

Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh

By

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A thesis submitted to the BRAC Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education in Educational Leadership & School Improvement

BRAC Institute of Educational Development
BRAC University
December 2024

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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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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: “Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh”

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1. Source of population

Primary teachers and students in classes 3, 4, and 5 of a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)

- a) Physical risk to the subjects - no
- b) Social risk- no
- c) Psychological risk to subjects - no
- d) discomfort to subjects- no
- e) Invasion of privacy- no

3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)

- a) Nature and purpose of the study- yes
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- g) Confidential handling of data- yes
- h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved- yes

4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)

- a) from study participants- yes
- b) from parents or guardian - Yes
- c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects? - yes

5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:

- a) Proposal- yes
- b) Consent Form- yes
- c) Questionnaire or interview schedule - yes

Abstract

This study examines the practices of formative assessment in English language learning in primary grades in a community school in Dhaka, Bangladesh. By employing a qualitative framework, for instance, in-depth interviews with teachers, classroom observation, focus group discussion with students, and document analysis, this study investigates the types of formative assessments used in English language learning, challenges teachers faced, and resources teachers required for the successful implementation. Findings of this study demonstrate that although teachers are implementing different types of formative assessments, such as group projects, games, role-play, quizzes, etc., in the class, their knowledge on the fundamentals of formative assessment is still inadequate. The analysis reveals that large class size (in some of the classes), insufficient resources, and balance between summative and formative assessment methods are still problems. Nonetheless, both teachers and students expressed their positive responses towards interactive activities during the learning process. Additionally, the study addresses the importance of professional development sessions and available resources to maximize formative assessment in community school settings.

Keywords Community school; English language learning; insufficient resources; professional development sessions

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents- Shaila Islam and Azad Islam for their unconditional love and support. My grandmother whom I have lost in this journey. I have felt your presence and blessings every day.

Acknowledgement

I would love to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Manjuma Akhtar Mousumi, Assistant Professor & Head of Academics, ma'am, for her unwavering guidance and support that she has extended during the course of my thesis. Her insightful feedback and encouragement have played a vital role in shaping my research. Then, I would like to thank and appreciate Md. Mokarram Hossain, lecturer and coordinator of the MEd thesis program, for his tireless effort in making this journey smoother for all of us with his continuous gentle reminders of submissions and discussions on the update of our work. Gratitude to all of my faculties from whom I have learnt a lot.

I would also love to show my gratitude to my research participants. Their enthusiasm and cooperation made this work easier for me. Special thanks to Ms. Rubaiyat Razzaque, Deputy Head of Primary Secondary Campus, CGSD, for her love and belief in me. Thanks to Rifat-E-Noor, my friend, for agreeing to do this M.Ed. together. Last, but not least, my family members—my siblings, nephews, and nieces—for always being supportive of me.

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List of Acronyms

ELL English Language Learning

CS Community School

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Assessment has always been considered an important part of the teaching-learning procedure. In particular, formative assessment has become popular as a pedagogical technique for its components, such as continuous feedback on making students' learning experience better. Formative assessments are dynamic instruments that facilitate the evaluation of student progress, the identification of learning requirements, and the real-time informing of instructional decisions (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Formative assessment, an integral component of effective pedagogy, holds one of the most important aspects of good teaching in the context of English language learning (ELL), especially at the primary grade level.

English language competency has a big influence on people's access to opportunities and socioeconomic advancement in today's globalized society as it is a crucial lingua franca. English language proficiency is widely recognized as a fundamental prerequisite for academic success and access to educational opportunities (Bialystok, 2001). English is a compulsory subject in the Bangladeshi education system and occupies an important position in Bangladeshi society, particularly for academic and professional purposes. It is also considered one of the tough subjects in board exams. With an interview with Prothom Alo (2024, May 13), the then chairman of the inter-education board coordination committee and Dhaka education board, Tapon Kumar Sarker, shared that Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) results are mostly impacted by Mathematics and English subjects. The passing rate in Dhaka board in English in 2023 was 90.83 percent, but in 2024, it was 94.58 percent (Prothom Alo, 2024). According to board officials, the overall result in the Dhaka board deteriorated in 2023 due to the poor performances in

Mathematics and English (The Business Standard, 2023). The impact of such assessments deserves exploration in English classrooms, for they both point to barriers and illuminate how we can address them through formative assessments to remediate inequitable learning.

It is possible to say that, in terms of achieving English language proficiency, the development of proficiency occurs gradually, and that this gradual process is largely influenced by the adoption and effective use of suitable assessment methods (Islam, Hasan, Sultana, & Karim, 2021). Particularly in resource constraints context, to achieve such fluency is limited due to the unavailability of resources, poorly skilled teachers etc. For students from disadvantaged backgrounds, ELL holds immense significance because it provides opportunities for social participation, economic empowerment, and academic success. According to Cummins (2008), underprivileged students who attain proficiency in English are more able to interact with academic content work together with their peers and achieve positive educational outcomes. However, in a developing country like Bangladesh, it is still a challenge to practice formative assessment in under-resourced schools such as community schools. Community schools (CS) are often managed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or local government bodies. There are many different kinds of elementary-level official and non-formal educational establishments in Bangladesh that are governed by NGOs and the government (APSC, 2021).

In Dhaka, a community school (CS) is a locally owned educational establishment that is essential to a child's elementary education, especially for those from underprivileged families. Their goal is to close the educational gaps by providing children with free or inexpensive education. It is essential to comprehend the unique dynamics of formative assessment methods in such settings for tailoring inclusive, flexible, and successful educational approaches. The inadequate implementation of formative assessment techniques in English language classrooms is a major contributing element to this problem. Thus, the

importance of formative assessment, especially in ELL, is immense in evaluating these students' learning outcomes.

This study will examine the types of formative assessments used in English classrooms in students' learning, struggles educators face while implementing formative assessments, and the support and resources for the English language teachers to feel confident in integrating formative assessment practice in primary grades in a community school. It can provide important insights into the efficacy of formative assessment procedures in community schools by examining the influence of formative assessment on student learning outcomes.

1.2 Research Topic

Research Topic: Formative Assessment Practices in English Language Learning in a Community School

For primary students, formative assessment plays a crucial role in improving their English language proficiency. Formative assessment is a valuable diagnostic tool that not only serves as an assessment for students' academic achievement but also enables them to identify their learning difficulties and focus on improving them. In addition to that, it enables teachers to track students understanding and adjust their teaching methods accordingly (Hunduma, Abo, & Nugusa, 2023).

The research intends to uncover techniques and challenges in utilizing formative assessments to promote young learners' language acquisition by analyzing instructor strategies. This study examines how continuous feedback and assessment methods influence student engagement, motivation, and language development in a community school in Dhaka. Ultimately, the study seeks to provide insights into improving English language proficiency through tailored assessment techniques.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In primary grade classrooms, especially in community schools in Dhaka, Bangladesh, formative assessment is not always used effectively. Formative assessment is a critical tool for offering ongoing feedback and improving student learning. The teacher scaffolds the learning process during formative assessment by looking for indicators of learning mastery; the teacher gradually informs the students of the findings through feedback so that the students are aware of their progress in learning (Voinea, 2018). Homework, class activities, assignments, concept maps, peer reviews, and quizzes are a few examples of formative assessment activities and in all their versions, formative assessments strive to capture whether, or the degree to which, students are making progress toward the targeted learning outcomes so that students and their instructors can adjust, improve, extend, or course correct before a summative assessment takes place (Carney, Zhang, Charsha, Taylor, & Hoshaw, 2022). Teachers also use a technique called scaffolding, in which they help students learn until they can function on their own (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

English is perceived as an important way of communicating in today's world. It is important to have fluency of the language for academic and career growth as it has achieved a superior role in the education sector in Bangladesh (Erling, Seargeant, Solly, Chowdhury, & Rahman, 2012). The Government of Bangladesh's national learning assessments show students' literacy and numeracy skills to be woefully low—only 25 percent to 44 percent of students from classes 5 through 8 demonstrate mastery over Bangla, English and math, and performance on this assessment is even worse if they belong from underprivileged families (World Bank, 2016). In Bangladesh, students from Bangla-medium schools receive 12 years of the English language before entering the university. Teenage students take the Secondary School Certificate exam and the Higher Secondary School Certificate exam, both of which assess English reading and writing competencies (Rowshon, 2020). HSC and SSC students

face 200-mark tests that examine only their writing ability in English, they do not face any test on their speaking, or listening skills. Students learn English in schools and colleges by memorizing the rules of grammar and the meaning of words instead of learning the contextual meaning of words. This emphasizes memorization among students leaving the importance of speaking and listening behind (Chowdhury & Kamal, 2014).

It can be difficult for teachers to apply formative assessment techniques in English language instruction due to many reasons. Teachers frequently lack the skills, resources, and support needed to effectively incorporate formative assessment procedures into their instructional practices, despite the fact that it is widely acknowledged that these strategies can improve language learning. This problem has a negative impact on the educational system because it makes it more difficult to adapt instruction to the diverse needs of students, which results in less-than-ideal learning outcomes and student engagement. Continuous feedback is essential for supporting language development because it allows students to see their strengths and shortcomings in real time (Heritage, 2010). Without the continuous feedback, they may find it difficult to increase their English language proficiency. Furthermore, ineffective use of formative assessments hinders teachers' ability to monitor student progress, modify their pedagogy, and offer individualized help. A study discovered that teachers struggled to implement formative assessment in the context of English language acquisition, despite the fact that it was understood to varied degrees in the classroom. This finding raises the possibility that teachers were unclear about the nature, purposes, and consequences of formative assessment (Kaur, 2023).

Primary education plays the critical role in laying the groundwork for students' future development. Teachers have a significant role in the educational processes of learners, and as such, they should be sufficiently motivated by the practice of formative assessments to shape their attitudes and behaviors in ways that directly impact learners' learning outcomes. The

direction and control the teacher exercises in the classroom shapes the students' overall educational experiences. In order to effectively implement formative assessments, teachers must define the term, provide matching tactics, and define what constitutes formative assessment practices in the context of their own schools and language classrooms (Singh, 2019). We can gain a better understanding of the kinds of formative assessments that can be used in English language classrooms in community schools by looking at these various school environments, applying qualitative methods, and collaborating with English language instructors as co-researchers. Formative assessment procedures in community school English language classes have received very little research attention, which leaves a big knowledge gap on how these approaches affect teacher preparedness and student learning results.

This study intended to explore how teachers, who are major players in the implementation process, perceive formative assessment procedures in the classroom, particularly in English classes. Interviews, FGDs, classroom observation, and document analyses—these qualitative methods were conducted to explore the type of formative assessment practices in the English language classroom in a community school. Additionally, the study tried to discover the challenges faced by the teachers while implementing formative assessment in ELL and what additional support they need for the successful incorporation of this assessment method in ELL.

1.4 Research Questions

This study aimed to investigate the practices of formative assessment in teaching English to primary school children. Additionally, the study explored the difficulties that arise when teachers implement these assessment strategies in English class. This information will support the development of focused interventions to address the unique needs and concerns of field-level instructors and contribute to achieving the English language proficiency for our

underprivileged students. This qualitative study used classroom observations, teacher interviews, focus group discussions with students, and document analysis to provide specific outcomes and conclusions of the research questions below:

1. What are some of the practices for formative assessment for English classes?
2. What are the challenges faced by the English language teachers in incorporating formative assessments in the English classroom?
3. What support and resources do the English language teachers need to feel confident in integrating formative assessment practices?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

Quality education is essential for underprivileged students as it contributes to reducing poverty in a country. To help learners develop their literacy skills, different types of assessments can be incorporated in the curriculum. This includes the kinds of formative assessments that are best for this purpose. Hence, it is an important topic to study to explore the types of formative assessment practices in the classroom of CS.

English is essential for maintaining the country's steady economic growth and producing skilled workers who can adapt to a variety of cultural contexts (Hamid, 2010). It is mostly assumed that the CS students don't have the grade-level competencies in English. Thus, the primary goal is to explore what type of formative assessment are in used in English classes, with a focus on classes 3–5 in a community school. This study aims to describe teachers' perception about formative assessment and discover the struggles they faced in ELL. The teaching and learning process may be considerably improved by comprehending and implementing formative assessment techniques that can cater to the requirements of community schools. There is a clear vacuum in the literature about the use and results of formative assessment in community schools, even in Bangladesh, where similar research has

been conducted in both government and private schools. This study will comprehend teachers' perceptions, challenges, and strategies about formative assessment. This study will also identify the resources that are required to implement formative assessment in ELL.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study aims to identify the strategies that resonate most with students at 3-5 class levels by investigating the different types of formative assessments employed in a community school in English language classes. Furthermore, investigating the frequency with which formative assessments are incorporated into the educational process would reveal valuable insights on the feedback and its influence on students' academic comprehension and classroom engagement.

Through the implementation of efficient formative assessment procedures, the school can raise the standard of instruction that students receive overall. As opposed to summative assessments, which showcases student achievement at the conclusion of a learning period, formative assessments are incorporated into the learning process to inform both teaching and learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Using formative assessment techniques can increase student motivation, engagement, and retention in the classroom. Formative assessments have also been defined as a planned process in which teachers modify their continuing instruction for student learning based on assessment evidence. This method acknowledges that an assessment can be formative if the teacher uses it to guide instructional decisions and practices; hence, what counts is how an assessment is used, not the exam's specific nature (Popham, 2008).

The study can give educators insightful knowledge on formative assessment techniques that work well for the unique requirements and environments of English language

instruction in community schools. Student success and English language proficiency can both increase with the use of formative assessment techniques in the classroom.

Moreover, the findings of this study can help education policymakers develop plans and programs that will incorporate formative assessment techniques successfully into English language instruction in community schools. The results of this study will also inform future research endeavors that involve in-depth analysis of approaches to classroom learning in Bangladeshi community schools, with a particular emphasis on formative assessment procedures.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter explores the literature on formative assessment, with a focus on English classes in community school environments. It covers important information from articles, books etc. that I reviewed in order to better comprehend my research topic. With an emphasis on Bangladesh's particular context, the paper explores both worldwide trends and particular formative assessment issues, acknowledging formative assessment as a dynamic instrument that promotes student participation and facilitates enhanced learning outcomes. This chapter examines recurring barriers to implementation in resource-constrained educational environments, including inadequate teacher preparation, resource limitations, and policy misalignments, through a thematic examination of formative assessment procedures. Additionally, the conceptual framework that underpins this research is also laid out, covering the fundamentals of teacher preparation, assessment alignment with learning objectives, ongoing feedback, and student motivation. Understanding the significance of formative assessment as a means of achieving educational fairness and improved language competence in community school settings is made possible by this fundamental analysis.

According to the key research questions of this study, the literature review is done thematically.

2.1 Formative Assessment in Global Context

The importance of assessment procedures has changed in the ever-changing educational landscape to accommodate the diverse needs of learners and educators. Formative assessment is considered as a powerful instrument for transforming education (OECD, 2005). It is known as the practice of collecting data on students' learning progress and utilizing it to modify instruction and learning activities to enhance student learning outcomes. It takes particular

instructional techniques to execute formative assessment. These include methods that give students quick feedback, like quizzes, peer feedback, and class discussions (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). When students participate in the assessment process, they start to view it as a learning process rather than merely a test, making formative assessment models instructional tools that promote learning rather than grading and assessment practices (Davies, 2008). Formative assessment not only can foster individual student learning but also can promote ongoing program improvement when they are in line with the intended program learning outcomes (Driscoll & Wood, 2007). Popham (2008) in his study described formative assessment as an organized process wherein teachers modify their instructions from the assessment data to better meet the needs of the students.

Research conducted in the United Kingdom has investigated how formative assessment affects students' academic achievement, self-discipline, and motivation (Black & Harrison, 2001; Torrance & Pryor, 2001). Seminal study on the use of formative assessment strategies to improve student learning outcomes was carried out by Black and Wiliam (1998). In their review, Black and Wiliam (1998) stated that covering all of the endeavours that educators and learners do provides data that may be utilized as feedback to adjust the educational activities that they are involved in. Their study looked at various approaches to formative assessment. While some of these tactics had connotations like feedback, others were studied under the umbrella of formative assessment. Teachers may learn more about what students know and comprehend by utilizing a range of assessment techniques. They can then utilize this knowledge to inform their lessons and clear up any misunderstandings (Clarke, 2015). Additionally, studies have looked at the benefits and difficulties of using formative assessment in culturally diverse classroom (Juwah, Macfarlane-Dick, Matthew, Nicol. & Ross, 2004).

2.2 The Significance of Formative Assessment in Enhancing Educational Practices and Student Outcomes

Formative assessment is a pedagogical approach that focuses on giving students continuous feedback to improve learning outcomes. Because of its many advantages in a variety of educational contexts, formative assessment has attracted a lot of attention globally. Some researchers (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) claim that formative assessment strategies, such as peer and self-evaluation, encourage metacognitive awareness and provide students the confidence to take responsibility for their education. This increased involvement results in better performance and achievement in the classroom (Sadler, 1989).

For motivation and active engagement in the classroom, formative assessment can play a great role. Students are more likely to participate actively in their learning and feel more in control of their growth when they receive regular feedback and are given the chance to reflect on what they have learned (Sadler, 1989). A study conducted by Santos and Serpa (2020) shows how the effects of formative assessment on learning outcomes, motivation, and student involvement in flipped classroom environments positively impacted learning results, motivation, and student involvement.

Feedback and assessment may be effective learning aids when formative assessment procedures are implemented in the classroom (Harrison & Black, 2001). Effective feedback, according to them, should be given promptly, precisely, and with an emphasis on the learning objectives of the student. It should also assist the student in self-evaluation and goal-setting.

Additionally, formative assessment aids students' ability to think critically and solve problems (Heritage, 2013). According to Black and Harrison (2001), deeper conceptual understanding and long-term memory retention are supported by formative assessment techniques including questioning and feedback. Teacher's modified methods of instructions

can be helpful in meeting the diverse needs of the students and for that they need to continuously monitor each student's unique needs by keeping a close eye on their development (Andrade & Cizek, 2010).

However, Hargreaves (2005) focuses on assessment for learning in formative assessment. Instead of only monitoring student performance, assessment for learning uses assessment as a tool for learning and may be utilized to improve student motivation, engagement, and accomplishment. According to Stiggins (2005), Assessment for Learning (AfL) ought to be learner-centered, offer continuous feedback to assist students in creating goals for development, be in line with instructional objectives, and use a variety of sources of data to compile data on student learning. Wiliam (2011) emphasizes the value of employing a range of assessment techniques, such as formal and informal assessments, to collect proof of students' learning. Teachers may use the result of summative assessment to find the strength and weaknesses of students and make better pedagogical decision such as incorporating formative assessment in their teaching to improve students learning (Maki, 2017).

2.3 Practices of Formative Assessment in English Classroom in Global Context

In the English classroom, educators may employ individualized instructional strategies, such as providing personalized one-on-one assistance or engaging in continuous monitoring of students' learning progress, to discern and address specific areas of academic challenge or learning gaps. However, this might often not be possible in larger classroom, they can still support decisions about teaching and learning by using assessment procedures, which allow them to gather the information they need (Muho & Taraj, 2022). In their study, they found the portfolio was a motivational assessment tool that encouraged self-sufficiency and independence in learning English. Peer feedback, a type of formative assessment, was proven to considerably enhance students' writing abilities in English (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001).

In another study (Graham, Hebert, & Harris 2015), the effect of formative assessment on instruction and student learning in an English language writing course was examined. The researchers supported student learning and helped them become better writers by utilizing a variety of formative assessment strategies, such as peer feedback and self-evaluation. Students stated that formative assessment was a helpful tool for them to develop their writing abilities and that it assisted them in identifying areas in which they needed to improve.

Sonmez and Cetinkaya (2022), in their study, suggest that enhancing students' reading comprehension skills in an English language learning environment can be accomplished through the use of formative assessment.

While conventional modes of learning may lack stimulation, integrating formative assessment strategies into the educational framework holds promise for enhancing English language proficiency within these contexts. Nonetheless, there remain several issues with the implementation of formative assessment procedures in classrooms in the current classroom, such as lack of clarity, insufficient input, time restrictions and inappropriate assessment techniques (Gan and Leung, 2019).

2.4 Formative Assessment in English Language Learning in Bangladesh

Communicative proficiency in English is a key component for the employability in this century. English language learning involves specific abilities that can be acquired through practices. Formative assessment can be helpful in this regard with its continuous feedback method. However, in Bangladesh, strict standardized testing regulations frequently restrict the curriculum's ability to include formative assessment tools (Rahman, 2014). Ali (2011) in his study found the discrepancies between the stated learning objective in English learning and the actual teaching strategies in the classrooms of secondary schools in Bangladesh. Another study revealed teachers only provide verbal feedback to the students in ELL and they

discovered during the observation that feedback was provided on some occasions only (Rahman, Babu, & Ashrafuzzaman, 2012). Some researchers found that there was a consistent imbalance between the prescribed assessment principals incorporated in curriculum and the assessment practices used in English language classroom (Islam, Hasan, Sulatan, & Karim, 2021).

According to some researchers, even a student pursuing a master's degree from Bengal-medium cannot speak fluent English due to the general dearth of effective English language instruction (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2015). Language difficulties make it difficult to assess student understanding and provide insightful comments, especially in multilingual situations like Bangladesh (Ahmed, Rahman, & Islam, 2019).

2.5 The challenges of Formative Assessment Implementation in Underprivileged Schools

Although formative assessment has received a warm reception at the policy level, its much-heralded promises have not yet been fully realized in practice (Laveault & Allal, 2016). Educators frequently depend on conventional summative assessment techniques like tests and quizzes, which fail to provide students with the feedback they need to direct their learning (Kleij, Vermeulen, Schildkamp, & Eggen, 2015). A study done by Chen, Zhang, and Li (2021) on formative assessment problems in an underdeveloped area of China showed that the ideas behind formative assessment policies and their advantages are not understood by the institutional policy-makers themselves. They pointed out that the importance of trust and supportive leadership is indubitably crucial, as dealing with teachers' diminished passion and resistance caused by mistrust and unsupportive leadership is a significant challenge. Al-Wassia et al. (2015) identified several factors hindering the implementation of formative assessment in Saudi Arabia, including teachers' lack of understanding of the core principles

and applications, prevalence of teacher-centered approaches, and pressure to ensure exam success.

Formative assessment implementation is essential to good teaching and learning, can be difficult, especially in community schools. The adoption of formative assessment in community school settings faces various obstacles that hinder its efficacy and long-term viability. One important issue that prevents educators from effectively using formative assessment procedures is a lack of resources, including time, training, and tools (Clarke, 2012). Research demonstrates that formative assessment adoption was difficult in non-Western societies where teacher-centric methods and high-stakes public exams predominate (Quyen & Khairani, 2016). When Arrafii and Sumarni (2018) surveyed 243 Indonesian school teachers, they discovered that English teachers there were not familiar with formative assessment.

In community schools, where access to quality education is imperative for children, the opportunity for English language practice outside formal educational settings is often constrained by environmental factors. Most community schools in Bangladesh either have small classrooms with a large number of students or large classrooms with only one teacher allocated for each subject, which makes it difficult to manage. A small, congested community school hinders the effectiveness of its teaching methods (Shah & Inamullah, 2012). The number of students in a class affects their behavior, engagement, and retention in various ways (Benbow, Mizrachi, Oliver, & Said-Moshiro, 2007).

Another important consideration is how formative assessment procedures relate to the national curriculum. In one of the studies of Bangladesh, the nation's status of English, its use in educational policies, the adoption of communicative language teaching resources, methods, and curricula, the validity of the current assessment, and its potential to hurt English

language instruction in Bangladesh, and the state of teacher professional development are just a few of the barriers that highlighted (Rahman et al.,2019).

Unequal access to formative assessment opportunities is a result of socioeconomic inequality and absentee parents, which exacerbates the achievement gap among students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Chapman & King, 2019). Furthermore, inadequate institutional hurdles and policy support impede efforts to incorporate formative assessment into the regular school curriculum (Khan, Jahan, & Islam, 2015).

As CS students mostly come from diverse groups of people, it's important that they have a good command of English and implementing formative assessment in the English classroom requires professional development training for the teachers. Lack of foundational training is one of the challenges for the teachers to implement formative assessment in the classroom. However, NGOs like BRAC offer different types of training for teachers, including foundational training specifically tailored for educators at the schools run by BRAC. (Kalam & Hadi, 1999).

When combined, these studies offer a variety of perspectives on formative assessment, but they all have some things in common. Most people view formative assessment as a continuous process that gives instructors and students feedback while they are teaching. Intending to enhance student learning and accomplishment, it collects evidence of students' development using a variety of assessment techniques. Furthermore, each of these researches emphasizes how important it is to include students in the assessment process, to provide them with timely and targeted feedback, and to match assessment procedures with learning objectives. Though a lot of studies have been done on formative assessment practices in English classroom, I couldn't find any study done on the practices of formative assessment in English classroom for underprivileged school students.

2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework for this study is anchored in the investigation of formative assessment practices in English language learning for primary grade students within a community school context in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Furthermore, this study examined the challenges encountered by teachers and the supplementary assistance required to adopt formative assessment procedures in English classes. Based on the literature review above, some of the key factors that advanced educational equity when it comes to English language instruction in community schools are: teacher's training programs; alignment of learning objectives with assessment procedures; implementation of assessment for learning strategies; and continuous feedback mechanisms.

The objectives for this conceptual framework were to investigate how teacher preparation programs affect teachers' ability to use student-centered methods in community schools when teaching English, to look into how assessment for learning strategies is used in community school settings and, to comprehend the ways in which efficient and ongoing feedback systems promote a positive learning atmosphere in community schools. Additionally, how students' motivation, and involvement in their English language studies are influenced by applying formative assessments in classroom. How different types of interactive activities promotes a learning environment in English classroom.

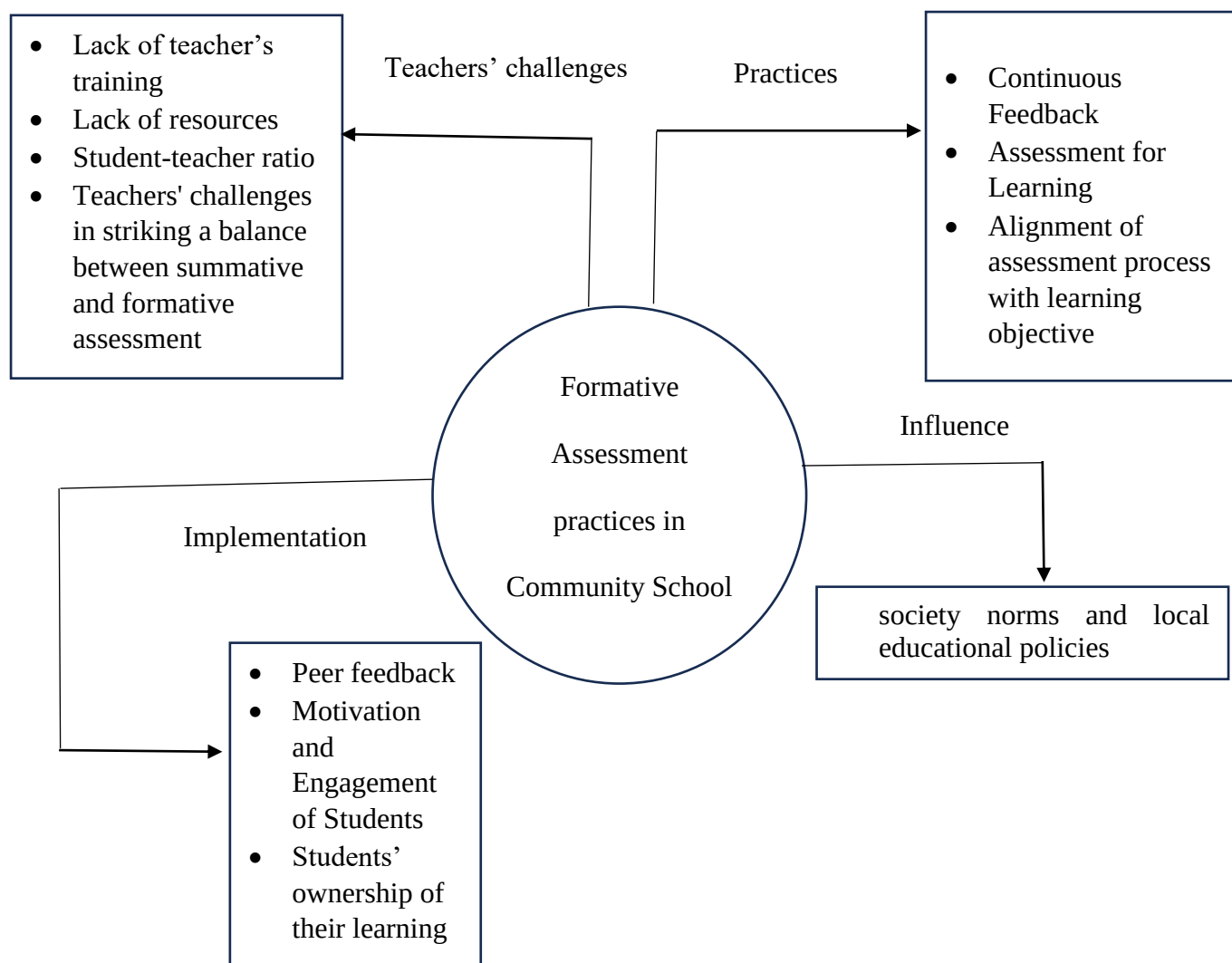


Figure 1: The conceptual framework

This framework integrates key concepts such as pedagogical strategies, teacher preparedness, student engagement, and the alignment of formative assessment with the learning objectives in addition to the challenges faced by teachers in resource-constrained environments.

Formative assessment, which is defined as an assessment for learning rather than of learning, plays a pivotal role to the acquisition of the English language since it offers ongoing feedback with the goal of improving student performance (Brookhart, 2011). This procedure is important while learning a language because it involves the gradual development of skills including speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Shute, 2008). Teachers' professional growth and readiness have a major role in the success of formative assessment procedures.

Research have revealed that instructors frequently lack the tools and training needed to carry out formative assessments in an efficient manner, especially in community schools with little assistance (Schildkamp, Karbautzki, & Vanhoof, 2014). Professional development programs are essential for giving teachers the tools they need to apply formative assessment to improve language learning results. When teachers are well-trained, they are able to apply assessment for learning in the class and select an assessment process that matches the learning objective. Students become more interested and driven to improve when they actively participate in their education through formative assessment methods. Additionally, formative assessment also helps students develop a sense of ownership and self-control by assisting them in creating learning objectives and monitoring their own progress (Sadler, 1989).

There can be many obstacles to overcome while implementing formative assessment in a community school setting, particularly in Dhaka. It might be challenging for teachers to regularly provide individualized feedback because of issues including huge class sizes, student-teacher ratio, scarce resources, and time restraints (Looney, 2011). Teachers are further burdened by the conflict between formative and summative assessment techniques, which forces them to strike a balance between the requirements of national exams and the continuous formative input that they need (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Finally, comprehending the influence of local educational policies and society norms is essential for the specific needs of students in the community school setting.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

I used a qualitative methodology to capture the complex experiences and viewpoints of educators and learners about formative assessment procedures in English language classes. There are numerous essential characteristics that define qualitative research. First of all, it highlights how subjective human experiences are and acknowledges the significant influence that people's perceptions, beliefs, and motivations have on the decisions they make. It also aims to document the situational and contextual elements that affect participants' views and behaviors (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). There are numerous essential characteristics that define qualitative research. First of all, it highlights how subjective human experiences are and acknowledges the significant influence that people's perceptions, beliefs, and motivations have on the decisions they make. It also aims to document the situational and contextual elements that affect participants' views and behaviors (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis were the four main data collection techniques used in this approach, which enabled a thorough investigation of formative assessments. Observations provided information about classroom dynamics, assessment methods, and real-time teacher-student interactions. Teachers' experiences, opinions, and difficulties were explored in-depth during interviews, which also highlighted the obstacles and resources they face while doing formative assessment. Students from classes three through five participated in focus group discussions (FGDs) to identify assessment processes, feedback experiences, and preferred formative assessment approaches. When combined, these methods allowed for a thorough

comprehension of formative assessment procedures, which strengthened and broadened our grasp of the classroom environment.

3.2 Research Site

To find answers to the research questions mentioned, this study used a qualitative methodology to investigate current classroom practices and teachers' challenges with formative assessment implementation in English classrooms for classes 3-5 at a community school inside Dhaka. The CS teachers at this school are given guidance in different teaching-learning strategies and approaches to ensure the quality of the education their students receive. This school is a part of an English medium school and the CS students receive their lessons in the same classroom as the school's English-medium students. As an example of formative assessment already in practice, there is a 'CS corner' of the classroom dedicated for displaying samples of the students' completed assignments assessed to be of the best quality.

The subject school already fulfilled all the criteria that have been identified for the purposes of this study, thus. Furthermore, there already existed a professional familiarity with the school authorities, which proved advantageous in accessing and collecting data from the school.

3.3 Research Participants

This research focuses on English language teachers who actively instruct English language classes, as well as primary school students from the community school.

Three English language teachers who were instructing in classes 3, 4, and 5 were selected for an in-depth interview. Their consent was obtained before the interview. Five students from each class group were selected for FGD after receiving consent from both parents and students.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

For this investigation, I adopted a purposive sampling approach to ensure the inclusion of teachers and students. In interviewing teachers, I purposely chose the teachers from classes 3, 4 and 5, resulted in a total of three teachers being interviewed using three criteria: (a) teachers should possess a minimum teaching experience of a specified duration, such as two years, to ensure they have sufficient expertise to contribute meaningful insights into their assessment practices: (b) must be currently employed as either full-time or part-time teachers within the community school: and (c) teachers must possess proficient English language skills to accurately articulate their assessment practices and experiences.

A total of fifteen students, five from each class group took part in FGDs using purposive sampling under the guidance of English language teachers. I sought permission from the school administration followed by collaboration with class teachers to identify suitable participants. The selected students were expected to have the required language skills to effectively engage in discussions. I gave the consideration to the factors such as academic performance and learning abilities, and engage in the focus group discussion (FGD) willingly and morally. This methodology augments the validity and richness of the collected data, thereby fortifying the research study's overall conclusions and insights.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and focus group discussions with students in order to meet the research objectives. In-depth interview had been selected to carry out detailed interviews with the teachers. In-depth interviews elicit specific information that clarifies a person's viewpoint, experiences, emotions, and the significance they attach to a given subject or problem (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020). By establishing a rapport with the teachers through in-depth interviews, it became

easier to get rich data. I gained a comprehensive perspective on formative assessment experiences, allowing for in-depth exploration of motivations, additional supports and resources, perceptions, and challenges. I gathered Teachers' opinions on the educational strategies they use through interviews.

I explained English teachers the process of classroom observation, in-depth interviews, and FGD. I informed them that I would schedule regular classroom observations during English language sessions. I provided the comprehensive explanations regarding the research design, data collection methods, and anticipated time commitments to ensure clarity and transparency to the teachers.

3.5.1 In-Depth Interview

I interviewed total three teachers from each class group to gain a comprehensive perspective on formative assessment experiences, allowing for in-depth exploration of motivations, additional supports and resources, perceptions, and challenges. My goal was to investigate in detail about teachers' perceptions, the strategies they use, and the specific challenges they encounter in their English language instruction. Initially, I met the head of the school in person and shared the detailed study purpose. An email containing the objective of the study was sent to the school authority for the basic formalities and after getting the ethical approval, I disseminated the informed consent form to the English language teachers making sure they understood the study's purpose and that their involvement was completely voluntary. After receiving the signed consent form from teachers, I conducted one-on-one interviews with the subject teachers to gather a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives which lasted between 25 to 30 minutes. To begin, I asked teachers to share the assessment techniques they commonly used while teaching English. This question was focused on understanding the specific formative strategies teachers implemented. To capture teachers' beliefs about formative assessment as a tool for enhancing student learning, I invited them to explain their

understanding of the purpose of formative assessment and its role in learning outcomes. To reveal the role of structured learning in shaping their assessment practices, teachers discussed their experience with training or professional development related to formative assessment techniques, including any formal programs they had attended and the duration of such training. I explored which formative assessments students appeared to enjoy the most. This captured the specific techniques that engaged students, offering a window into the types of assessments that fostered a more enthusiastic response from learners. When I asked them about the additional support or resources, teachers highlighted areas where more tools, instructional materials, or institutional backing could enhance their practices. Finally, teachers shared the challenges they faced when implementing formative assessments that students enjoyed the most. This covered logistical or resource-based obstacles that limited their ability to deliver engaging assessments consistently. While conducting in-depth interviews with English language teachers, I collected notes, and with participant consent, I recorded the conversation and transcribed verbatim to make further data analysis easier for later verification and analysis. This interview approach offered a comprehensive perspective on teachers' strategies, challenges, and perspectives regarding formative assessment in a community school setting.

3.5.2 Classroom Observation

I monitored two classes of 3-5 English language learners. For a total of six classes, I observed classrooms for three days in a row. I used a checklist for classroom observations as the tool for gathering data to record formative assessment practices, teacher-student interactions, and classroom dynamics. The rationale for choosing this method was to focus on how assessments were implemented in real-time to understand the nuances of the process. I focused on identifying whether teachers were actively employing formative assessment practices and, if so, determining the types of assessments integrated within each lesson. By

carefully observing teacher-student exchanges, I documented the types of questions teachers posed to probe deeper comprehension, noting whether these questions encouraged critical thinking, encouraged discussion, or simply assessed basic recall. To observe how teachers engaged students in responding to questions, I noted specific techniques that teachers used to motivate students to answer questions. Another important part was the presence of peer feedback within the lesson, I noted any support the teacher provided to ensure feedback remained focused and productive. Observing how teachers provided feedback on students' performance in class was another essential theme, I noted instances where feedback was used to reinforce strengths or address areas for improvement, providing students with actionable steps to enhance their learning. I aimed to understand how feedback was leveraged to support students' continuous improvement in targeted areas of language learning and noted any strategies employed to modify instruction or provide individualized support, assessing how formative assessments were adjusted to cater to diverse student proficiencies, especially in multi-level classes. This approach not only offered insight into the frequency and variety of formative assessment strategies but also enabled me to identify details that might not emerge from teacher interviews alone. These strategies included certain things that needed to be watched out for, such as instructional strategies, material usage, student participation, and the general classroom atmosphere.

3.5.3 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions are an effective way to gather data since they allow members to explore ideas and concepts, give insight into their inner thoughts, and yield detailed information. The structure gives the facilitator the freedom to delve into unexpected topics as they come up during the conversation. The results have a high face validity since the findings seem credible and the procedure is easily comprehended (Marshall, Rossman & Blanco, 2022). I arranged three FGDs with five students from each class group, for a total of fifteen

students. The group was carefully balanced to include diverse perspectives, comprising seven boys and eight girls, a ratio of 7:8. This structure ensured that both male and female students had the opportunity to contribute equally to the discussion, offering a well-rounded view of formative assessment experiences across gender lines. I prepared consent forms for students and have taken assent from parents/guardians before conducting the FGD with students, outlining the purpose and procedures of the study, as well as assurances of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. Under the class teacher's and English teacher's guidance, we asked students to get assent from their parents. Despite their age sensitivity, I, along with their English language teacher, have explained the objective of this study to the students and have taken their consent in the consent form. Class teachers distributed the consent forms to the students, and if any parents were confused or had any confusion, I made appointments to explain the overall process and purpose. For FGDs, CS teachers helped students understand how to take part in the discussions. My role was the facilitator, and I took notes at the same time. After receiving assent from parents and signed consent forms from students' parents or guardians, I started the FGD by introducing myself and tried to create a friendly environment for students to feel welcomed and relaxed. I started with asking some funny riddles and gained their attention. I then explained the process of FGD to the students. While conducting the discussion, I encouraged everyone to talk.

In order to shed light on the different assessment techniques used by their teachers, I started the discussion with students outlining the kinds of tests they typically took in their English classes. In order to lay the groundwork for a deeper investigation of their preferences and experiences, this opening subject gave students the opportunity to express their opinions about both traditional and formative assessment forms. Subsequently, students talked about the assessment activities they enjoyed the most, exposing the kinds of dynamic and captivating tasks that inspired. This highlighted strategies that could promote active

involvement and illuminated the elements of formative assessments that piqued students' attention. The opinions of students on feedback and its function in their education were a major area of focus. I tried to find out if they had ever helped to review a peer's work. This part of the conversation exposed students' experiences with peer feedback, enabling them to explore any difficulties or advantages they had with peer-review exercises and highlighting the ways in which these methods promoted cooperation and introspection. Students also talked about the kinds of assessments they liked best, mentioning particular formats or techniques that they thought were very interesting. This portion of the discussion was crucial for finding tests that were both instructive and entertaining, both of which are necessary for creating a supportive learning environment. To explore the clarity of teacher communication and whether students felt well-prepared to complete their assessment tasks, I asked them if they felt they understood the instructions provided by their teachers during assessments. Finally, I asked students of class 5 specifically for recommendations on how to make formative assessment procedures in the classroom better. Through this subject, students were able to share their thoughts on how formative assessments may be improved, emphasizing areas in which they believed more resources, assistance, or other methods could improve their educational experience. I made thorough notes, recorded the meeting with prior agreement, and encouraged everyone to speak freely throughout the session. Thus, the FGDs offered a thorough and nuanced understanding of how students saw and valued formative assessment processes, as well as useful insights into areas that could use improvement.

3.5.4 Document Analysis

I conducted an analysis of curriculum materials, including textbooks and lesson plans for all three class groups, to see the alignment of formative assessment practices with curriculum goals and objectives. With permission from teachers, I reviewed their lesson plans prior to class observation, guided by specific questions aimed at assessing the coherence between

lesson objectives and the English learning goals specified for students in classes 3 to 5. This analysis focused on the extent to which formative assessment practices were explicitly connected to these learning objectives and incorporated diverse instructional approaches, such as projects, presentations, discussions, and quizzes, consistent with curricular standards.

Additionally, I examined how formative assessments fostered the development of multiple language skills, including writing, speaking, listening, and reading, within the planned activities. A key focus was on understanding how feedback mechanisms were integrated into the overall teaching plans to support student progress. The analysis also assessed the alignment of these formative assessment procedures with broader educational standards and guidelines. This document review provided valuable insights into planned formative assessment strategies and highlighted any gaps or discrepancies between prescribed practices and their actual implementation in the classroom.

3.6 Role of the Researcher

I took on the role of a non-participant observer, which necessitates keeping a distinct distance between the activities being observed and my presence. I observed six classes of classes 3 to 5 starting on August 18, 2024, making sure that there was no direct involvement or interference with the organic flow of the classroom environment. This approach made it possible to gather data objectively, concentrating only on the actions and conduct of the teachers.

In order to obtain a thorough understanding of formative assessment procedures in the classroom, I participated in focus groups (FGDs) and conducted in-depth interviews in addition to serving as a non-participant observer during class sessions. It was my responsibility to establish a secure and transparent setting during teacher interviews so that participants could freely discuss their teaching methods, difficulties, and opinions on

formative assessment. I was able to lead a discussion in which teachers were able to express their experiences in their own words by open-ended questions. I took thorough notes, engaged in active listening during these interviews, and made sure the teachers were at ease in order to collect rich, qualitative data that represented their distinct viewpoints without imposing my interpretations.

In a similar vein, I served as a facilitator during the student focus group talks, directing conversations while granting students the opportunity to freely share their opinions and preferences on the methods of assessment. Using understandable language and promoting equal involvement, I used tactics to create a pleasant and engaging environment because I knew that students, especially younger ones, would be reluctant to contribute freely. I made sure that the group discussion went naturally by gently guiding the conversation without influencing responses. This allowed me to gain insight into the students' opinions on formative assessment, their experiences receiving feedback, and how they interacted with classroom assessments.

I remained active but unbiased throughout the research procedure, concentrating on gathering data in an unbiased manner and making sure that my presence didn't affect participants' actions or answers. As a researcher, I also had to examine my own prejudices and presumptions in order to maintain the validity and integrity of the study. I was able to gather a comprehensive set of data from various viewpoints thanks to this multifaceted and introspective function, which enhanced the study's conclusions and guaranteed a thorough, solid examination of formative assessment procedures.

3.7 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, which was adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to extract valuable information from the data that was gathered. The process of thematic analysis entails

carefully reviewing transcribed data to identify themes (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). It is an inductive technique that involves developing thoughts and theories based on the data. Finding themes in the data, such as patterns that help explain a certain behavior, is the aim of a thematic analysis. These themes can then be used to discuss the research or provide insight into a social issue (Rosario, 2023). I collected the data using an in-depth interview questionnaire, a checklist for classroom observation, and FGD guidelines. I conducted all the interviews and FGDs in Bangla for the accuracy of the data using notes and transcribed verbatim and translated into English later. I maintained regular communications with the teachers through WhatsApp. Maintaining regular communication and collaboration with participants can ensure alignment in understanding and interpretation of the data (Xian, 2008). Then next was identifying codes, and themes. Through an iterative process of coding and classification of qualitative data, investigators can identify recurrent themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By going over interview transcripts and observational notes, I tried to identify key concepts about formative assessment procedures.

To find underlying themes, I grouped the codes together that are similar. Within the data, codes were allocated to particular concepts, ideas, or words and labeled accordingly. These codes aided in the organization and classification of the data and formed the foundation for the theme analysis. Potential themes in the data were found by expanding on the original codes. This required putting related codes together and looking for links and patterns. The underlying patterns that surfaced from the data were discovered by means of meticulous reading. These themes reflected connected thoughts or patterns that went beyond particular codes. In order to make sure the themes were representative, coherent, and relevant, they had to be refined and interpreted. After reviewing and revising the prospective themes, the linkages, links, and alignment with the study objectives were examined. The

objective was to present an understandable and thorough narrative that faithfully depicted the data and offered significant insights.

Each theme and sub-theme were carefully developed in this step to elucidate its wide-ranging, unique characteristics and pertinence to the research question. By identifying the key concepts and ideas they contained, the themes were confirmed to be accurate and unambiguous. This phase created the foundation for an organized and methodical data analysis, which facilitated the discovery of important patterns and trends.

This helped to offer a thorough grasp of how formative assessment helped students from disadvantaged backgrounds acquire the English language. Thus, thematic analysis provided an easily understood and rigorous approach to analyzing qualitative data and producing insightful findings related to the research questions of this study.

3.8 Ethical Issues and Concerns

I conducted the study with strict adherence to ethical standards. Before starting interviews and FGDs, I provided Teachers, students with comprehensive consent letters outlining the study's goals, methods, confidentiality guarantees, and the voluntary nature of participation in order to guarantee that everyone involved was fully informed and assent from students' parents or guardians. Both parents and teachers received these consent letters, with specific consideration given to younger students. Consent letters were obtained from all the participants, ensuring that they were clear about the research's scope and implications. During FGDs, their English language teacher and class teacher were sitting at the back throughout the time, as working with young students is quite challenging. However, students were active and enthusiastic the whole time.

I employed Pseudonyms to preserve participant privacy, and no publications or reports included any personally identifiable information. I guaranteed the freedom to leave

the study at any time without facing any consequences to the participants. Furthermore, every encounter with students was sensitive, especially during focus group discussions, to make sure they felt free to express themselves. By taking these precautions, the study complied with strict ethical guidelines and respected the autonomy, privacy, and welfare of its subjects.

Transcripts, notes, audio recordings, and other research materials are all safely secured and will be kept for two years after the study is over. I explained the preservation plan to the participants as well.

3.9 Validity, Credibility and Rigor

In validating this qualitative study, I took some measures. The use of triangulation played a central role; I incorporated multiple data sources—classroom observations, in-depth teacher interviews, document analysis, and focus group discussions with students—to cross-check information and validate themes emerging from different perspectives. This approach allowed for a more comprehensive view, minimizing the influence of individual biases and supporting a balanced understanding of formative assessment practices in the observed community school. The use of thematic analysis provided a structured and rigorous approach to identifying recurring patterns and themes within the qualitative data, supporting the consistency of findings. Together, these validation strategies strengthened the credibility and depth of the research, ensuring that the study's findings offer a trustworthy depiction of formative assessment practices in this educational context.

My work as a research assistant on numerous development projects has given me a strong foundation in educational theories, methodologies, and practices as a graduate student seeking a Master of Education (M.Ed.) at the Institute of Educational Development (IED), BRAC University. It is important to recognize, though, that I may have been exposed to particular opinions or biases about educational difficulties because of my academic

experience. Deliberate measures were taken to reduce any possible impact on the study process in order to address this.

I was dedicated to upholding academic rigor, objectivity, and impartiality throughout the study's planning and implementation. I made sure that personal opinions or experiences didn't affect the data collection or interpretation by rigorously following accepted research procedures and ethical standards. Although there was no prior direct interaction between me and the study participants, there was prior familiarity with the institution. However, this familiarity had no bearing on the data collection's objectivity I was still mindful of keeping an impartial position.

I took many proactive steps to further reduce potential biases, including adhering to stringent methodological protocols, taking into account a variety of viewpoints, and regularly conducting critical self-reflection. The goal of these efforts was to make sure that the conclusions were derived only from the data that was gathered, without any outside influence. In the end, the I aimed to respect academic integrity and make a significant contribution to the investigation of formative assessment procedures in primary-grade English language classes in a community school context.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The study has a number of limitations that I noted. First, students in classes 3 and 4 were younger, which made it harder for me and them to participate fully in formal group discussions during FGDs. They struggled to articulate their opinions. I arranged more casual discussions to accommodate their comfort levels in order to lessen this, albeit this might have hampered the depth of the students' responses.

Additionally, there was a chance of response bias, where some teachers might have given socially acceptable answers since they might have been uncomfortable talking about

difficulties in a formal interview context. Furthermore, the availability of teachers for interviews was influenced by their busy teaching schedules, affecting data collection process. I had to schedule their interviews on different days. They might have provided answers they believed were desirable during interviews, such as when I asked them, “What are some of the particular formative assessments that students enjoy the most?” They all almost gave me the same answers. They even struggled to understand some particular questions, for instance, for the question “Are there any particular formative assessment-related areas where you think further guidance or assistance would be helpful? If yes, what are they in your opinion?” They struggled to give their opinion. However, further explanation needed to clarify. Moreover, one of the criteria for selecting a teacher was that they have to be actively engaged in teaching English for at least two years. There was one English teacher who had been teaching for only nine months. She scheduled her interview after two experienced teachers were done and gave almost similar responses as experienced teachers. The chances of getting authentic data might have been less from her.

The observational data were collected over a short period, which may not capture the full scope of formative assessment practices or the variability in teacher strategies across different times of the academic year. Extended observation periods could yield a more complete understanding of how these practices evolve and adapt over time.

Another drawback is the paucity of earlier studies that explicitly examined formative assessment procedures in Dhaka's community school English classes, which restricts the background information that can be used for comparison analysis.

My background, perspectives, or prior experiences with education and assessment might have subtly influenced how I interpreted teachers' and students' responses, potentially impacting the study's findings.

Finally, time and the fact that the nation was going through a revolutionary phase affected the study's scope and depth. For a time, everything came to a stop. Although every attempt was made to do comprehensive data collecting and analysis, the country's crisis era had an impact on the research's depth.

Chapter 4

Results

The findings of this study shed light on the formative assessment strategies used by teachers in a community school in Dhaka, Bangladesh, with an emphasis on primary-grade students' English language learning. This investigation's primary goal was to inquire the implementation of formative assessment practices in primary-grade English language learning. It sought to understand the types of assessment techniques used by teachers, as well as their perceptions and challenges in employing formative assessments. The study examined subtle insights from three primary school teachers who participated in in-depth interviews; fifteen students who participated from three class levels and shared their classroom experiences and suggestions during focus group discussions (FGDs) with students. Additionally, three classes were observed twice during classroom observations to witness the practical use of formative assessment; and document analyses were done by going through teachers' lesson plans and English books of classes 3, 4, and 5. I have triangulated the collected data and organized key findings into themes based on the strategies used in the class, teachers' understanding and challenges of implementing formative assessment, availability of resources, and engagement of students in assessment activities. Overall, for this investigation, these findings presented thematically arranged data in accordance with the key research questions.

4. Key Findings and Themes

The qualitative investigation of this study unveiled themes that emerged across implementation of formative assessment in class, teacher's training, challenges faced by teacher, and limitation of resources.

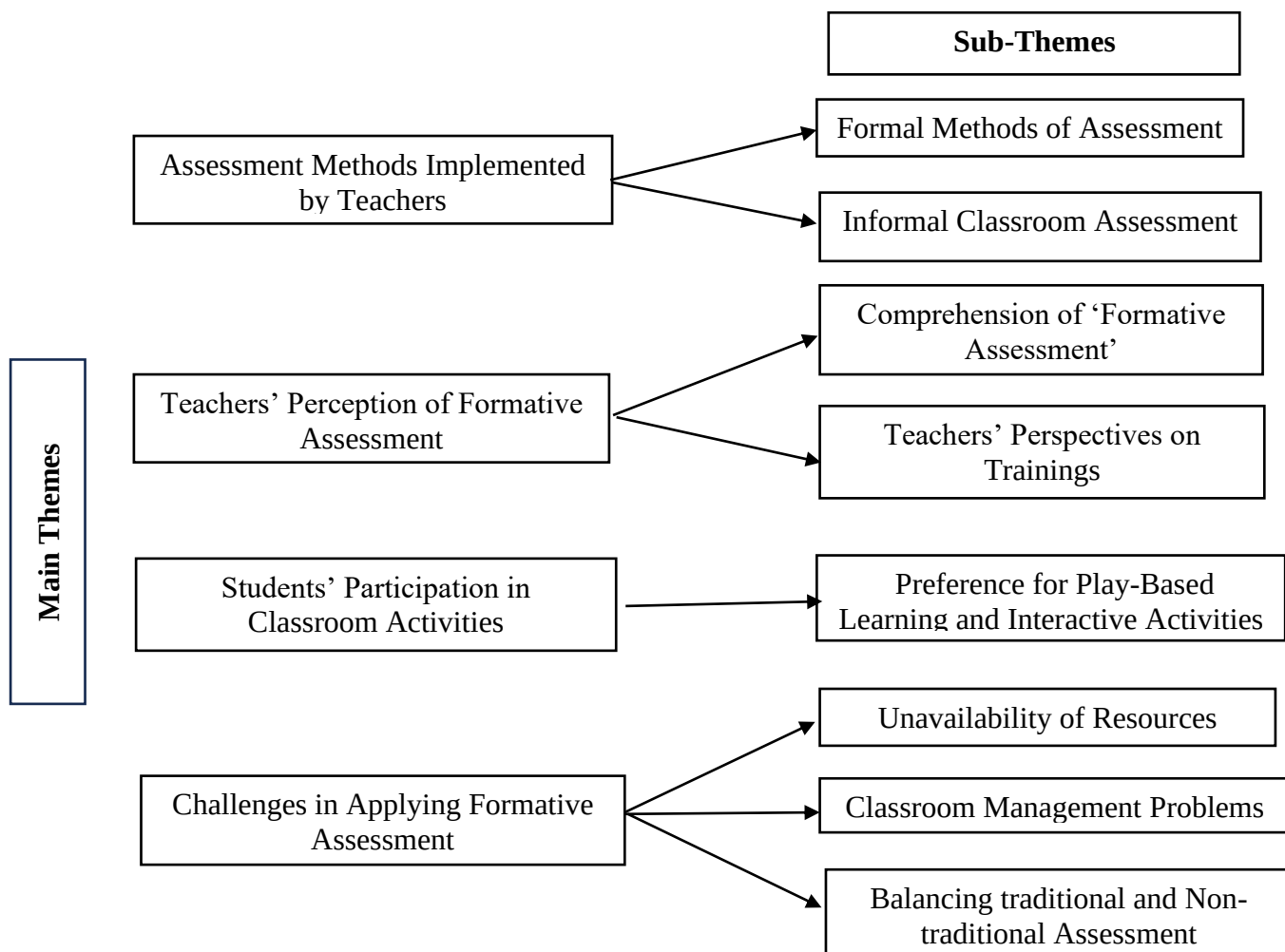


Figure 2: Themes and Sub-themes

4.1 Assessment Methods Implemented by Teachers

Findings of this study revealed that teachers expressed their insightful opinions on using assessments in the class. Teachers used different types of assessment methods, primarily formal summative assessments such as half-yearly and final exams, to gauge students understanding. They also shared how they implement interactive activities in classes. All class levels have a dedicated CS corner that means one side of a classroom with CS students' assignment work, vocabulary trees etc. pasted on the wall. Most of them used formative assessments in grammar lessons; some also shared their ideas on using formative assessment practices in the comprehension part and the creative writing part, such as writing a letter too. Classes were conducted in Bangla in all class levels for students better understanding.

Classroom observation showed a mixed scenario in the classes. In class 3, the teacher was writing a letter on the board and told students to copy it in their notebook. The teacher barely looked back in between to check whether students were writing or not. After writing the entire letter, the teacher looked back and was checking students work and asking questions in between such as, *“Who is the letter addressed to?”*, *“How many body parts should be there in a letter?”*, *“How do we end a letter?”* (Observation #1, 03-09-2024)

While observing classes in class 4, I found the teacher was applying some sort of activities in class. In a comprehension class of class 4, the teacher encouraged students to read and focused on the vocabulary by making them read aloud all together. Teachers used instruction such as *“Read the story”*, *“Repeat after me”*, (Observation #2, 03-09-2024). After that, the teacher called some random students on the board and asked them to write the spellings on the board while instructing everyone to write the spellings in their notebook. For this activity, teacher used instructions *“Write down the Bangla meaning of the words in your copy.”* (Observation #2, 03-09-2024). These instructions helped the students to follow the class. However, they didn’t clarify what exactly students were expected to learn. Class ended with an assignment instruction.

Teachers of all three class levels focused on the visual learning, defining it as an important part of learning. Some also expressed the importance of a study tour as a practical learning aid. They expressed that if these visual and practical learning aids were applied, it would have helped them to learn faster and improved their public learning skills.

4.1.1 Formal Methods of Assessment

During this investigation, I found that teachers predominantly depend on the traditional methods of assessment. They mostly use conventional methods of assessments, such as half-yearly and final exams. One respondent shared: *“We have two types of assessments. Half-*

yearly and final exam. Half-yearly is done in the middle of the year, and final takes place in December.” (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24)

These approaches are structured and formal and emphasize grading over feedback and individual learning. The grading is done based on their memorization and recall abilities in the exam. Teachers were trying to incorporate some activities in most of the observed classes. Nonetheless, a large portion of classes were lecture-based. Teachers in some observed classes were emphasizing the memorization part of the vocabulary or even asking students to memorize formal letters at home. Though the books in all class levels were enriched with a number of activities in each topic, some of them weren't even applied in the class. The findings showed that teachers in this study solely rely on half-yearly and final exams to assess students' academic achievements.

4.1.2 Informal Classroom Assessment

Though they started with the implementation of summative assessments such as half-yearly and final exams as the main methods of assessment and class tests (CT) for assessing students monthly, they advocated the importance of applying different types of activities to students learning too. One of the teachers in the interview shared that she utilizes both formal and informal assessment methods, such as monthly CTs and small in-class assessments where she focuses on grammar. She shared:

“We try to take small weekly CTs. In the grammar part, since they are in class 3, we break down the topics. We try to use nouns, pronouns, and verbs in our conversation in class and ask them to identify, which also helps them to learn faster. We play games on identifying nouns, pronouns, and verbs.” (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24)

Other teacher shared of using grammar exercises, games and role-playing in assessing students' understanding of the topics. The teacher said: *“We play different types of games.*

When I reviewed adjectives, we played a game such as when I said 'up' they showed the position of up. They enjoy when we learn like this.” (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24)

Teachers recognized the necessity of balanced assessment method that goes beyond traditional format of assessment. They all agreed in noting positive feedback in students learning and classroom engagement when they apply different activities in the class. One teacher stated:

“See, students nowadays don't enjoy traditional learning. If we apply anything different than traditional memorizing and writing in their copy, they like doing those the most. I have seen students can remember things better.” (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24).

I observed two consecutive classes of class 5 where the topic was “A Visit to the Liberation War Museum”. This classroom was crowded than other two class levels having 32 students in a class with one teacher. In the first class, teacher read the story and followed a group work activity given inside the book. However, once students were done, teacher asked students to submit their work without providing any feedback during or after their work. Second day started with a new topic whereas the previous topic had more activities in the book.

4.2 Teachers' Perception of Formative Assessment

Another theme that appeared was the teacher's perception about formative assessment. Their overall understanding on formative assessment is still unclear to a lot of extent. They are employing different types of activities such as role-play, board games, assignments, quizzes, group activities etc. without having an exact clear idea of accomplishing its learning goals. Their unfamiliarity with the term 'Formative Assessment' was certain even though two of them having Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree.

4.2.1 Comprehension of ‘Formative Assessment’

The term ‘formative assessment’ was not familiar to some of the teachers interviewed. While some teachers were aware of the benefits of using formative assessment, others were unfamiliar with the term or its applications. One of them said that she heard this term but wasn’t clear about what that meant. The teacher said, *“No, I have heard about it but I don’t know anything in details.”* (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24)

Whereas the books of classes 3,4, and 5 are enriched with different types of formative activities such as guessing game, pair work, project work, role-play etc., teachers’ lesson plan didn’t reflect the implementation of those work in their classes. Plans were written in Bangla and learning objectives were limited to *“Students will be able to fill in the blanks and identify true false statement”*. While teaching present indefinite and present continuous tense, their learning goal was *“Students will get to know about present indefinite and present continuous tense.”*

During this study, it’s been revealed that they might be engage in activities that align with the guidelines of formative assessment such as observing students’ progress through games, quizzes, projects, group work etc., these incidents are rather incidental than a component of an organized pedagogical approach.

A continuous feedback loop, formative assessment by its definition a collaboration of teachers and students to work together to identify the learning gaps, and modify teaching and learning strategies as needed. Nonetheless, teachers in this study acknowledged that they incorporated different types of activities such as encouraging groups works, posing questions during lessons, role-play, assignments, they didn’t know that these activities are part of formative assessment that aims to enhance students learning. The finding highlighted that they were applying the aspects of formative assessment unknowingly.

4.2.2 Teachers Perspective on Trainings

During this study, one thing was dominantly evident: teachers unanimously acknowledged the importance of training for formative assessment. They expressed their interest in having training on formative assessment, and one of them shared that she did not even have any professional training in teaching so far. There was one teacher who was from madrasa background, and completed her honors and masters and currently pursuing B.Ed. shared that it's been one year since she had joined the school and she didn't receive any professional training on teaching. She was guided by senior teachers and observed senior teachers' classes for a while and started taking classes right away. In her words, *"My seniors trained me on taking classes for three days, and then sometimes I used to go to their classroom to see how do they conduct the classes."* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24)

Teachers throughout the interview claimed that their pedagogical skills could be significantly enhanced through different professional development opportunities, including workshops, peer observations, etc.

"Of course. It's important for every teacher. I also believe that teachers must apply these learnings from the training; otherwise, it will be useless. Not only I support having different types of professional trainings but also, I think teachers should apply them in classes. Only then we will be benefitted." (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24). It shows her recognition of training as an important tool for professional growth and its positive outcomes in class.

"Yes, because we learn through training. In a training, there are different types of teachers. We share our ideas and learn from one another." (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24). Shared by another teacher who emphasized of exchanging ideas and learning of innovative approaches through professional development platform. However, the teacher who

didn't receive any professional development training so far, stated that she would like to have access to these kinds of opportunities. She said, *"Yes, if I had the training I could have answered you well."* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24).

4.3 Students Participation in Classroom Activities

While talking about the student's engagement in various classroom fun learning activities, both teachers and students responded positively. Games, group work and role-playing emerged as the most popular activities among students for learning. These fun learning methods not only made learning enjoyable for them, but also helped them to grasp the complex topics easily according to both teachers and students. One of the teachers told, *"They love the play-based learning the most. So, I try to play small games every day."* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24). Students of class 5 also expressed their preference for group work. They said, *"We like group project the most."* (Focus group notes #1, 27-08-2024)

Students were found enthusiastic both in classes and during FGDs. Students became more active the moment teacher applied any activities beyond traditional way of teaching. During classroom observation for this study, a notable change was observed in students' expressions when someone was being called on the board. Their spontaneous responses during any type of activities were evident. Students of class 5 especially shared how peer learning helped them understanding any topic faster than they try to study alone at home. One of the students expressed, *"When I don't understand a topic, my friend helps me understand it."* (Focus group notes #1, 27-08-2024)

4.3.1 Preference for Play-Based Learning and Interactive Activities

During this study, it was inevitable that play-based and interactive learning activities were the most preferred activities by students which demonstrated how well they fostered engagement

and concept retention. During focus group discussion with class 3 about the games they play in the class while learning a topic, one of the students shared,

“Yes, sometimes teacher asks us to write the answers on the board. If I am right then I win the game.” (Focus group discussion #3, 29-08-24). This statement highlights how much these fun learning activities motivate students in active participation when teachers incorporate them in learning.

Indistinguishably, students from class 4 stated, *“Yes. when our teacher calls us on the board and asks us write the answers on the board, it helps us understanding the topic better. Now we know everything.”* (Focus group discussion #2, 28-08-24). This sentiment echoes that how interactive activities like board games aid them in comprehending the topic.

Teachers found that students also enjoy the role-play a lot. According to them, role-play assist students in actively participate in the activities and they learn the topics faster. While talking about the experience of role-play activity, one teacher shared the importance of this activity noting, *“We have role-play also. Sometimes I randomly choose students to become the teacher to explain a topic. Other students enjoy that a lot and wait for their turn to become a teacher.”* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24). It reflects the enthusiasm of students for learning through activity.

The majority of respondents showed their appreciation for group work or pair work for its collaborative nature. Teachers shared that the groups are formed in such a way that it's a combination of mixed students' group. As teachers have also observed that students can easily ask for explanation of any topic from their friends during group work. Some students from class 5 shared during focus group discussion, *“When we work with our friends, if we don't understand, our friend help us understanding the topic.”* (Focus group discussion #3,

29-08-24). This peer assistance fosters the collaborative learning environment. One teacher mentioned,

“In a class, there are diversified students. Some are strong achievers; some are way too weak. I always use the strong achiever to help and guide the weak learners. I make them as a role-model in my class. I pair them up with weak learners as I believe sometimes students understand better from their friends. I sometimes change their sitting arrangements. I remember there was one kid who didn’t know anything, I guided him to follow good students. Sometimes good students don’t want to sit with them. These are a few challenges I face in my class.” (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24).

While their enthusiasm in any kind of pair work or group work is in support of their faster grasping the topic, sometimes their unwillingness of doing work with one another hampers the class.

4.4 Challenges in Applying Formative Assessment

Teachers of classes 3,4, and 5 have shared about the challenges they face while implementing formative assessments in the class. The common area where all of them agreed to face difficulties was inadequate resources. Projectors, visual aid, printed posters were some of the tools identified by them as essential resources that were unavailable and were hindering the proper implementation of formative assessments in the class. English language teacher from class 5 stated that, *“I forgot to mention one thing, which is having a projector. Students always want to see what they learn. Even if we can’t take them on a study tour, if we could show them visually, it would have been effective for them.”* (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24). While talking about the importance of study tour for increasing the practical knowledge of students, teacher shared the importance of alternate resources in filling the gap in her statement.

Along with lack of resources, teachers also highlighted problems they face in classroom management and balancing formative and summative assessment. The large number of students in each classroom made it very extremely difficult for teachers to provide one-on-one attention to them. Though student-led learning created more classroom engagement and activities among students, teachers found that some students were still not active during activities due to not having proper individual attention from the teachers. Teacher shared, *“I remember there was one kid who didn’t know anything. I guided him to follow good students. Sometimes good students don’t want to sit with them. These are a few challenges I face in my class because it’s not possible for me to guide him all the time in the class Which is why sometimes I can see that he doesn’t want to do any activity and feels demotivated.”* (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24).

Teachers responded that it wasn’t possible for them to include formative assessment in their every day’s class lesson. They have a huge syllabus to complete before half yearly and final exam. One of them noted, *“Students like different types of assessment. But one thing is they always want these types of games in the class, which is not possible most of the time as we have a limited number of project papers to use and a syllabus to complete before their exams.”* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24).

4.4.1 Unavailability of Resources

One of the challenges faced by teachers where all of them unanimously identified was the limited resources. Though school was providing poster papers, color pencils for project work, the desire of visual learning was evident during the interviews. The number of project papers were also limited. They found out that the inadequate resources were one of the barriers in student’s learning process. Teachers; aspiration in using visual aids in the classroom while teaching a topic was notable. A teacher shared, *“I believe that when students are learning*

something, they like to see that too. In my last school, they had a projector, and we used to show our students pictures and videos too.” (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24).

The absence of multimedia tools lacks the visual learning and students’ connectivity with the materials taught in the class. Another teacher pointed,

“Sometimes it happens when I am teaching them something, I wish I could show them as well on screen. I feel like that before starting a topic, if I could show them in a printed posters or in projectors, it would have been more engaging to them.” (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24).

In this statement, teacher along with mentioning the unavailability of resources such as additional printed materials, teacher pointed out that if these additional resources were available, it would have helped in creating an engaging learning environment for students. Likewise, another teacher shared about how having visual aid thorough project would have enhanced students’ knowledge on learned topics in class.

One of them talked about the importance of study tour for experiential learning opportunity,

“Actually, I believe that study tours are very effective for students. For example, there was one topic in English about zoos. These students have never been to any kind of zoo. If we could take them there, they would have enjoyed it, and it would have enriched their learnings too. When we read about Lalbagh er Kella, it’s a historical place; they would have learnt better if they could visit it. Another thing I want to say is that there was this comprehension on brails. I was teaching them how to use brails. They were excited and wanted to see the brails, but I couldn’t show them.” (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24).

This shows students’ interest in practical learning to grasp a better understanding about the topic.

4.4.2 Classroom Management Problems

Classroom management problems were one of the challenges faced by the teachers while implementing formative assessments in the class. They reported facing challenges in students' behavior during interactive activities for instances group work, pair work, and role-playing. There's no doubt that these activities are beneficial for engaging students in active learning, teachers stated the challenges in controlling class and students' behavior. These disruptions not only hamper class, but also students get too personal and end up getting into fight. Teacher reported,

"Sometimes students get so excited that it becomes very hard to control them. Sometimes they even get into fights. Other than that, there are some students who are so reluctant to study that it also becomes a challenge to motivate them. When I assign them to any group work, first they are excited, but sometimes they have conflict, which leads to incomplete work." (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24).

This statement gives a picturesque of a class with mayhem where overexcitement for any interactive activities create a disorder in the class and how teachers struggle to ensure a careful balance between engagement and classroom rules and regulation. Additionally, the teacher added, *"It becomes sometimes difficult to keep students' attention on something, and it's not possible to do project work or group work every day. That time, students easily get distracted, they don't want to pay attention to the class, and it affects their learning."* (In-depth Interview #2, 25-08-24).

Furthermore, one teacher emphasized on learning contents over these activities. According to her, *"Children always want to do play-based class only. They don't want to pay attention in understanding contents."* (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24).

The teacher-student ratio was fine in class 3 and 4 having two sections each with 18 to 22 students. However, class 5 had 32 students and there's only one subject teacher assigned to manage the class. Finally, in the classrooms with diverse groups of students, I practically observed the difficulties faced by the teachers to keep students in order whenever they tried to do some group project work in the class.

4.4.3 Balancing Traditional and Non-traditional Assessment

Throughout the data collection process, it was evident that this community school uses the traditional way of assessing students using two conventional summative assessment methods which are half-yearly and final exam. Incorporating formative assessment into formal curriculum's rigid framework was another difficulty for the teachers. Teachers notified that though students enjoy and learn faster through these fun learning activities, it's not possible for them to include these in everyday class. One of them said, *"No, it's not possible to include these things in every day class. We do that sometimes, and they enjoy it."* (In-depth Interview #3, 26-08-24). It reflected in her remark that the challenge she faces of striking a balance between formal assessment with the flexibility required for the formative techniques.

Another teacher stated, *"Now we only use half-yearly and final exams for grading them. But I feel that if we can include their class performances in their report card, that will be great too."* (In-depth Interview #1, 25-08-24).

This explained the struggle of aligning formative assessment with traditional assessment framework.

Despite the challenges and barely knowing the term 'Formative Assessment', these teachers shared their insights and experience of using interactive methods of teaching in English class.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The result of this investigation revealed gaps in understanding and practicing formative assessment in English classroom in a community school in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This study conducted a qualitative investigation to find the types of formative assessments are practiced, challenges teachers face, and the additional supports they expect in the classroom. The findings illustrate that even though teachers in primary-class levels are employing both formal and informal assessment techniques in their classes, they still possess limited understanding on formative assessment. This discussion frames the overall observations, examining how they might be used for enhancing teaching methods, and better learning outcomes in underprivileged settings.

5.1.1 Dependence on Conventional Assessments

The dependence on conventional assessment methods such as half-yearly and final exams highlight the long-standing focus on the summative assessment of this community school. To assess students' performances, teachers mostly depend on these techniques. These techniques prioritize grading over formative feedback. This finding mirrors with the findings of Nazeef and Fareed (2024) who also supported that summative assessment methods prioritizes grading and ranking to improve student learning over formative feedback method. However, information gathered from observations in the classroom and interviews discloses that teachers also additionally use unconventional methods to make learning interesting for students. These unconventional assessment methods are mostly group project work, pair work, role-play, games, etc. I have also observed in one of the classes during classroom

observation that the teacher only assigned students in a group to work with the instructions and didn't provide any feedback once they were done. According to some researchers, a formative assessment will only be considered as formative if the teacher utilizes activities to give the students feedback. Without feedback, a well-designed formative assessment could end up being summative (Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009). Clarke (2012) found that in underfunded schools, formative assessments mostly take place without a thorough grasp of their teaching implications.

Despite applying formative assessment in the class, teachers' unfamiliarity with the concept of formative assessment indicates the significance of professional development in this study. For instance, teachers are unintentionally incorporating activities in their lessons such as identifying nouns, pronouns or any other grammatical components through games or peer work in order to achieve learning objectives. While incorporating these activities in the classes, one of the main goals of formative assessment, which is providing continuous feedback to improve students learning, is mostly not being comprehended by the teachers. Teachers are applying different types of activities in ELL, but are these activities helping students to reflect on their progress, and are students taking ownership of their learnings, which are not fully perceived by the teachers? Similar observation was found in a study conducted by Kaur (2021) where due to the lack of proper understanding for formative assessment, some teachers were conducting formative assessment in a summative way in class 2 English language class.

5.1.2 Students' Preference for Interactive Activities in English Class

The study underlines the importance of formative assessments in enhancing students' engagements in learning activities, which eventually aids them to improve their learning skills. Students shared their preference for play-based and interactive learning activities

during focus group discussion, which also accentuated how well these activities could work in students learning and concept recall. Despite English being a difficult subject for them, teachers noticed that these interactive activities not only grabbed their focus in the class but also students were able to recall what they learnt earlier. This finding is in line with the prior study that points to the significant role of formative assessments in motivating students and fostering in-depth learning (Black and William, 1998). Additionally, students also shared how peer learning helped them to clear out their conceptual confusion about any topic. According to a recent meta-analysis done by some researchers, students learn better from their peers, especially when it is combined with peer assessment trainings (Li, Xiong, Hunter, Guo, & Tywoniw, 2020). Throughout the focus group discussion, students' excitement was visible on their faces when they were talking about activity-based learning. This overall finding pointed out that teachers may need to consider applying more diverse and engaging activities in English class to assess students' learning as well as work on the strategies to boost student participation and engagement in class.

5.1.3 Factors Influence the Practices of Formative Assessment in English Classroom

There are several factors that influenced the practice of formative assessments in English classroom. The results draw the attention on teachers' facing significant challenges in English classroom of this community school like unavailability of resources, lack of proper trainings, big class size (not in all the classes though), and the pressure of completing term syllabus. These factors have hampered the use of formative assessments in the classroom to a lot of extent. Though the availability of poster papers and color pencils made it possible to work on projects and assignments in the class, lack of projectors and printed materials for visual learning hindered the practical learning of students. Teachers even shared that the number of project papers were also limited. Managing resources limitations such as the access to use multimedia tools in the school could successfully enhance the practices of formative

assessment in English classroom. Additionally, teachers desire for the study excursion also highlighted their interest in applying non-traditional assessment methods in the class to improve students understanding concepts. Teachers stressed the necessity of having professional development trainings and expanding the resources for the proper implementation of formative assessment techniques. These findings are in coherent with earlier research that also discussed about the challenges in applying formative assessments into a resource constraints classroom. Clarke (2008) in her study agreed on how limited resources and insufficient trainings hinders the effective use of formative assessment in under-resourced schools. So, these limitations already discussed in this study, where teachers shared their point of view about lack of visual aids, professional trainings and time constraints of completing term syllabus were a number of obstacles for them to integrate formative assessment in their classroom on a regular basis.

Classroom observation visualized a mixed scenario. Some of the classes were still lecture-based. Teachers even didn't try to provide the instructions in English. It also needs to be taken under consideration that different contents might be taught differently in the class. In their classroom observation, Krumsvik and Ludvigsen (2012) observed that teachers sometimes combined lecture-based methods with formative assessment strategies to personalize instructions based on the materials being taught in the class.

Classroom management was another important factor to take into the account for the successful implementation of formative assessment. The classroom atmosphere has a significant role on students' learning. Though teachers specifically didn't mention of facing challenges in interviews about managing classes during usual class time, they reported of facing difficulties in handling students during any group work activities.

Lack of professional training was highlighted throughout the interviews with the teachers. It reflected in their lesson plans as well where the learning objective wasn't aligned with the activities done in the class. These findings are in aligned with Arrafii and Sumarni (2018) who investigated understanding of teachers on formative assessment. They pointed out that many teachers lack of assessment trainings and have poor knowledge about the practices of formative assessment. The data collected from classroom observation was insufficient to provide a complete picture of the classroom practices. Nonetheless, teachers were using direct questioning strategies that also pointed out that they use the questioning to let students think and gauge their understanding. It demonstrates that without having professional workshop or trainings, the way teachers are applying strategies and activities in the English classroom prioritizing students learning is commendable. They are focusing on providing feedback to assist students learning. A dedicated formative assessment-based training would be helpful for these teachers by clearly articulating its importance. Similar to Hubert's findings (2016), formative assessment strategies can be benefitted through system-level strategies such as institution-wide professional training endeavors. However, they require resources, coordination and commitment from the institutions.

Even while formative assessment has demonstrated a great deal of promise to improve learning outcomes, particularly in language instruction, there are still a number of obstacles that limit its use. Comprehensive study is needed to create formative assessment frameworks that are specific to a given environment, given the gaps in teacher preparation, resource availability, classroom limits, policy alignment, and socioeconomic barriers that have been discovered. Future research should concentrate on developing flexible assessment methods for big classes, developing scalable teacher training programs, and supporting legislative changes that give formative assessment integration top priority. Future studies can help create a more effective and equitable educational environment by filling up these gaps, especially in

community schools where formative assessment has the potential to have a profoundly positive educational impact.

5.2 Conclusion

The investigation revealed an intricate interaction between formal summative assessment methods and informal interactive teaching methods. While teachers in this community school recognized the advantages of formative assessment in the English classroom, they had insufficient knowledge of this assessment technique and how it is applied. Formal assessment techniques such as half-yearly and final assessments are still dominating in assessing students' knowledge. However, teachers are also using informal strategies such as playing games on adjectives or grammar topics, board games on vocabulary, group project work in creative writing and role-play, etc. in their English classroom. Nonetheless, the application of these activities is inconsistent and is not systematically integrated with the formative assessment framework. Teachers most often struggle in balancing the implementation of formative assessment which is time-consuming in nature with the requirements of completing the prescribed half-yearly or final term syllabus.

After considering the findings, I can say that I was able to capture the practices, challenges, and support requirements related to formative assessment in community school setting. After integrating the data from interview with teachers, focus group discussions with students, classroom observations, and document analysis, the study offered a comprehensive knowledge of the current state of the formative assessment and where gaps exist. The conclusion of this investigation conveys valuable suggestions for improving the practices of formative assessments in community schools.

Finally, it has been an enlightening experience for me conducting this study. It helped me to understand the practical realities teachers face in a resource constrain setting and

appreciate the difficulties faced by them. It deepened my understanding on the importance of institutional support and teachers' preparation to facilitate pedagogical innovations.

5.3 Recommendation

Primary teachers are to be trained enough to implement different strategies in classes to implement formative assessment practices in English classroom. After all the discussions and findings, the following are proposed at optimizing formative assessment practices in English classroom.

- Frequent professional development trainings must be implemented on formative assessment practices to improve teachers' understanding on the same. Teachers in this community school, didn't get any training or workshop on formative assessment. Teachers unrealized use of formative assessment practice would enhance with the clear learning objective if they receive targeted training. These trainings can assist teachers in developing assessment tasks that will not only be align with the specific learning goals and focusing on assessing students' grammatical knowledge but also will help developing their critical learning skills. Teachers will also be able to help students thinking creatively while writing an essay or a formal or informal letter. The study highlights that in setting with limited resources, if there are proper training, funding and policy supports available, formative assessment practices can become integral to the delivery of education in this setting.
- Both teachers and students in this study expressed their desire to have multimedia tools such as projectors, printers, etc. for their visual learning. Projectors, visual aids, and printed study materials can turn a conventional classroom into a lively and engaging learning space. These visual learning aids can help students learning English in the classroom, as visual learning assists in connecting abstract knowledge with

tangible understanding. A visual aid on how to write a letter, especially the structures of writing a formal and informal letter, will make the lesson relatable and memorable for them. Similarly, while learning about a visit to a zoo, a video on the same may help students learn the English name of the animals better.

- Community schools can promote a learning environment that will value the ongoing learning and development of students by incorporating formative assessments into grading systems. At the moment, the grading method is based on only summative assessments like half-yearly and final exams. These exams mostly prioritize the final result over their learning journey. Community schools can foster a fun learning environment that will also ensure students growth in learning English by including formative assessment in the overall grading system. Teachers also shared their views on grading formative assessment during the interview on a positive note. This would also result in motivating students to participate actively in these activities, knowing that this would be a part of their grading systems. Policymakers and teachers can develop rubrics to operationalize this recommendation by balancing summative and formative assessment grading in the overall grading system. Out of 100%, 40% can be kept for formative assessments and 60% for summative assessments. This balance will ensure that assessment will promote learning and accountability, ultimately improving academic success.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Classroom Observation Checklist

Title of the Research: Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Date of Observation:

Time:

Name of the School:

Name of the Teacher:

Gender: Male / Female

Age:

Class:

Number of Students:

Boys:

Girls:

Sl. No.	
1.	Was the teacher employing formative assessment practices in the class? If yes, what type of formative assessments were employed in the lesson?
2.	Did the teacher assess the understanding of the students? If yes, how did the teacher assess the understanding of the students?
3.	What type of questions did the teacher ask to gauge student understanding?
4.	How did the teachers encourage students to answer questions during class activities?
5.	Was there any peer feedback during the lesson? If yes, in what ways did the instructor assist and direct the process of peer feedback?
6.	Which kinds of interactive exercises were used to assess language learners'

	progress?
7.	How did the teacher encouraged students to participate actively in group projects, debates, and discussions?
8.	Did the instructor give comments on how well the students performed in class? If yes, how did the instructor give comments on how well the students performed in class?
9.	How did the teacher use the feedback to target at directing progress, specific, and constructive?
10.	How did the instructor use formative assessments to meet each student's unique learning needs?
11.	To what extent did formative assessments correspond with the overarching goals of language learning?
12.	In what way the instructor modified the tests according to the student's progress if needed? Were all the resources available?

Appendix B. In-Depth Interview

Research Topic: Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Interview Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Teacher's Name:

Teacher's Age:

Educational Qualification:

Name of School:

1st joining in the Service:

Service Experience:

Training Received:

Duration of Training:

1. What are the assessment techniques do you usually use while teaching English to the students?
2. Can you describe your understanding of the purpose of formative assessment? What is your view about using formative assessment practices to evaluate students learning outcomes?
3. How do you include formative assessment in your everyday instruction?
4. Have you received any training or professional development related to formative assessment techniques? If yes, how long it was?
5. Do you think that teachers' training is necessary for developing the capacity of the teachers? If yes, why? If not, why not?
6. What are some of the particular formative assessments that students enjoy the most?

7. What are the resources you usually use in incorporating formative assessment practices in class?
8. What additional support and resources you think you need to use formative assessment in the classroom?
9. What challenges do you face while implementing those formative assessments that students enjoy the most?
10. Are there any particular formative assessment-related areas where you think further guidance or assistance would be helpful? If yes, what are they in your opinion?
11. How do you adjust tests to fit curricular changes or the requirements of your students?
12. What challenges do you face while adjusting tests to fit curricular changes or the requirements of your students?
13. What modifications in student performance, if any, have you noticed as a result of formative assessment use?

Appendix C. Document Analysis

Research Topic: Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Class:

1. Are the goals listed in the lesson plans in line with the English learning objectives that are specified in the curriculum for children in classes 3 to 5?
2. To what extent are formative assessment procedures connected to certain learning objectives explicitly?
3. Are there examples of a diverse approach that are in line with the curriculum, such as projects, presentations, discussions, or quizzes?
4. How well can formative assessments include the growth of several language skills (writing, speaking, listening, and reading)?
5. To assist students' success, how are feedback mechanisms included in the overall teaching plan?
6. To what extent do the lesson plans and curricular materials' formative assessment procedures align with educational standards or guidelines?

Appendix D. FGDs With Students (Classes 3 to 5)

Title of the Research: Investigating the Practices of Formative Assessment on English Language Learning of Primary Grade Students in a Community School in Dhaka, Bangladesh

FGD Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Class:

1. What are the types of tests you have in your English class?
2. What kinds of activities do you enjoy the most when your teacher assesses you in your English class?
3. Do you think receiving feedback help you to improve your work in English? If yes, how does it help you to improve your work in English?
4. Have you ever been involved in checking the work of your classmates in English language class?
5. Do you believe the assessments have improved your understanding of the subjects?
6. Which kinds of assessments do you find most enjoyable?
7. Do you understand the instructions well given by your teachers?
8. What is your opinion of the help and direction your teacher gives you during assessment?
9. Do you have any suggestions to improve formative assessment practices in the classroom?

Appendix E. Consent Letter for the in-depth interview

[Date]

Dear [Teacher's Name],

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you about an exciting opportunity to participate in an in-depth interview as part of my research study. The purpose of this interview is to gain insights into your experiences and perspectives on English language instruction at your school.

Interview Details:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. If you are willing to participate, please read and complete the enclosed consent form and return it to me by [Deadline].

Consent Form:

I, [Teacher's Name], hereby provide permission for my participation in the in-depth interview as part of the research study on English language instruction.

Signature of Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Your contribution to this study is invaluable, and I appreciate your willingness to share your insights with me. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [Contact Information].

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sanjida Ferdous

Appendix F. Consent Letter for the FGD

Dear Parents/ Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. We are pleased to let you know about an amazing chance for your child to take part in a focus group discussion (FGD). The purpose of this FGD is to learn about your child's and a few of their classmates' experiences and perspectives about their English language learning in a small group discussion.

Date and Time:

The involvement of your child is completely voluntary. If you consent to your child's participation, kindly fill out and submit the enclosed form.

Consent Form:

I, [Parent/Guardian Name], hereby provide permission for my child, [child's Name], to attend the Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

As the child participating in the focus group discussion, I, [Child's Name], agree to take part voluntarily.

Signature of Child: _____

Date: _____

Kindly return this signed consent form to the school by [Deadline].

Regards,

X Community School (Keeping the anonymity of the school for this paper)