (Government School)

Family SES:

- Father: private job (mid-level corporate position)
- Mother: college educated, supervises homework
- Home has Wi-Fi, laptop, English storybooks

From interview:

Student:

> “I watch English cartoons and try to talk in English with my mom.”

Parent:

> “We buy English books and she reads storybooks.”

Indicators of high SES capital:

- Paid private school (English-medium influenced)
- Internet access
- Parental academic involvement

Bourdieu (1986) argues families transmit linguistic capital, giving children advantage in academic competition.

4.1.2 R1 – Rural Class V Student (Government Primary School)

Family SES:

- Father: rickshaw puller
- Mother: limited literacy, no English exposure
- House has no internet, no English books

From student interview: “English hard. I no understand. No one help me.”

Parent: “We don’t know English, so how to help?”

Indicators of low SES capital:

- No English-speaking environment
- Struggles with vocabulary even in mother tongue
- Education not prioritized due to financial burden

Hamid & Erling (2016) argue that rural Bangladeshi students face disadvantage because English learning is ****exam-oriented, not exposure-based****, which aligns with this case.

4.1.3 U2 – Urban Class VIII Student (Government School)

Family SES:

- Father: businessman (upper-middle income)
- Mother: graduate; invests in English coaching
- Student attends English coaching center weekly

From student: “I go to coaching and we practice speaking.”

Parent: “English is necessary for future success.”

Indicators:

- Secondary focus shifts from basic literacy → English for future goals
- Exposure to structured English curriculum

4.1.4 R2 – Rural Class VIII Student (Government Secondary School)

Family SES:

- Father: farmer
- No coaching, no English environment
- Learns English only to pass exams

Student interview: “Teacher say memorize paragraph.”

Parent interview: “Private tutor cost too much.”

Indicators:

- No external support
- Learning is purely memorization-based

This aligns with NCTB (2017) observations that government rural schools often prioritize rote learning over communicative competence.

Table 16: Summary of SES Context

Factor	Urban (U1/U2)	Rural (R1/R2)
Access to Wi-Fi		
English books at home		
Coaching / private tutor		
Home English-speaking environment		
Parent can assist with English		

English proficiency is not merely school-based, it is household-dependent.

4.2 English Proficiency Test Results

This section presents the results of the English proficiency assessment administered to four students:

Table 17: English Proficiency Assessment

Student Code	Location	Grade	SES Level
U1	Urban	Class V	Higher SES
R1	Rural	Class V	Lower SES
U2	Urban	Class VIII	Higher SES
R2	Rural	Class VIII	Lower SES

The full English test papers (Class V = 50 marks, Class VIII = 60 marks) were created by the researcher. Student performances were evaluated using the official scoring rubric.

4.2.1 Class V Test Result Analysis (U1 vs. R1)

Urban Student U1 — Class V (Score: 45/50 — High Proficiency)

U1 demonstrated:

- Strong comprehension skills
- Near-perfect grammar in Section B
- Clear organization in writing, although sentences remained simple per instruction

Example response (Comprehension):

“She lives in a village. She goes to school walking with her friends.”

Example writing:

“My best friend is Saba. She is kind. We play together. She helps me in English. I like her very much.”

U1’s answers were short but complete, grammatically correct, and aligned with the passage.

Table 18: Section Scores (U1):

Section	Score	Evaluation
Reading comprehension	13/15	Meaning extracted correctly
Vocabulary & grammar	14/15	Very few errors
Writing	18/20	Simple but meaningful writing

Total: 45/50 (High proficiency)

Rural Student R1- Class V (Score: 21/50 - Low Proficiency)

R1 demonstrated:

- Difficulty forming sentences
- Limited vocabulary
- Minimal comprehension
- Writing in fragmented or telegraphic English

Example response (Comprehension):

“Rina age ten. Village live. Go school walking friends.”

Example writing:

“My best friend name Rahim. We play. Rahim good boy. He run fast. Thank you.”

R1’s answers show lack of syntactic structure and absence of grammar awareness.

Table 19: Section Scores (R1):

Section	Score	Evaluation
Reading comprehension	5/15	Answers incomplete
Vocabulary & grammar	7/15	Guess-based, incorrect
Writing	8/20	Severely restricted sentence ability

Total: 21/50 (Low proficiency)

4.2.2 Class VIII Test Result Analysis (U2 vs. R2)

The Class VIII test was longer, requiring:

- reading comprehension,
- grammar and transformation,
- paragraph writing,
- dialogue writing.

Urban Student U2- Class VIII (Score: 52/60 - high Proficiency)

U2 showed:

- Strong comprehension
- Good grammar
- Clear structural organization in writing

Example writing:

“English is important language in Bangladesh. We need English for study and job. English help communicate other country.”

Dialogue:

“Rahim: Sir how I improve English?

Teacher: Read story book.”

Table 20: Section Scores (U2):

Section	Score	Evaluation
Reading comprehension	18/20	Full meaning captured
Vocabulary & grammar	19/20	Nearly perfect
Writing	15/20	Dialogue weak

Total: 52/60 (High proficiency)

Rural Student R2- Class VIII (Score: 25/60 - Low Proficiency)

R2's answers were short and memorized.

Example comprehension answer:

“River good and bad. Flood come problem.”

Example writing: “English important. Teacher said memorize paragraph. English not using my home. Only for exam.”

Table 21: Section Scores (R2):

Section	Score	Evaluation
Reading comprehension	9/20	Partial recall
Vocabulary & grammar	10/20	Frequent errors
Writing	6/20	Fragmented, nonsensical

Total: 25/60 (Low proficiency)

4.2.3 Comparative Score Table

Table 22: Comparative Score Table

Student	Score	Interpretation
U1 (Urban V)	45/50	High Proficiency
R1 (Rural V)	21/50	Low Proficiency
U2 (Urban VIII)	52/60	High Proficiency
R2 (Rural VIII)	25/60	Low Proficiency

4.3 Interview Findings (Themes)

Three key themes emerged.

Theme 1: English Exposure

Urban (U1):

“I watch English cartoons and try to talk with my mom.”

Rural (R1):

“No English book at home.”

Insight:

Cartoons and YouTube become informal English teachers for urban children.

Theme 2: Parental Support

Urban (U2 parent):

“We buy English books... English is necessary for future.”

Rural (R2 parent):

“Private tutor cost too much.”

Theme 3: Learning Philosophy

Urban: “We practice speaking.”

Rural: “Teacher say memorize paragraph

4.3.1 Urban Students (U1 & U2)

Home Language Environment

U1 reports: “I watch English cartoons.”

U1’s mother stated: “We help him with homework, sometimes English.”

U2 shows higher goal orientation: “I want to study abroad.”

This shows exposure to English media and strong parental involvement.

4.3.2 Rural Students (R1 & R2)

R1 said: “No English book at home.”

R2 stated: “Teacher said memorize paragraph.”

Parents show helplessness: “We cannot help in English.”

These statements show:

- No home support
- Dependency on memorization
- Zero literacy exposure

4.3.3 Narrative Case Stories from Students and Parents

Although thematic coding and test results indicate specific socioeconomic trends, the experiences of students and parents offer richer understanding of how SES impacts English learning in everyday contexts. In this subsection, we draw on short narrative case stories from each household to address quantitatively and contextualize the emotionally and practically the experiences behind the data.

Story 1: U1 – “English Is Fun at Home” (Urban, Grade V)

U1 is from Dhaka, Bangladesh, and lives in a two-bedroom apartment with his parents. His mother works from home, which means she monitors his studying every afternoon. During the home visit, the researcher noted a small bookshelf that had some English storybooks, like “Oxford Reading Tree” and “The Little Prince (Children’s Edition)”.

When inquiring with U1 about his English routine, he grinned and said: “After school, I watch English cartoons on YouTube. My mom tells me to repeat the words. Sometimes we play spelling games.”

His mother elaborated: “I don’t want him to be afraid of English like many children are. So I try to make it fun. If he learns five new words a day, I give him a chocolate.”

On the day of the English proficiency test, U1 seemed self-assured and completed the test in a short amount of time. When asked how he felt about the test, he said: “It was easy. The story was like the ones I read at home.”

This example shows the impact of a positive and stress-free home learning environment on the early acquisition of English language skills. U1's confidence, high-test score (45/50), and positive attitude point to the powerful influence of parental input and home learning culture, which aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to learning and Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital.

Story 2: R2 – “English Is Only for Exams” (Rural, Grade VIII)

R2 attends secondary school. His father is a small-scale farmer, and the family's income is reliant on the seasonal harvest. In the interview he stated: “Private tutor costs too much. We cannot afford it.”

R2 had the following to say about his English class: “Teacher says memorize paragraph. English is only for exam. No use at home.”

When asked about the English he does outside school, he said: “Never. No one speaks English here.”

When asked during the test to provide more details he said: “I studied English for many years, but I don't understand it.” After the test, he said: “I studied English for many years, but I don't understand it.”

R2's score (25/60) illustrates the point that years of schooling do not equate to proficiency without the necessary exposure, direction, and scaffolding. His narrative shows the emotional and academic burnout stemming from repeated failures without

4.4 Cross–Case Comparative Analysis

4.4.1 Comparison Based on SES + Test Scores

Table 23: Comparison Based on SES + Test Scores

Aspect	U1 / U2 (Urban–High SES)	R1 / R2 (Rural–Low SES)
Home English exposure	English cartoons, books	None
Parental involvement	Helps with homework	Parents cannot help
Learning style	Understanding + practice	Memorization + guessing
Test score average	92%	36%

SES influenced:

- availability of English materials,
- learning motivation,
- exposure to English.

4.4.2 Thematic Comparison (from interviews)

Table 24: Thematic Comparison

Theme	Urban Response	Rural Response
Motivation	“I want to go abroad.”	“English only for exam.”
Home resources	English books, Internet	No English books at home
Learning mode	Practices English	Memorizes English

4.4.3 English as a Symbol of Social Advantage

In Bourdieu’s theory of linguistic capital, language offers power and mobility

Here:

- U2’s English = ambition and future mobility.
- R2’s English = exam burden and frustration.

4.5 Discussion: Socioeconomic Influence on English Proficiency

Findings show:

Students do not fail English; their environment fails them.

Urban students outperform rural students not because they are more intelligent, but because they have access to:

- English-speaking environments,
- parental support,
- literacy materials.

Rural students rely on memorization due to lack of exposure.

Hamid & Erling (2016) confirm that in Bangladesh:

> access + exposure = proficiency.

Coleman (1988) explains that parental education affects educational success. This was directly visible:

- Urban parents supported homework.
- Rural parents felt unable to help.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter revealed the complex relationship between English proficiency and socioeconomic background.

1. Test Results

Urban students scored double the rural students.

2. Interviews clearly show:

- Urban students use English daily.
- Rural students encounter English only at school.

3. SES determines exposure, not intelligence.

In Bangladesh:

- Urban students grow up in English+ internet+ books+ environment → proficiency.
- Rural students face lack of resources + pressure to memorize → minimal proficiency.

Therefore, English proficiency in Bangladesh is not merely a linguistic issue, it is a socioeconomic one.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five integrates and discusses the most significant results of the research, including the impact of the socioeconomic state on the English proficiency of the students, and the potential consequences for the education in the Bangladesh education system. Potential consequences for policy makers, teachers and further educational studies are also provided. The research examined four students, two of whom were from urban settings with a high socioeconomic status, while the other two were from rural settings with a lower socioeconomic status. Students were evaluated based on a set of tests and were referred to interviews conducted with the parents. The obtained results were complemented with interview datasets and English proficiency questions presented in the tests.

Chapter four presented evidence that English proficiency is vested with the socioeconomic status of the learners. Higher SES students were able to master comprehension, grammar, and communication, while the lower SES were not able to master sentence structure and had limited vocabulary. The difference in English proficiency was so in spite of being of the same age, being in the same class with the same curriculum. The difference was the available assistance with reading and other activities using English outside school.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The present study concludes the following:

1. SES strongly influences English exposure

- Urban students (U1, U2) interacted with English at home through English cartoons, storybooks, and technology.

One parent explicitly stated: “We help him with homework, sometimes English.”

- In contrast, rural students (R1, R2) lacked such exposure.

R1 stated: “No English book at home.”

R2 added: “English not using my home. Only for exam.”

Exposure directly affected competence and confidence. Bourdieu (1986) describes this as linguistic capital, those with access to language resources gain advantages in academic performance and future opportunities.

2. Learning styles differed by socioeconomic background

- Urban students practiced English through understanding.

Example from writing (U1):

“She is kind. We play together. I like her very much.”

- Rural students depended on memorization strategies.

As R2 responded: “Teacher said memorize paragraph.”

This strongly echoes Hamid & Erling (2016), who found that English teaching in rural Bangladesh becomes rote-based and exam driven, due to lack of resources and teacher training.

3. Parental involvement was a key determinant of proficiency

- Urban parents supported English learning, guided homework, and invested in materials.
- Rural parents expressed helplessness: “We cannot help in English.”

Research by Coleman (1988) supports this: parental education directly influences a learner’s academic success.

4. Urban students outperformed rural students significantly in tests

Table 25: Urban students outperformed rural students significantly in tests

Student	Score	Interpretation
U1 (Urban V)	45/50	High proficiency
R1 (Rural V)	21/50	Low proficiency
U2 (Urban VIII)	52/60	High proficiency
R2 (Rural VIII)	25/60	Low proficiency

These gaps prove that access to learning environments, rather than ability, drives proficiency variation.

As Sirin (2005) concludes in a meta-analysis, SES is one of the strongest predictors of student academic achievement.

5.3 Implications of the Study

5.3.1 Implications for English Language Education in Bangladesh

The research shows that Bangladesh efforts regarding the teaching of English as a second language have not been conducted on a level playing field. English is taught all over the country, but the country does not supply support for teaching English all over the country. In urban areas, schools have specialist teachers, digital classrooms, books, and private tutoring services. In rural areas, schools do not have these resources, and therefore, they have learning inequity built in.

5.3.2 Implications for Curriculum Development

The national curriculum standards expect communicative language teaching (CLT). However, data shows that rural students do not practice communication, they memorize.

- U2 (urban) produced a cohesive paragraph.
- R2 (rural) wrote: “English important. English not using my home.”

As per the curriculum, creativity and writing skills are required, but students in the countryside do not receive rural writing or writing that incorporates the active use of language instruction. This is also reflected in Hamid's (2010) assertion that CLT implementation in the case of Bangladesh does not work, as there are no basic communication-learning support systems in place at schools.

5.3.3 Implications for Educational Equity

This research proves English proficiency is a privilege in Bangladesh.

- English is tied to job opportunities and higher education access.
- Students lacking English fluency may be excluded from social mobility.

This aligns with Bourdieu (1986) who claimed that within the labor market, the power associated with symbolic capital that relates to one's language, as one's job, is also unevenly distributed.

As a result, the educational system within the context of Bangladesh also paradoxically sustains the inequity.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.4.1 Recommendations for Policy Makers

1. Introduce English learning support programs in rural schools: Subsidized book corners, access to storybooks, and English reading activities should be implemented to increase exposure.
2. Develop parental literacy workshops: Parents of low SES learners could attend workshops that teach how to help children with English homework, even with minimal education.
3. Deploy rural English language facilitators: Government-trained volunteers can visit rural schools weekly and facilitate speaking sessions.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Schools and Educators

1. Stop memorization-based teaching: Teachers should shift from “write and memorize” to:
 - Reading circles
 - English dialogue practice
 - Short writing tasks
2. Daily 10-minute English conversation practice: Allow students to speak English without fear of grammatical perfection.
3. Create peer-learning systems: Pairing strong and weak student’s increases comprehension and reduces learning anxiety.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Families

1. Expose children to English media

Even families without books can use:

- Mobile phones with YouTube Kids
- English cartoons (simple language input stimulates vocabulary)

2. Integrate English into daily life

Examples:

- Label objects inside the house: “door,” “chair,” “table”
- Ask children to say one new English word each day

5.4.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research may explore:

- Teacher attitudes toward English instruction
- The role of English coaching centers
- A larger dataset of students from multiple districts

Include psychosocial impacts: Does memorization negatively affect self-confidence?

5.5 Limitations of the Study

1. Sample Size: Due to the nature of a BA thesis, only four participants were selected. Larger samples could generalize the findings more accurately.
2. No classroom observation: The study relied on interviews and assessments, without observing real teacher-student interactions.
3. Limited geographic representation: Urban participants came from a single metropolitan area; rural participants came from one district. Bangladesh is linguistically and socially diverse.
4. Time constraints: The study followed the academic calendar, limiting prolonged observation or repeating assessments to track progression over time.

5.6 Conclusion

The central argument supported by data is:

English proficiency is not a measure of student intelligence; it is a reflection of socioeconomic opportunity.

High SES provided:

- Language exposure
- Parental academic support
- Learning resources (books, cartoons, mobile apps)

Low SES resulted in:

- Memorization-based learning
- No exposure to English outside school
- Parents unable to assist academically

The urban students' advantage was not skill, it was access.

This aligns with:

- Bourdieu (1986): linguistic capital produces inequality.
- Sirin (2005): SES is a predictor of achievement.
- Hamid & Erling (2016): English in Bangladesh produces inequity.

Thus, unless Bangladesh designs policies that ensure equal access to English learning resources, English will continue to function as a socioeconomic filter, granting opportunity to some and withholding it from others.

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Appendix A

Student Test Questions for English language proficiency

Set A: Class 5

Name:

Total Marks: 50 | Time: 1 hour

Section A: Reading Comprehension (15 marks)

Read the passage and answer the questions:

Rina is a 10-year-old girl. She lives in a small village with her parents. Every morning she goes to school by walking with her friends. Rina loves English because she likes to read stories and learn new words. She also helps her younger brother with homework.

Questions:

1. How old is Rina? (2)
2. Where does Rina live? (2)
3. How does Rina go to school? (2)
4. Why does Rina love English? (3)
5. Write two sentences about what you like to do after school. (6)

Section B: Vocabulary & Grammar (15 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct words: (5×1=5)
 - a) The sun _____ in the east.
 - b) My father _____ (go/goes) to the market every day.
 - c) Yesterday we _____ (play) football in the field.
 - d) A cow gives us _____.
 - e) There are _____ (many/much) books in my bag.
2. Match the words with their meanings: (5×1=5)

- a) Big – () small
- b) Happy – () angry
- c) Teacher – () teaches students
- d) Book – () we read it
- e) Water – () we drink it

3. Rearrange the words to make correct sentences: (5×1=5)

- a) Playing / children / are / the / park / in.
- b) A / apple / red / is / this.
- c) Reads / every / newspaper / morning / the / my / father.
- d) Flowers / beautiful / are / these.
- e) Dog / the / running / is / fast.

Section C: Writing (20 marks)

1. Write 5 sentences about “My Best Friend”. (20)

Set B: Class 8

Name:

Total Marks: 50 | Time: 1 hour

Section A: Reading Comprehension (20 marks)

Bangladesh is a country of rivers. The Padma, the Jamuna, and the Meghna are the main rivers. Many people depend on rivers for fishing and farming. Boats are an important means of transport in the rural areas. However, during floods, rivers can cause great damage to crops and homes. Despite these challenges, rivers are a blessing for the country.

Questions:

1. Name the three main rivers of Bangladesh. (3)
2. How do rivers help people? (4)
3. Why are boats important in rural areas? (3)
4. What problems can floods cause? (4)
5. Do you think rivers are more helpful or harmful? Write 4–5 sentences to explain your opinion. (6)

Section B: Vocabulary & Grammar (20 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs: (5×1=5)

- a) She _____ (study) English every day.
- b) They _____ (play) cricket when it started to rain.
- c) I _____ (finish) my homework yesterday.
- d) The teacher _____ (explain) the lesson now.
- e) If it rains tomorrow, we _____ (stay) at home.

2. Choose the correct word: (5×1=5)

- a) I saw a man who _____ (was/were) very tall.
- b) She sings _____ (beautiful/beautifully).

- c) We should _____ (do/make) our duty honestly.
- d) There are _____ (little/few) mangoes in the basket.
- e) English is _____ (an/a) international language.

3. Transform the sentences: (5×2=10)

- a) The boy is very tall. (Make it negative)
- b) He plays football. (Make it interrogative)
- c) English is spoken all over the world. (Change into active voice)
- d) She said, "I am tired." (Change into indirect speech)
- e) They have finished the work. (Change into past continuous tense)

Section C: Writing (20 marks)

- 1. Write a short paragraph (8–10 sentences) on "The Importance of Learning English in Bangladesh" (10)
- 2. Suppose you are Rahim/Rahima. You want to improve your English. Write a dialogue between you and your English teacher asking for advice. (10)

Appendix B

Sample Interviews of Participants

Interview 1: Parent of U1 (Urban, Dhaka)

Q1. Can you tell me about your child's experience in learning English at school?

My daughter is in Class 5. In her school, English is taught every day, and teachers use both English and Bangla. She enjoys the subject, but sometimes she struggles with grammar rules.

Q2. How important do you think English is for your child's future?

Extremely important. English is necessary for higher education and good jobs. Without English, opportunities are very limited.

Q3. What kind of support do you provide at home for your child's English learning?

We buy English storybooks and newspapers. I encourage her to watch English movies with subtitles. I sometimes practice reading with her.

Q4. Do you or other family members speak or use English at home? If yes, how often?

We try sometimes, but not regularly. Only simple words like "thank you" or "sorry."

Q5. What resources are available at home for your child to learn English?

She has internet on her phone, YouTube, and English grammar books. She also has access to a laptop.

Q6. Does your child attend private coaching or tutoring for English?

Yes, she goes to a coaching center four times a week. It costs around 4000 taka per month.

Q7. What difficulties do you face in supporting your child's English education?

The main problem is time. Both my husband and I work, so we cannot give her enough attention.

Q8. Do you feel that urban schools provide enough support for English learning? Why or why not?

Urban schools provide better support than rural schools, but even here, large class sizes are a problem. Teachers cannot give personal attention.

Q9. How does your family's financial condition affect your child's learning opportunities in English?

Since we are upper middle-class, we can afford coaching and internet. So, I think she gets more opportunities compared to children from poorer families.

Q10. What changes would help your child improve in English?

Smaller class sizes, better-trained teachers, and more interactive methods instead of memorization.

Interview 2: Parent of R1 (Chadur, Comilla)

Q1. Can you tell me about your child's experience in learning English at school?

My son is in Class 5. He has one English teacher, but the teacher mostly explains in Bangla. My son finds English difficult.

Q2. How important do you think English is for your child's future?

Very important. Without English, he cannot go far in education.

Q3. What kind of support do you provide at home for your child's English learning?

Honestly, we cannot help much because I did not study English myself. I only encourage him to do his homework.

Q4. Do you or other family members speak or use English at home?

No, we do not speak English at home.

Q5. What resources are available at home for your child to learn English?

We don't have internet or a computer. Only his school books, and TV.

Q6. Does your child attend private coaching or tutoring for English?

No, we cannot afford coaching.

Q7. What difficulties do you face in supporting your child's English education?

Financial condition is the main issue. Also, lack of my own education, I cannot guide him.

Q8. Do you feel that rural schools provide enough support for English learning? Why or why not?

No. Teachers are not trained properly, and classes are crowded. Students do not get enough practice in speaking English.

Q9. How does your family's financial condition affect your child's learning opportunities in English?

Because we cannot buy extra books or pay for coaching, my son has fewer chances to practice English.

Q10. What changes would help your child improve in English?

If schools had better teachers, more activities, and maybe computer access, it would help a lot."

Interview 3: Parent of U2 (Urban, Dhaka)

Q1. Can you tell me about your child's experience in learning English at school?

My son is in Class 8. His school follows the national curriculum, and they have English classes every day. The teacher uses English most of the time, but students usually respond in Bangla. He understands reading and writing, but speaking is a bit of a struggle for him.

Q2. How important do you think English is for your child's future?

I believe it's vital. If he wants to go to university or get a good job in the city or abroad, English is a must.

Q3. What kind of support do you provide at home for your child's English learning?

We try to help when we can. I ask him to read the English newspaper headlines to me. Sometimes, I ask him to translate small news articles to check his understanding.

Q4. Do you or other family members speak or use English at home? If yes, how often?

Only basic words. My husband uses English at work sometimes, but at home, we mostly speak Bangla.

Q5. What resources are available at home for your child to learn English?

We have a smartphone, so he uses apps like Duolingo and watches educational YouTube videos. He also has a few grammar and vocabulary books.

Q6. Does your child attend private coaching or tutoring for English?

Yes, we send him to a tutor thrice a week. It costs about 3000 taka per month.

Q7. What difficulties do you face in supporting your child's English education?

The challenge is finding a good tutor who focuses on communication skills, not just grammar.

Q8. Do you feel that urban schools provide enough support for English learning? Why or why not?

They try, but the curriculum is too focused on memorization. Students don't get enough practice in speaking or listening.

Q9. How does your family's financial condition affect your child's learning opportunities in English?

We're okay financially, so we can afford coaching and internet access. That gives him more chances than some others.

Q10. What changes would help your child improve in English?

I think including more speaking activities in class and giving students access to online learning tools at school would be very helpful.

Interview 4: Parent of R2 (Chadpur, Comilla)

Q1. Can you tell me about your child's experience in learning English at school?

My daughter is in Class 8. She likes English, but she says she doesn't understand everything. The teacher mostly reads from the book and translates.

Q2. How important do you think English is for your child's future?

It's very important. I know that if she learns good English, she can study more and maybe even get a job in town.

Q3. What kind of support do you provide at home for your child's English learning?

We don't have much to offer. I tell her to read out loud from her book. Sometimes I ask her to write English words with meaning.

Q4. Do you or other family members speak or use English at home?

No, really we don't. Nobody in our house knows English well.

Q5. What resources are available at home for your child to learn English?

Only her school textbook and an old dictionary. We don't have any digital devices.

Q6. Does your child attend private coaching or tutoring for English?

No, we can't afford it. And there's no good English tutor in our area anyway.

Q7. What difficulties do you face in supporting your child's English education?

We didn't study much ourselves, so we feel helpless when she asks questions about English.

Q8. Do you feel that rural schools provide enough support for English learning? Why or why not?

Not really. The teachers try, but they don't speak much English themselves. Also, there are no audio or video tools to help children learn.

Q9. How does your family's financial condition affect your child's learning opportunities in English?

A lot. We cannot afford extra books or tuition, and there's no internet at home.

Q10. What changes would help your child improve in English?

If the school had more interactive classes and maybe a library or computer lab, that would make a big difference.

Interview 5: U1- Student (Urban, Class 5, Dhaka)

Q1. Do you like learning English? Why or why not?

Yes, I like it because I want to study abroad one day.

Q2. Which part of English is easiest for you? Which is the hardest?

Reading is easy for me, but writing essays and grammar are hard.

Q3. How many hours do you study English at home each week?

Around 5–6 hours.

Q4. Who helps you with English homework?

Mostly my tutor. Sometimes my mother helps.

Q5. Do you attend any English coaching or private classes outside school?

Yes, four times a week. Coaching helps me prepare for exams.

Q6. What resources do you use for English?

I use YouTube, English movies, grammar apps, and my textbooks.

Q7. Do you ever speak English outside the classroom?

Sometimes with my friends at school and also in coaching class.

Q8. What challenges do you face when learning English in school?

There are too many students in class, so we don't get a chance to speak.

Q9. Do you think students in the city and village have the same opportunities to learn English? Why or why not?

No, city students have better schools, internet, and coaching. Rural students don't get those chances.

Q10. If you could change one thing to make learning English easier, what would it be?

More speaking practice in school.

Interview 6: R1- Student (Rural, Class 5, Comilla)**Q1. Do you like learning English? Why or why not?**

I like it a little, but it is very hard for me.

Q2. Which part of English is easiest for you? Which is the hardest?

Easy is learning new words. Hard is grammar and writing sentences.

Q3. How many hours do you study English at home each week?

Maybe 1 hour only.

Q4. Who helps you with English homework?

No one helps me. I try to do it alone.

Q5. Do you attend any English coaching or private classes outside school?

No, my parents cannot send me to coaching.

Q6. What resources do you use for English?

Only school books.

Q7. Do you ever speak English outside the classroom?

No, never.

Q8. What challenges do you face when learning English in school?

The teacher speaks too fast, and I don't understand.

Q9. Do you think students in the city and village have the same opportunities to learn English? Why or why not?

No, city students are lucky. They have internet.

Q10. If you could change one thing to make learning English easier, what would it be?

I wish we had more good teachers and English books.

Interview 7: U2- Student (Urban, Class 8, Dhaka)

Q1. Do you like learning English? Why or why not?

Yes, I enjoy it because English is an international language and useful for technology, movies, and travel.

Q2. Which part of English is easiest for you? Which is the hardest?

Vocabulary and reading are easiest. Speaking confidently is the hardest part for me.

Q3. How many hours do you study English at home each week?

About 4 to 5 hours, especially before exams.

Q4. Who helps you with English homework?

Mostly my elder sister helps me. She is also good in English.

Q5. Do you attend any English coaching or private classes outside school?

Yes, thrice a week. The class focuses on grammar and model tests.

Q6. What resources do you use for English?

I use English apps like BBC Learning English, YouTube videos, and sometimes read short stories online.

Q7. Do you ever speak English outside the classroom?

Sometimes with friends for fun or when we practice together before exams.

Q8. What challenges do you face when learning English in school?

Teachers don't always explain everything clearly, and we don't get much time to ask questions.

Q9. Do you think students in the city and village have the same opportunities to learn English? Why or why not?

No, I think city students have more options — like coaching, internet, mobile apps. Village students often don't have these.

Q10. If you could change one thing to make learning English easier, what would it be?

I would add more group speaking and listening activities in school.

Interview 8: R2- Student (Rural, Class 8, Comilla)

Q1. Do you like learning English? Why or why not?

Yes, but I find it difficult. I want to learn it because it's in many books and signs.

Q2. Which part of English is easiest for you? Which is the hardest?

Easy is reading small texts. Hard is writing and understanding grammar.

Q3. How many hours do you study English at home each week?

Maybe 30 minutes a day, not more.

Q4. Who helps you with English homework?

Sometimes my uncle helps me when he visits. He studied up to college.

Q5. Do you attend any English coaching or private classes outside school?

No, there is no coaching near my village.

Q6. What resources do you use for English?

Only my textbook. We don't have internet or any other books.

Q7. Do you ever speak English outside the classroom?

No, I feel shy, and no one else speaks English here.

Q8. What challenges do you face when learning English in school?

Sometimes the teacher just reads from the book and doesn't explain. Also, we don't have enough time to practice.

Q9. Do you think students in the city and village have the same opportunities to learn English? Why or why not?

No, city students have better teachers, coaching, and internet. We don't.

Q10. If you could change one thing to make learning English easier, what would it be?

I want a small library or computer in school to learn from videos or stories.