Alternative Assessments in Rural Bangladeshi Schools in Post-Pandemic Times: An Evaluation

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English & Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

M. A. in English

Department of English & Humanities

BRAC University

May 2023

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.

2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Of Fall, 2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of M.A. in English on 20.05.2023.

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Ethics Statement

The researcher made a conscious effort to remain conscious of any biases, preconceptions, and perceptions that would interfere with the data's objectivity and neutrality during the course of the study. I demonstrated caution while defending any specific beliefs or principles. Furthermore, I didn't try to eliminate any information that might influence how the results are interpreted. As a result, the findings reported here in this study are real and unmodified. At the same time, I was very cautious to maintain the highest standards of ethical and professional research conduct, particularly participant confidentiality, the right to privacy, and the willingness to not participate.

Abstract

Alternative Assessments in Bangladesh were practised a lot during the COVID-19 period. As all the educational institutions are nationwide shut down and face-to-face learning sessions was not possible. This study explores the challenges of rural S.S.C students while facing 'Alternative Assessments' during the pandemic. In addition, this paper also investigates their challenges after reopening schools, and their overcoming process. For this study, the researcher chose five participants of S.S.C levels from different schools in different rural areas, using the qualitative method. The researcher finds that school authority was unsupportive, and students faced an information gap at the beginning of their online learning. Besides, they faced internet and electricity problems a lot. Some teachers were not sincere in traditional assessments. Most of the students struggled with both short and long syllabi considering the situations. Further research is needed to identify other factors that could strengthen the effectiveness of this kind of study.

Keywords: Alternative vs Traditional Assessments; COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Learning; Unstable Internet; Unsupportive Authority; Curriculum Challenges.

Dedication

My grandmother, my childhood storyteller. Who left us in the beginning of 2022.

Abbu, the name of my inspiration, by his words I got courage to do good and challenging things.

Ammu, who loves me a lot.

Razin, my nephew, new member of our family who born in 2023.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, all praise to the Almighty Allah who is the supreme authority of wisdom, for whom my thesis have been completed without any major interruption.

Secondly, to our advisor Dr. Sabreena Ahmed ma'am, for her kind support and advice in my work. She helped me a lot whenever I needed help.

And finally to my parents without their continuous and spontaneous support it may not be possible. With their kind support and good wishes I am now on the verge of my graduation.

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<center>**Chapter One**</center>

<center>**Introduction**</center>

1.1 Background of the Study

Assessments are necessary to check the improvements of the students where traditional assessments are being used for ages. Traditional assessments are bound to many things such as certain examinations, authority decisions, certain curriculum, and syllabi. Studies found that Traditional assessments are fatal, scary, and tough, and lack variety which put a negative attitude towards it (Shakoori, 2022). Nevertheless, traditional assessments are the most common way for many countries for assessing students such as Thailand, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Cape Verde, and Bangladesh where it contains MCQ, matching headings, true-false, sit-down tests, and other memorisation based tests (Mansory, 2020; Quansah, 2018; Rahman, 2021). Though some teachers believe that alternative assessment is a motivational technique and it can be catalyst for classroom but prefer traditional assessment due to reliability and validity (Phonsirikul, 2018). Minda (2022) examines a research on three Ethiopian universities where a large number of teachers and students participate, and found that, 70% of teachers still using traditional assessments where teaching objectives and goals were incompatible.

Alternative assessments (AA) are necessary because it gives students more privilege than any other method, and it is a learners' centered method (AL-Mahrooqi & Denman 2018). In addition, Alternative assessments encourage the learners to think critically by coming out from the boundary. As these assessments are simple and to the point, students feel comfortable with it, and it builds logical reasoning. AL-Mahrooqi & Denman (2018) states that alternative assessments have lots of verities that provide freedom to students, and it is a standardised process. As alternative assessment contains presentations, portfolio, assignments, teamwork, peer assessments,

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discussions, and so on, students must work with different personality which improve their skill of communications (Ganasan et al., 2022). Giving students the chance to demonstrate their learning and participate in activities is the primary goal of alternative assessment. Among various elements of alternative assessments, a study claims that teachers utilise portfolios as an alternate form of evaluation because they want their students to participate and be present in class more often. Teachers also said that students are aware of the potential benefits of using portfolios to improve their learning and promote independent and critical thinking abilities it (Singh et al., 2022).

1.2 Importance of Alternative Assessments

Alternative assessment has a lot of varieties so it is easy to choose the suitable method for a teacher to his or her students' based on their level. Some students cannot prove themselves their skills, and competence by traditional assessments of assessments. According to Brunell (2019) adopting alternative evaluations is a great way to boost learners' self-esteem and confidence as they acquire the standard learning styles necessary for academic success for students who are entering higher education, especially those from non-traditional groups. In addition, after completing a single course with alternative assessments, students found it interesting, it reduces their anxiety that's why students showed positive attitudes toward it (Tuvachit & Soontornwipast, 2018). As it is a new technique, students can enjoy the technique by coming out from the traditional assessments. In addition, AA can improve the communicational skills of students and make the students more social as it contains teamwork, group presentations, and so on. Alternative assessments also enhance students' critical analysis skills as it is not confined to memory-based learning. Take-home assignments also suggest the students study more, and not be limited only to class hour studies. Overall, alternative assessments can be a good technique for students to improve

their analytical and communicational skills, beside this students find it is an interesting way of learning.

1.3 Assessments in Bangladeshi Education in Recent Years

Bangladesh adopts the British educational system, and there are three levels of formal education there: primary, secondary, and tertiary (Ali et al., 2018) where primary education consists of grades 1 to 5, while secondary education is divided into three levels: junior secondary (grades 6 – 8), secondary (grades 9 - 10), and higher secondary (grades 11-12). In Bangladesh, pre-primary schooling lasts for two years as well. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is in charge of creating textbooks and curricula for students at these pre-university levels of education (Islam et al., 2021).

As reported by (Das et al. 2014; Khan 2010; Rahman 2015), the national examination system dominates testing and, in fact, nearly all evaluations of students' learning within Bangladesh's educational system. Despite the high objectives of the current English curriculum, an increasing number of research papers criticise the disconnect between stated policy objectives and actual implementation. In terms of testing system, Khan (2010) examined the format, question types, and mark distribution for the Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C.) and Higher Secondary Certificate (H.S.C.) exams and emphasised the need to incorporate an oral component in the English examination.

The curriculum has traditionally served as the basis for Bangladesh's evaluation system, which mainly evaluated students' memorization and comprehension abilities. Application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are further categories of knowledge-based skills that are almost ever evaluated. Additionally, the assessment system does not take into account some of the fundamental

traits like oral presentation, leadership, tolerance, cooperative attitude, classroom behaviour, extracurricular activities, and social values. Because of this, students' tendency to rely too much on memorising skills causes them to become handicapped and deficient in the excellence needed to make a positive contribution to society (Islam 2021). Throughout the whole academic year, the schools engaged in school-based assessment (SBA) practise. In secondary schools, different emphasis was placed on the six key SBA components. The schools put a lot of practise into group projects, homework assignments, class assignments, practical assignments, and SBA. On the other hand, not all schools gave out "assignments," and teachers occasionally disregarded them. (Islam 2021).

In the manner of recent curriculum students will be able to "describe people and places, follow instructions, directions, requests, announcements, and responds accordingly in social situations," "narrate incidents in logical situations, ask and give permission/suggestions, participate in conversations, discussions, and debates," as well as "recognise and use English sounds, stress, and intonation appropriately while listening and speaking" (National Curriculum 2012). The current system of national exams makes it challenging to attain curriculum goals and objectives. Additionally, experts said that expecting significant changes in teaching and learning until the national examination system is improved to be more in line with curricular objectives would be unrealistic. (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018). Education systems point out how difficult it is to implement reform even though it seems necessary given the way exams are now administered. There is a serious need for reforming the exam system. (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018).

Bangladesh's ELT policy has historically been influenced by a fundamental lack of understanding and doubt over the essential role of English in the nation (Rahman & Pandian, 2018). ELT in Bangladesh has long been characterised by inconsistent educational policies. Alter

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decisions have frequently been made without any discernible explanation. One such change in the curriculum occurred in 1996 when traditional GTM was replaced with CLT (Rahman & Pandian, 2018). To help Bangladesh progress, ELT still has a ways to go. First, Bangladeshi English education policies should be reviewed and updated without regard to vested Western interests (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014).

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Memory-based learning keeps students under pressure for memorising examination materials and they forget easily after the examinations which they cannot relate to their further study. Traditional assessments are irrationally teachers' centered because it cannot meet up their teaching objectives and goals (Minda, 2022). Researchers believe that traditional assessments are scary, fatal, and difficult and lack variety it cannot help students rather it draws negative washback (Tuvachit & Soontornwipast, 2018). In addition, due to memory-based learning students are not improving in critical thinking, communicative skills, teamwork skills, and so on (Ganasan et al., 2022). As learners are the main target of any education, it should be learners' centered and give them the freedom to learn anything without fear. The more conducive the environment for learning and assessment would be, students would learn easily and effectively. Boredom arises when the same types of assessment exist throughout the year and when the teacher follows the same types of teaching techniques. Researchers believe that if a student gets receptive and productive ways of learning, skills are developed quickly due to alternative assessments (Ganasan et al., 2022).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the education sectors of Bangladesh used different sorts of materials, and ways to continue the classes and assess the students (Hossain, 2021). Students and teachers used online platforms to conduct the class and assignments, portfolios, online viva were some of the elements for assessing the student's progress. The researcher reviewed a good

number of scholarly articles on alternative assessments, but there remains a significant gap in the existing literature regarding the issues of rural S.S.C. level students. During conducting online classes what challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic? After conducting online classes and doing several sorts of alternative assessments for a long time, what challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools? This paper also to explore how they overcome those problems, and so on.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to find out the challenges that S.S.C. level students faced during post COVID period when they back to in person class after reopen the schools, and back to traditional assessments after conducting classes through alternative methods.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to achieve the purposes of the research:

RQ-1 What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?

RQ-2(a): What challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools?

RQ-2(b): How do they overcome those problems?

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study reveals the challenges of rural S.S.C level students while they faced alternative assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic. As alternative assessment was a new technique for

them and many technological tools were used for the first time. Technological competence, and adapting a new way of teaching and learning were problematic from both sides. What those challenges do they face during that time? How they overcome those problems was discussed in this paper. This paper also talked about their problem while reopening all the educational institutions, and coming back to traditional assessments after the pandemic. The researcher chose rural S.S.C level students in Bangladesh, especially those who live in the Feni district. As the researcher's hometown is Feni, so this is the convenient place for data collections. Researcher know the place very well, and spends more than twelve years in this settings, and know the environment, local dialects, and so on. The researcher took this interview in person and recorded the interview by using the snowball technique. The researcher took five people interview who are from rural S.S.C level students considering conceptual frame work. Finally, the researcher got enough time to do the interview with them. Within two to three weeks (last week of February to second week of March) the researcher had to do take the interview, transcribe those into themes, take inter-rater reliability so on and so forth.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study had some specific limitations that a researcher tried his best to mention. As the term 'alternative assessments' is new to the participants, the researcher had to give information about it though, they can provide better info if they previously knew about it. Some participants feel shy to interact with the researchers and feel uncomfortable when the researcher wanted to know deeply about any issue.

1.9 Significance of the Study

It is true that rural people or students get less opportunities than urban students. While COVID-19 affected Bangladesh, educational institutions were closed so that infection rates not getting

higher. As it was a deadly disease, and the lockdown and quarantine timeframe were so long, the study was hampered. Those who are going to attend S.S.C level examinations fall into many problems. Authority arranges online education and brings some sort of alternative ways to assess the students but not every corner of Bangladeshi students got the same opportunity. For this reason, problems are also different in challenges while doing online classes and coming back to the traditional assessments after the pandemic. Rural students of the S.S.C level are still less talked about in this regard.

In addition, this thing really important to know the challenges that they face while doing online classes and coming back to the traditional assessments, and how they overcome those. As they are still less talked about, they might have different sorts of barriers in this regard. These things should be explored so that policymakers of the government of Bangladesh, especially the education ministry/boards can take necessary steps to overcome those problems.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Part One: Traditional vs Alternative Assessments

2.1.1 Concept of Traditional Assessments

Traditional Assessment refers to the multiple-choice tests, fill in the blanks, true or false, matching, and other forced-choice assessments that have been and continue to be widely used in education. Typically, students choose an answer or recollect data to complete the assessment (Billah, 2020). According to National Council of State Supervisor for Language (NCSSFL), traditional evaluations consist of 'tests' that are typically true or false, matching, or multiple choice and are completed using paper and pencil. These tests are simple to grade, but they only check knowledge of facts, information that has been memorized, or isolated applications. Traditional evaluation rarely shows what a language learner can actually do with the language. Along with, traditional assessment entails conventional testing procedures that typically result in a written document, like quizzes or examinations. Traditional assessment methods include standardised examinations, the majority of state achievement assessments, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). These consist of examinations that teachers administer to students to gauge how much they have learnt. Multiple-choice tests, true-false examinations, short answers, and essays are among the most popular traditional evaluation methods (Quansah, 2018).

2.1.2 Concept of Alternative Assessments

According to NCSSFL, a teacher can select an appropriate assessment for children with various learning styles, maturity levels, learning difficulties, physical limitations, and other traits that may affect language performance by focusing alternative evaluations on the kids' strengths what they

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can do. While one student could want to write their response, another might perform better in a role-play scenario. In order to give participants the right feedback and enable informed decisions, the alternative evaluation places a strong emphasis on the quality of the information obtained through the evaluative practice. Alternative testing, when done critically, can also point out areas where a student could be having trouble. The main objective of alternative assessment is to give students the opportunity to show their understanding and perform activities. A general term called alternative assessment is frequently used to refer to a number of alternatives to tests that are typically thought of as being more standardised (AL-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018). Alternative assessment is mostly developed in response to the perceived problems of more conventional or traditional types of assessment, particularly when used with students who have special needs (AL-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018).

2.1.3 Traditional Assessments and Teachers' Attitude

Traditional evaluation is frequently used to refer to formal exams that evaluate students' memory and competence of course material (Coombe et al., 2012). The study found that assessment itself is an integral part of teaching and learning. Various issues with traditional assessment are still being practiced in numerous institutions throughout the world (Rahman, 2021). African country, Cape Verde also using traditional techniques for teaching English writing. Their assessment criterion is also the same as before checking spelling errors, sentence structure, coherence, red marking in the script, and many others. In addition, their teachers grade their script by judging their mistakes but they do not put any comments so that the students can understand where is their mistakes or how could they improve their writing skills (Lopes, 2015). After conducting the research, Minda (2022) found that both teachers and students valued traditional learning over alternative assessment by keeping the reliability and validity of the tests in mind. Minda (2022)

pointed out that, 70% of teachers used the traditional methods of teaching where a mismatch of teaching objectives and goals was found. The study found that Traditional approaches are teacher-centered. In addition, teachers responded that they were hesitant about alternative assessment methods and preferred the traditional ways of assessments (Raoof, 2013).

2.1.4 Various Instructional Methods in Alternative Assessments

Ganasan and his colleagues (2020) believe that alternative assessments contribute to students' learning in both receptive and productive ways of learning. Skills are developed quickly due to this type of assessment namely writing and speaking skills. The study found that alternative assessments also are used for diagnostic and intervention in classroom learning. Through diagnostic test language skills of different student can be identified. In order to motivate their students, teachers give them authentic materials, assign grades, and use various teaching methods (Singh et al., 2022). On the other hand, students learn various skills such as teamwork where a student needs to work with different personalities (Ganasan et al., 2022). Students were amused after doing a single course that includes alternative assessments, and they showed positive attitudes towards it (Tuvachit & Soontornwipast, 2018). In this regard, Shakoori (2022) states that alternative assessment has a lot of variety like discussions, presentations/projects, portfolios, self-assessment, peer assessments, essays, and so on which give a lot of freedom to choose from the traditional technique. For instance, at Omani university, students go through the process of projects, interviews, presentations, and other sorts of alternative assessments. Researchers pointed out that these sorts of assessments are necessary and useful and students show a positive attitude towards it as it promotes learners' independence (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018). Moreover, students said that traditional techniques are scary, and difficult, and lack variety which draws a negative attitude towards it. The study found that major problems regarding poor performance in

academic writing were due to the dependence on a single approach of instruction and summative assessment (Tuvachit & Soontornwipast, 2018). In the traditional technique, students are more bothered with grades where AA (Alternative Assessment) reduces their anxiety, and feel more independent. Self-assessment and peer assessment saw more impactful assessment on alternative assessment (Mansory, 2020). Though mixed impression also comes no one put a negative comment on AA (Shakoori, 2022). Petre (2017) states that, to make university lecturers aware of the need to combine conventional approaches with alternative methods in order to get better results while educating and assessing students. According to Brunell (2019) those who are disabled may have alternative assessments too. Despite having the chance to enroll in higher education, many people are hesitant to go back to school because they may feel poorly, uneasy, and out of place (Brunell, 2019).

2.1.4.1 Portfolio as a Technique of Alternative Assessment

Students commonly choose the portfolio, project, and self-evaluation, and these assignments receive good grades because they change the way, and researchers evaluate students by giving them an opportunity to begin right away (Petre, 2017). According to the study, teachers utilise portfolios as an alternative assessment because they want students to participate and be present more in class. In addition, teachers reported that students are aware of the possibilities of using portfolios to improve their learning and develop autonomous and critical thinking skills. Students that are assessed using a portfolio have the chance to actively participate in their work and understand why they are doing it (Singh et al., 2022). According to the researcher, a portfolio as an alternative assessment tool can be effective as it would be learner-centered pedagogical approach followed by a self-regulated learning process, requiring digital literacy for e-portfolios (Lem, 2019). The

study found that taking a portfolio as a tool of alternative assessment develops the linguistic assessment, and community of practice when they do it as a group, but falls into the difficulty of technical things. So according to the teachers, students are aware of how portfolios can be used to enhance learning and develop independent and critical thought. Students that are assessed using a portfolio have the chance to actively participate in their work and understand why they are doing it (Singh et al., 2022).

2.1.5 Pros and Cons of Alternative Assessments

Alternative assessment techniques such as motivational techniques or other English course techniques, it is believed that this new technique can be the catalyst for a classroom. The authors examine the articles and found that there is a matter of concern on students' communication, reflectivity, willingness, and for critical work (Atifnigar et al., 2020). The study added that, in different situations, students' strengths and weaknesses are different. In most cases, alternative assessments is accepted by teachers and students whereas students believe that they can enhance their quality of learning and willingness through alternative learning. According to Brunell (2019) for students who are entering higher education, especially those from non-traditional groups, using alternative evaluations is an excellent way to boost learners' self-esteem and confidence as they master the conventional study techniques required for academic achievement. Attitude towards alternative assessments is seen really praiseworthy when teachers and peer review were taken. This action research got a positive response for alternative assessments for writing skill improvement (Tuvachit & Soontornwipast, 2018). According to the researchers, culture, teaching style, and quality of education vary from each other (Ong et al., 2021). An alternative assessment would be a mediator, and priority, and for the remote student is favorable (Ong et al., 2021). Experts said that adult learners need more variety in alternative assessments in their learning (Ong et al., 2021).

Traditional assessment cannot help students that much in terms of their goals of doing a course, broadside on, teachers have to adapt to alternative assessments (Mansory, 2020). Self-assessment and peer assessment saw more impactful assessment on alternative assessment (Mansory, 2020). On the other hand, some researchers think that AA is not a suitable technique as it has no direct impact on students (Atifnigar et al., 2020). A teacher can design many alternative assessment tools but those can arise low-stake issues (Phonsirikul, 2018).

2.1.6 Difficulties of Implementing Alternative Assessment

Gidiotis (2021) gives the evident idea that many teachers are eager to experiment with assessment, but it also raises concerns about the quality of assessment in both face-to-face and remote learning. Many teachers were found to be open to the idea of using alternative evaluation techniques, but they were reluctant to stray too far from the traditional test (Gidiotis, 2021). Alternative and formative assessments have been asserted to be significantly more advantageous for a student's future education and other activities (Gidiotis, 2021). The main barrier to Alternative Assessment is developing and implementing performance assessments (Lopes, 2015). Due to a lack of educator expertise, financing, structure, support, and instructions from the Department of Education, the implementation of alternative assessment as an inclusive practice has not been fully realised (Bursey, 2014). Regarding technology, roughly 12% of students use a personal computer, and about 25% a laptop to access online courses (Hossain, 2021). Rahman (2021) suggested that understanding the concept of alternative assessment and knowing its significance of it is mandatory to implement this sort of assessments. Though the study demonstrated that although any alternative approach to teaching and evaluation can first seem challenging, it can be successfully integrated with remote learning if teachers are sufficiently competent and students are briefed about it clearly (Gidiotis, 2021).

Part Two: COVID-19 Pandemic and Assessment

The study revealed many challenges to integrating alternative assessments in Yemeni classrooms where faculties are not encouraged to implement alternative assessments in class, faculties are not experts or trained in alternative assessments, some faculties have no desire to judge their students through alternative assessments, and the current teaching method has no harmony with AA method (Moqbel, 2020). According to Putri et al., (2019) students have a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar problems, limited time issues, and last but not least some students are slow learners. They need extra care and time to adapt to new things In addition, classrooms are not equipped with the alternative assessments method, and gender issues like, either boys or girls do not want to do role plays in front of the opposite gender. They are concerned about the wrong implementation of AA and fear of embarrassment (Shakoori, 2022). The researcher also said that classroom size, class time, number of teachers, and administrative support are very limited (Moqbel, 2020). Rahman (2021) said primary teachers of government institutions do not have enough knowledge of alternative assessments to overcome the challenges of implementing them. Lack of teachers, student-teacher ratio, class duration, workload, and parents' pressure lead it back while implementing it. In addition, the traditional assessments, the summative assessment focuses on students' results rather than learning (Rahman, 2021).

2.2.1 Alternative Assessments in COVID-19 Pandemic

Teachers and students both switch to some readily available and practical technological tools such as smartphones, laptops, and desktop computers, and classes or meeting-enabling software applications as Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Classroom, and Facebook, during the COVID-19 pandemic and, as a matter of fact, the closure of educational institutions across the nation (Hossain, 2021). The four abilities of the lingua franca are taught and learned in diverse

ways by L2 teachers and students in online classrooms. However, the experiences that both teachers and students had in their virtual classrooms show that providing ELT instruction or education as a whole in Bangladesh via the internet system is neither a completely positive nor negative experience. According to the opinions of the instructors and students included in this study, online teaching and learning actually offer a mix of benefits and drawbacks, with the latter accounting for the majority (Hossain, 2021). In a survey conducted by Hossain in 2021, 50 students were found to participate in online courses set up by their respective institutions during the COVID-19 epidemic. They all utilise Zoom Apps, and 62% of them use Google Classroom on their smartphones to take online classes. It was found that teachers were much more habituated to using printed materials, web articles, and PowerPoint presentations for instruction than video clips and audio lectures (Khan et al, 2021). Teachers noted that if students were absent from class, they could still access the recorded lectures, read the study guides at their convenience, and ask questions later (Khan et al, 2021).

2.2.2 Teachers' attitudes towards Alternative Assessments

Peer assessments, collaborative work, and class student feedback as alternative techniques are followed by an Islamic Boarding School of Indonesia to improve EFL competence (Putri et al., 2019). Putri et al., (2019) investigated two instructors of language teaching and there they bring the teachers' recommendation where they suggested other teachers' to do the alternative assessments. The teachers give direct instructions to their students where students are advised to act in front of the class as learning activities such as Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), situational language teaching, and designed lots of group activities to take an alternative assessment. Overall, these two teachers repeatedly suggested doing the AA for other subjects' teachers also not being confined to English only (Putri et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Chugai (2022) findings demonstrated that respondents from both nations had a favorable opinion of how portfolios affect students' motivation. The study's findings supported the hypothesis that there were more parallels than differences between the alternative assessments utilised by English teachers in India and Ukraine throughout the pandemic. Both Indian and Ukrainian respondents agreed that training in evaluation and learning facilitation was essential. The majority of respondents agreed that alternative assessment is important for language teaching and learning, however, some Ukrainian teachers disagreed. The study's findings indicate that English teachers in both nations are aware of the need for training in evaluation and learning facilitation, and it is advised that additional opportunities be given for their professional growth (Chugai, 2022).

Part Three: Bangladesh Context and Alternative Assessment
2.3.1: Existing Assessments in Bangladeshi English Classrooms

Almost the majority of English language evaluation in Bangladesh is summative, where the students' memorisation, and comprehension skills are measured. Assessing students' speaking and listening abilities are not implemented. Rarely are other abilities like learners' presentation, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking seen as crucial for evaluation (Begum & Farooqui, 2008). Despite the emphasis on four language skills in the curriculum, only reading and writing are tested in exams, whereas speaking and listening are not formally taught or evaluated. Some English language instructors in renowned schools frequently conduct informal assessments of the students' speaking and listening abilities in class (Ali, 2016). Although communicative approaches had been incorporated into the language curriculum, the majority of teachers still preferred to comply with the traditional grammar-translation method, which primarily concentrates on the syllabus that must be completed within a certain amount of time in order to achieve higher exam scores (Ali, 2016). Students are instructed to only write about the prerequisites for the examination while their writing

abilities are being evaluated. Students have few opportunities to practice creative writing in the classroom, despite some guided and semi-assisted writing techniques (Ali, 2016). There is a considerable negative washback on English teaching and learning observed in SSC English tests. On issues including teaching-learning styles, subject matter, instructional strategies, and classroom procedures, negative washback was discovered. These negative washback effects on English teaching-learning practice are caused by the test's stakes, participants' attitudes toward the test, a mismatch between the curriculum's objectives and the test's format, teachers' incomplete knowledge of the subject matter, pressure from students' parents to perform well in the final or in the SSC exam, and other factors (Rahman et al., 2021).

In terms of the teachers' comprehension of the current assessment system, Rahman et al. (2021) reported that just three of the twelve teachers have a sufficient understanding of it. The rest of them strictly follow the SSC English exam question forms and school curriculum. The study looked at how curriculum objectives and SSC English test formats were irrelevant or inconsistent, which also had a negative washback effect. Exam preparation is a big focus of class activities. The teachers frequently highlighted the lessons that were essential for the test. The CLT class varies in its rules and principles due to the curriculum and examination system's obvious incompatibility (Islam, 2021).

Writing is a critical language skill that must be improved through the use of many efficient teaching-learning methodologies, systematic formative assessment, and providing regular feedback to each student (Rahman & Sarker, 2019). Study found that teachers primarily adopted questions of various types' taken from or comparable to textbooks to evaluate students' writing skills (Rahman & Sarker, 2019). Rahman (2018), on the other hand, discovered that teachers did not evaluate their students' classwork in order to assess their learning. Due to validity, teachers

valued oral assessment more. They claimed that while no one could copy in an oral exam, it was possible to do so in a written one (Rahman et al., 2011). The majority of teachers (56.67%) view classroom evaluations as summative assessments. Teachers referenced annual exams and final exams as examples of in-class evaluation. Classroom evaluation, according to two teachers, is a difficult procedure that is not always possible in science classes. Some teachers advised classroom assessments, which are done through annual exams and terminal exams, to assess students' overall situations (Rahman, 2018).

2.3.2: Alternative Assessments used in Bangladesh

It can be claimed that alternative assessment unquestionably gives students the chance to prepare for upcoming real-life issues and scenarios. However, the institutions themselves are at the root of the issue in integrating these assessment methods. It is difficult for the teachers to decide the assessment or evaluation procedure of their courses because of the tertiary-level educational institutions' persistent top-down authoritative style the marks distributions are typically decided by the higher authority without the teachers' involvement (Islam & Ahmed, 2018). Research explores how students' learning was hampered and how negative washback in English teaching and learning was worsened by teachers' lack of language assessment literacy (Rahman et al., 2021).

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) conducted a study (4 to 7 May, 2020), named Rapid Assessment of Education in 16 districts of Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic and the report said that, Sangsad TV is used by the Bangladeshi government to broadcast classes. Additionally, several urban private schools have started providing lessons online. According to field data, 56% of the students are not participating in Sangsad Television or online classes. Students who identify as members of ethnic minorities are more likely to not participate

which is nearly 75%, as are students who attend madrasas 68%, students who are handicapped 61%, and 60% students who reside in rural regions also did not want to participate in online classes.

The primary causes of the lack of interest in online classes are, logistical equipment, including cable network connections, televisions, internet connections, and other amenities. Around 71% of students struggle with this challenge of infrastructure, 21% of students refused to accept alternate options and only 56% said that learning through Sangsad TV programmes was beneficial for their academic progress.

Language improvement through alternative assessments gives students freedom more than traditional assessment as it has more varieties like discussions, presentations/projects, portfolios, self-assessments, peer assessments, essays, interviews, team work, and so on (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018; Chugai & Pawar, 2022; Cong-Lem, 2019; Ganasan et al.,2022; Gidiotis, 2021; Petre 2017; Shakoori, 2022; Sing et al., 2022). On the other hand, traditional assessments are mostly teacher centered (Minda, 2022), where teachers want to stay with TM over AA because they are concerned about reliability, and validity and think that AA has no direct impact on students (Atifnigar, 2018). Teachers face difficulties to implement AA due to having lack of classroom facilities, equipment and materials (Minda, 2022; Moqbel, 2020), in equal student teacher ratio, teachers' workloads, short class duration (Rahman, 2021; Ali, 2016), and teachers' need to adapt with this new technique (Mansory, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic and, in fact, the nationwide closure of educational institutions, teachers and students both switched to some widely accessible and practical technological tools like smartphones, laptops, and desktop computers, as well as classes or meeting-enabling software applications like Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Classroom, and Facebook (Hossain, 2021). English language evaluation is mostly gauged through summative assessments where memorisation and comprehensive skills are tested (Begum &

Farooqui, 2008) though speaking and listening are not formally assessed (Ali, 2016). In Bangladesh Primary teachers of government institutions do not have proper competence of alternative assessments to overcome the challenges of implementing them. Additionally, some previous research were conducted on university-level students in urban locations, but private institutions in rural areas have not been looked at yet (Rahman, 2021).

To date, very few studies have been conducted on students' perspectives regarding alternative assessments during pandemic and challenges of going back to the traditional assessments at the SSC level of Bangladesh. That is why current study aims to fill the gap of knowledge by exploring what rural students experienced during COVID-19 pandemic and after reopening the schools in terms of assessments.

<center>**Chapter Three**</center>

<center>**Methodology**</center>

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is about research design which was set to perform this study. As stated earlier in chapter one, the main aim of this study is to explore the challenges of rural S.S.C level students after reopening the schools during post COVID-19 pandemic. The first research question explores their problems while they faced alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic. The second research question aims at finding what challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools? The third research question finds their overcome process of those challenges. The procedure of selecting participants and collecting data, as well as the framework for data analysis and the steps taken to ensure the study's trustworthiness, are all described in detail in this chapter.

3.2 The Qualitative Paradigm and Its Philosophical Assumptions

A particular research paradigm and a set of philosophical presumptions form the foundation of the methodological design of qualitative research. The researcher selected the Social constructivism paradigm among all qualitative research paradigms (which is frequently referred to as interpretivism Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Mertens, 2010), and is attempting to identify the challenges faced by the rural S.S.C students with alternative assessments and after the reopening of the schools with traditional assessments. In this regard, Crotty (1998), Lincoln and Guba (2000), and Schwandt (2007) state that individuals try to discover the environment in which they live and work. They create subjective interpretations of their experiences, which are focused on specific items or things. These meanings are various and complex, encouraging the researcher to focus on the variety of perspectives rather than attempting to categorize or categorize them into a few classifications or ideas. The purpose of the

<center>22</center>

research is   to rely on the participants' perceptions of the situation as much as possible. Here, individuals describe their experiences in phenomenological investigations (Moustakas, 1994). With the use of discussion or other interactions, participants in this study paradigm can construct their own understanding of a situation by answering broad, general questions. Additionally, this study paradigm encourages open-ended inquiries more so that participants can express their own ideas, opinions, and real-world experiences. This paradigm would be more useful in rural situations where the research depends on a particular level of understanding. In addition, this study was the qualitative nature, in which the researcher analysed other people's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and ideas and then could them to fit their own experiences and background.

According to Moustakas (1994), the ontological problem concerns the nature of reality and its characteristics. When conducting qualitative research, researchers are exploring the concept of many realities. The researchers, as well as the individuals being investigated and the readers of a qualitative study, embrace different realities. For instance, the researcher analysed the audio recordings and questionnaires (see Appendix- C) to find out the rural S.S.C level students' individual responses to challenges alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic (RQ- 1). The response from the rural S.S.C. level students individual's situation while they came back to traditional assessments after reopening the schools where interview transcriptions served as a means to show their subjective opinions about the issues related to traditional assessment (RQ 2a) and what steps they took to overcome their problems they faced in both cases (RQ-2b).

Research Paradigm	Philosophical Assumptions			
	Ontological	**Epistemological**	**Axiological**	**Methodological**
Social Constructivism	Multiple Subjective Views of Participants	Participatory approach of the researcher to spend time with the participants face to face with recordings.	Researcher's values and biases will be discussed along with the participants' interpretations.	Qualitative Multiple Case Study Approach

Table (3.1): Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

The next category of these assumptions is epistemological assumptions where the researcher chooses different ways of getting involved in the research to establish a relationship with the issue of the study. Conducting a qualitative study means that researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied. Therefore, subjective evidence is assembled based on individual views (Wolcott, 2008). In short, the researcher tries to minimize the "distance" or "objective separateness" (Guba & Lincoln, 1988, p. 94) between himself or herself and those being researched. In Feni, the researcher has two cousins who were in J.S.C. level during Covid-19 period, so it would be easy to incorporate the data form them, and their friends as well. The third assumption is an axiological assumption that helps in understanding a researcher's positionality in the study and accepting that his or her values or biases may express themselves in the analysed data. Finally, instead of attempting to apply an existing theory to the data, the methodology of this study follows an inductive approach to looking at the data obtained and developing a theory. To develop the research viewpoint, the researcher

of such a study frequently switches back and forth between the research questions and the data analysis procedure (Creswell, 2007). The next chapters will have parts that discuss the study's methodology.

As the researcher does not belong to any organisations, educational institutions or any government sectors,   so there is no connection what is the outcome of the results.

3.3 Selecting the Participants

For acquiring rich data of the participants, the researcher chose-

- ➢ Rural S.S.C level students from the hometown of the researcher

- ➢ Students participated willingly as three of the participants were the researcher's cousin

- ➢ The rest of them were elected through the snowball technique

Selecting the appropriate sampling technique for a study is essential for obtaining useful data. To collect information-rich data from the limited accessible sources, the study used the purposive snowball or chain sampling strategy (Patton, 2002). This research is on rural S.S.C level students on alternative assessments and the challenges after reopening schools. The researcher selected Snowball Sampling techniques for selecting the participants because knowing the participants through his or her friends or relatives is important for data collection and this way the researcher can have the credibility. Because of the unfamiliarity of the topic or the complexity of events, some participants may feel hesitant if the interviewer is totally new to them. Qualitative snowball sampling, like purposive sampling research, is a type of purposeful sampling that occurs after a study begins and occurs when the researcher asks participants to suggest more people to be sampled. This request could be made as a question during an interview or in random chats with people at a study site (Creswell, 2012). Here the researcher would like to invite their acquaintances, relatives who are from the same class through them.

The sample size in qualitative research is usually not fixed. The number of participants is dependent on how many are necessary to adequately understand all significant aspects of the topic being examined. In other words, the sample size is enough if additional interviews or focus groups do not lead to the creation of new concepts, which is the goal known as data saturation (Sargeant, 2012).

In order to select the participants, the researcher first communicated with his cousins who were from rural S.S.C level students, from the same schools that the researcher passed S.S.C level. Later, the researcher told his cousin to bring his friends, relatives or acquaintances who belong to the same S.S.C level, and willingly participate for this study. The researcher will take the interviews face to face on the field.

3.4 Participant Profile

Here are the brief information of the participants those are interviewed for the research findings

No	Name, Gender, Age	Educational Qualification	Occupation
01	Hamim Arafat (M) (17)	Class 10	Student
02	Mahima Akter (F) (16)	Class 10	Student
03	Jannatul Ferdous	Class 10	Student
04	Syed Nazim Uddin (M) (15)	Class 9	Student
05	Azmeer Hossen Rafi (15)	Class 10	Student

Table (3.2): Participants Profile

3.5 Major Theories Related to the Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study on Alternative Assessments is based on some theorists who talk about the constructivist view where learners construct knowledge from their activity (Estrin 1993; Shepard 2000). Here, learners, text, and other contexts have an impact on learning outcomes. Sing et al., (2022) believe that materials play an important role in alternative assessments where teachers will provide materials, use various teaching methods, and assign grades to make the session interesting. According to Ong et al., (2021), alternative assessments have a lot of verities that help adult learners. For better understanding in the classroom, it is necessary to have a good environment in the classroom whether it is a traditional or alternative way of learning. Practicing in the classroom, and giving feedback immediately have a great impact on the students (Rhodes & Roller 1996; Shanklin 1993; Shepard 2000; Valencia 1998;). The researchers also believe that this way teachers can adjust their teaching style which suits better on their respective classrooms. In terms of alternative assessments, school's authority was supportive or not, and do the students face any challenges regarding new techniques (August, 2018).

3.6 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Alternative Assessments│
                    │           Vs            │
                    │  Traditional Assessments│
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                       ╱                  ╲
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Constructivist View

Students, Text, Context, Impacted Learning Outcomes, and Learners are active, Learners Construct Knowledge.

(Estrin 1993; Shepard 2000)

Materials

Alternative Assessments have more Variety, Authentic materials, assign grades, and use various teaching methods (Ong et al., 2021). (Singh et al., 2022).

Classroom Environment & Practices

In alternative assessments and traditional assessments (Rhodes & Shanklin 1993; Roller 1996; Valencia 1998; Shepard 2000).

Challenges in Alternative & Traditional Assessments

Identify barriers to learning in their respective schools. (August, 2018)

Strategies of Overcoming Challenges

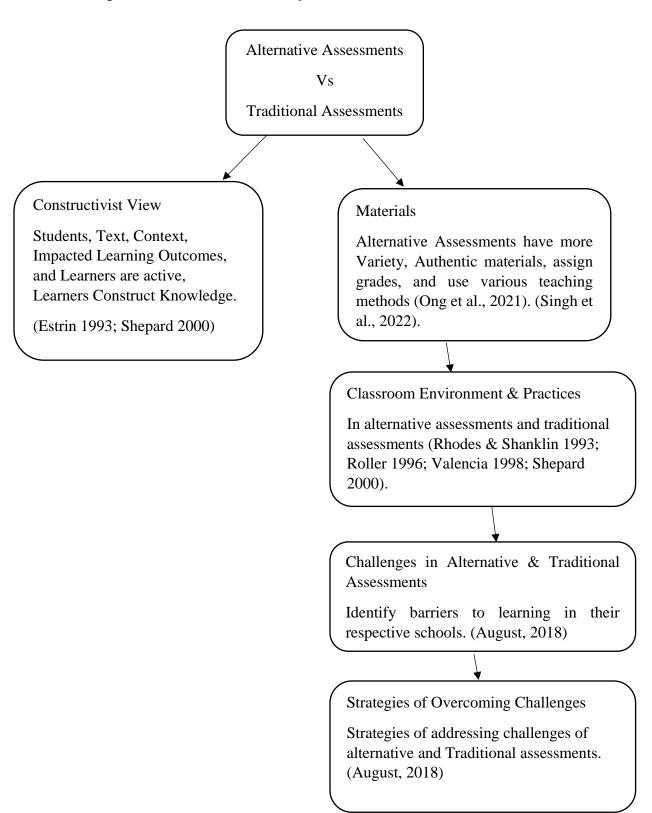Strategies of addressing challenges of alternative and Traditional assessments. (August, 2018)

Figure: 3.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

3.7 Designing Fine-Tuning Interview Protocol

To get rich qualitative data, a trustworthy interview protocol is essential. Through the prior boundary of the issues to be addressed, it facilitates the interview process involving multiple groups of people in a methodical, consistent, and thorough manner (Gugiu & Rodriguez-Campos, 2007; Patton, 2015). Furthermore, by ensuring thorough information is gathered within the allotted time, an interview protocol improves the effectiveness of the interview process. The researchers can better comprehend the respondents' experiences and pinpoint key components that are relevant to the topic by using rich qualitative data (Yeong et al., 2018).

The researcher choose Fine-Tuning Interview Protocol for the study which followed (Jacob & Furgerson, pp. 2-5). This interview protocol has such steps following:

Step 1: Pick a topic that is interesting to you.

Step 2: Research should guide your questions.

Step 3: Use a script for the beginning and end of your interview.

Step 4: Questions should be open-ended.

Step 5: Start with the basics.

Step 6: Begin with easy to answer questions and move towards ones that are more difficult or controversial.

Step 7: The phrase "tell me about…"is great way to start a question.

Step 8: Write big, expansive questions.

Step 9: Use prompts.

Step 10: Be willing to make "on the spot" revisions to your interview protocol.

Step 11: Don't make the interview too long.

Step 12: Piloting the Study.

These above steps are been followed, but practising with a friend was carried out through piloting the interview with the participants. It follows expert evaluation of the interview protocol in the third step to improve reliability, predict respondent responses, and assure understandability. To get feedback on the interview questions, the researcher approached an assistant professor from the Department of English and Humanities who has been teaching Linguistics and ELT courses at a private university in Bangladesh for over ten years. Her academic works have been presented at a number of local and international conferences in Australia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and India. Pilot testing the instrument as a last stage guaranteed that the questionnaire would function as planned in real-world situations. Testing should closely resemble the actual interview procedure in a real-world setting (Kim, 2010). The pilot testing was extremely fruitful, producing plenty of unexpected yet important results. This feedback assisted the researchers in fine-tuning the questionnaires for clarity, usability, and a more natural flow of conversation. Nonetheless, the researchers noticed that the participants' body language and facial expression revealed that they had more to say about the interview topics. As a result, after the initial open-ended questions, close-ended probing questions were added (Yeong et al., 2018).

3.8 Data Analysis Framework

For case studies, Stake (1995) presents four types of data analysis and interpretation methodologies. The first is categorical accumulation, which involves gathering subtleties or cases from data in order to find issue-relevant meanings. The second type of analysis is direct interpretation, which is when a researcher investigates a single instance and attempts to make sense of it. The researcher

searches for patterns or themes that arose when analysing data in the third form. Naturalistic generalization is the last type of analysis, which refers to making generalisations the pattern of themes for similar circumstances (Stake, 1995).

Research Questions	Sources of Data	Data Analysis	Discussion
What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?	Audiotaping of participants	Coding	Results are interpreted in context of current theories and scholarly literature.
What challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools?	Audiotaping of participants	Verbatim Transcription, Open Coding, In-vivo Coding	
How do they overcome those problems?	Audiotaping of participants	Open Coding, In vivo Coding	Results are interpreted in context of current theories and scholarly literature.

Table (3.4): The Framework for Analysing Data of the Study

3.8.1 Analysis of Interview

The researcher conducts the interview before going on to the analytical stage. Transcribing verbal data to written data is the first step in the process. The advantage of transcription is that it "preserves the interviewee's remarks" (Bryman, 2008, p.453). The audio recordings of the interviews were manually transcribed verbatim in order to examine the participants' interviews. The interview transcripts were then coded in two cycles using the seven-column coding template (Ahmad, 2017) using open and in-vivo coding. There are multiple qualitative analysis techniques exist. A quasi-statistical technique, a theme coding approach, and a grounded theory approach are the three most popular methods, according to Robson (2011). Thematic coding is the method used in social research the most frequently out of these three methodologies.

The theme coding method will be examined because of its popularity. The thematic coding approach was categorized into five steps by (Robson, 2011).

1- Familiarizing with the data.

2- Generating the initial codes.

3- Identifying themes.

4- Constructing thematic networks.

5- Integration and interpretation.

The researcher highlights the most fascinating data, labels it, and then classifies it in order to analyse interviews (Seidman, 2012).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were considered before taking the interview with the participants. A consent form was sent to every participants before the interview. The participants were asked to read the 'informed consent form' and signature by allowing all the statements (see appendix- I) It also said that the participants' comments during the interviews would be recorded. The participants were assured that I would respect their privacy and not reveal any of their personal information to the public.

The researcher provided a soft copy of consent form every participants before taking the interview and after transcribing their data, the conversations files were sent to them to check weather everything is ok or not. The researcher audio record the whole interview sessions of the participants with their consent. In addition, the major themes and inter-rater reliability forms sent to an expert of this field to check the reliability.

3.11 Trustworthiness of the Study

To establish trustworthiness and credibility of this study, the researcher took several steps. For instance, the researcher add triangulation of data sources (Denzin 1978; Patton 1999) from the assignments

that participants submitted in the schools, analyst triangulation and interviewer reliability checking, Audit Trails and Member checking (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

For the purpose of establishing credibility, this researcher utilised the triangulation of data sources and analyst triangulation. The researcher used audio recordings of interview sessions to generate data for this study. An experienced professor from BRAC University's ENH department evaluated the interview transcription since analyst triangulation refers to using multiple analysts and observers. In addition, inter-coding and inter-rater reliability were taken into account for this study's analyst triangulation.

Akkerman et al. (2006) believe that audit trails are a beneficial tool for assuring the quality of qualitative investigations, in this regard, Koch (2006) argues that a reader's ability to audit the researcher's events, influences, and activities may help establish the trustworthiness of a study. The researcher kept an electronic audit trail (see Appendix- J).

Audit trail and reflexivity are two methods for ensuring confirmability and the study's integrity (Pandey & Patnaik 2014). The study's credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability were all increased by the use of these following techniques.

For member checking, the researcher emailed every participant before taking the interview and after transcribing their data, the transcripts files were emailed to them to check whether everything is ok or not (Merriam, 1995). In addition, Member checking is also known as participant verification (Rager, 2005), informant feedback, respondent validation, applicability, external validity, and fittingness (Barrett; Morse; Mayan; Olson & Spiers, 2002).

In general, during an interview, the researcher will restate or summarize information and then question the participant to determine accuracy. The participants either agree or disagree that the summaries reflect their views, feelings, and experiences, and if accuracy and completeness are affirmed, then the study is said to have credibility (Creswell 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Lincoln and Guba believed another kind of member checking occurs near the end of the research project when the analyzed data and report are given to the participants to review for the authenticity of the work. The participants check to see whether a "true" or authentic representation was made of what he or she conveyed during the interview. Member checks may involve sharing all of the findings with the participants, and allowing them to critically analyze the findings and comment on them (Creswell, 2007).

In addition, the major themes and inter-rater reliability forms sent to an expert of this field to check the reliability. A part of the data were sent to an expert of 13 years of experience in tertiary level teaching from Applied Linguistics and ELT background.

<div align="center">

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

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4.1 Introduction

This study's major goal was to investigate the difficulties faced by rural S.S.C. students returning to class after the COVID-19 pandemic and taking traditional assessments. By collecting their script from the respective schools, the researcher also made an effort to know about their writing challenges and errors. The research results based on the following research questions will be presented in this chapter:

RQ 1: What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?

RQ 2(a): What challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools?

RQ 2(b): How do they overcome those problems?

(See methodology chapter page: 26 to see participants from the participants' profile)

Section One: Challenges of Rural S.S.C. Students and Alternative Assessments During COVID-19 Pandemic

Information Gap is seen as the biggest loss of learning in the COVID-19 pandemic. Authority started the online class. A significant number of students are unaware of it. The school authority did not reach them at the proper time. In addition, the authority did not send messages about the class timings, meeting links, and other information related to the class to the guardian or student's phone. One of the participants said that she got the information 2 weeks later and she got information from her friend. She missed 2 weeks of classes due to the communication gap.

Numerous alternatives to exams that are often viewed as being more standardised are frequently referred to by the broad term "alternative assessment" (AL-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018). Portfolios, assignments, and presentations are some of the varieties of alternative assessments where some of the rural S.S.C students faced difficulties with these kinds of learning techniques during the COVID-19 pandemic. When a portfolio is used for assessing students, they have the opportunity to actively engage in their work and fully understand why they are doing it (Singh et al., 2022).Alternative assessments, according to Ganasan and the others he collaborated with (2020), support students' learning in both receptive and productive ways. Due to this kind of examination, abilities like writing and speaking are improved swiftly. Students believe that innovations are good and most of them preferred new techniques. However, though alternative assessments were going on during the pandemic, rural S.S.C students did not introduce to these kinds of new techniques. Students get a variety of abilities, such as teamwork, which requires them to collaborate with individuals who have varied personalities (Ganasan et al., 2022). The majority of the participant in this study stated that their teacher did not introduce many techniques from alternative assessments. Even some of them heard the name of some alternative assessment techniques for the first time during the interview sessions with the researchers. As per Shakoori (2022), alternative assessment provides a wide range of options, including debates, presentations/projects, portfolios, self-evaluations, assessment by peers, essays, and more, which give students a lot of freedom to select from the standard method. From the participants' voices, it is clear that some teachers were confined to only assignments and oral assessments. Mostly rote learning is on the priority list.

On the other hand, those teachers introduced or tried to implement some new techniques in rural S.S.C. students face difficulties with that too. Students encountered the new environment

and techniques for the first time and they needed time to get accustomed to it. Students said that some techniques were easy and some were difficult to learn. New techniques bring some problematic issues too. For instance, a respondent answered questions related to this issue like that, "Yes, it was problematic. Ah. When I was going to submit my papers my friends wanted to see my papers. They talked a lot, wanting to copy from one another as some new techniques were introduced. If I was not interested to show them, sometimes it creates mental distance between us." Plagiarism issues arose here, and also she indicated the mental distance between themselves.

Peer and self-assessments have a greater impact on alternative assessments (Mansory, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, assessing scripts were problematic as they were far distant from their teachers, and in online classes internet was problematic for various reasons. In addition, institutions in rural areas, are underprivileged for many reasons, one of the participants of this study said, they did not conduct their classes in Zoom or other online meeting apps. They used Facebook groups for their learning where their instructors uploaded the video recordings in that group. In this case, eye-to-eye connection or face to face to face communications are greatly hampered. They could not be asked their teacher according to their individual problems. On the contrary, those teachers conduct classes through meeting apps online, they also could not give feedback properly during the class due to classroom size and limited time. In some schools in rural areas, they have over 100 students in a class and they could not break the class into sections due to a shortage of teachers. That's why it was not possible. In addition, some students added that checking their own script is really difficult, mostly checking English paper's script.

Unstable internet and server issues are the most common internet issues in Bangladesh, and the rural condition is deadly! Students and teachers faced huge difficulties with that. Many students could not conduct the classes due to poor internet. Service provider delays their work if

there is any problem going on. Even mobile network is also in poor condition, students buy the data but could not use it due to network issues. Electricity problems, blurry screens, and audio issues make the class problematic. Some students got interrupted frequently and they get bored and leave the class.

Another common problem with online classes is vision problems. Eye irritation occurs after gazing at the screen for a long time. Most of the students join from small screens such as mobile phones. In mobile, even the teacher's font size was ok from his side, but it was really difficult to see from the students' side. Gazing at mobile phones leads headaches, eye irritation so on and so forth.

Teachers and students generally support AA, which was and students tend to think that alternative learning can improve their motivation and quality of learning. According to Brunell (2019), using alternative evaluations is a great way to boost learners' self-esteem and confidence as they master the traditional study techniques necessary for academic success for students who are entering higher education, especially those from non-traditional groups. The introduction of alternative assessment as an inclusive practice has not been fully realized due to a lack of educator competence, funding, structure, support, and directives from the Department of Education (Bursey, 2014). Creating and implementing performance evaluations is the biggest challenge to alternative assessment (Lopes, 2015). However, every students faced difficulties in short syllabus. They said, obtaining A+ is more difficult in short syllabus than full syllabus. Longer version is easier than short syllabus exam.

Traditional vs Alternative Assessments! Students voted for the traditional one. They blame the poor internet for this. And students have more freedom in online mode, they can bunk classes anytime they want when their teacher gave them any task and said an internet problem. Other

students feel shy to ask any questions in front of the class in online mode. Due to these difficulties, they choose face-to-face classes.

100% of the participants agreed that their school authority was not supportive during online classes. The adoption of alternative assessment as an inclusive practise has not been fully fulfilled due to a lack of educator skills, funding, structure, support, and directives from the Department of Education (Bursey, 2014). The same thing occurs in during COVID-19 when the school authority was unsupportive of the students. According to the participant's voice, the school authority did not reach the students from the beginning with the information. Many students went to their home which was really far from the schools. In addition, the authority did not provide data for the internet, materials for online classes so on and so forth.

Section Two: Challenges of facing traditional assessments after reopening schools and overcoming process

After reopening the schools, almost one and half years later, students have several types of difficulties in facing traditional mode. First of all, students face difficulties with writing issues. The majority of the participants talked about their slow handwriting issues. Secondly, they said, they did mistakes in grammar and spelling too. Classroom noise also arose problems during the learning sessions. In online mode, the teacher can mute the class easily, and in face-to-face classes, it was difficult to make the class calm. Teachers do late in the class after going back to traditional assessments. In this case, students make more noise in class, and they got less time in learning sessions. A respondent said that, first few days he cannot set up his mind after reopening the schools.

Syllabus and Curriculum related challenges were the major challenges after the reopening of the schools. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students read a short syllabus, and after they came back to traditional assessment, they had to complete the full syllabus. In that case, they said, their memorising skills were reduced. They blame short time is also problematic. Within a short time, they had to cover a lot. That's why they have struggled to obtain an A+.

In switching to online mode, the biggest obstacle is seen information gap from the study. Authority could not reach students nearly 80-90% with online classes. Some students did not get the news from the authority that online classes going on. Later they were informed by their friends and acquaintances. Later, they joined online classes, they faced severe internet problems. They used to rejoin to solve the problem. Most of the time there is only and one solution to all problems like audio issues, blurry screens, internet instability, etc. Sometimes students have to buy mobile data for conducting classes. If there is a problem going on, they used to leave the class finally and wait for class recording on their respective Facebook groups.

After going back to the traditional assessments, in a face-to-face class, students struggled to concentrate in class due to noise problems. Some outside noises like buses and trains horns create problems, and then, inner noises like friends gossiping in the class interrupted the learning sessions. Students meet each other for long times, and their gossiping increased significantly. In online classes, teachers have the opportunity to mute all the students easily but in face-to-face classes it is difficult. Sometimes teachers scolded them and gave punishment by keeping them standing in the class where the option to solve the noise problem.

Overcoming Processes

Students were having trouble with various issues during online classes and post-COVID periods but were able to find out the way of overcoming those, though those were not any permanent solutions. It is found that the school authority was less supportive, that's why some problems arise with this. For instance, the communication gap, in authority can fix it in no time. However, students communicate with one another through social sites and other means and inform each other that online classes was going on. Varieties of alternative assessments were problematic to some students but they took help from their senior one, mostly from elder brother or sister. The same thing happens for self-assessments too. One of the most common solutions for internet problems is to restart the Wi-Fi router. This way they tried to overcome those problems but sometimes they have to buy mobile data which was expensive but not enough to do online classes as the village network is poor. Load shedding was another problematic issue for all, students have nearly no alternate solutions for it except waiting for electricity or waiting for the recorded lectures, those teachers posted on the Facebook group.

After post-COVID, going back to traditional assessments, students fall into other types of problems. Such as memorising skills reduce, broad syllabus problems, noise, and mindset problem. Students said that after doing online classes their memorising skills reduce, as they habituated to short syllabi and other sorts of assessments already but this time they had to memorise for their sit-down tests but their syllabus was huge in terms of time. They write a lot to memorise those. Their teacher scolded those who were making noise in the class, and their class captain writes their name who creates anomalies in class, and later submits it to their next teacher. Sometimes, the teacher punished the students by standing up on the bench.

Chapter Five
Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter work towards summarising the major findings of the study and discussing the implications and recommendation for alternative assessments in the education sector of Bangladesh, especially at the secondary level of education. This study endeavors to fill the gap of knowledge regarding alternative assessments and their challenges in rural S.S.C students, where their difficulties and problem-solving strategies are mentioned after reopening their schools.

5.2 Contributions of the Study

5.2.1 Implications of the Study

After conducting the study, the first and foremost obstacle is seen information gap during the COVID-19 pandemic where the school authority cannot reach students within the given time. That's why, some students cannot join their online classes, they got the news later that their online classes are going on. Missing classes with inexperienced knowledge of online platforms make the situation worse at that time. Later, students faced difficulties with some variations of alternative assessments. But most of the teachers did not introduce the element of AA rather they were confined to only assignments and some oral exams. Self or peer assessment was nearly absent there. In addition, those students tried to check their papers, having trouble when their elder ones helps out. Limited time and students' number in class make this thing difficult for the teachers also.

Unstable internet is one of the biggest barriers to online classes. Load shedding makes this problem bigger even. Blurry screens, audio issues, and server problems are the most common scenario in rural areas. The mobile network is also poor. Students from rural areas, those students

were bound to buy mobile data, and they also failed to attend classes sometimes due to poor mobile network issues.

The short syllabus was problematic during the pandemic when achieving an A+ was more difficult than in normal situations according to student's voices. On the other hand, another group did not support a longer syllabus too. They bring the example of disliking it like a short time, memorising skills reduce after conducting classes online for nearly two years so on and so forth. Noise issues and unsupportive authority leads to some negative sides to conduct class properly.

5.2.3 Implication for the Society

The world is now moving on to new techniques in almost every sphere day by day. The education sector is also got that magical touch. First-world countries are doing far better than Bangladesh precisely in the education sector, we can have that idea if we look at the university's global ranking. Alternative assessments are really impactful learning techniques where the student can come out from traditional learning. Memory-based learning, according to the researcher's opinion kills the creativity of the learners. Students cannot answer if the questions are a little bit changed or fall into new situations. By alternative assessment, students can never bored due to its variety and they learn easily.

By alternative ways of learning a students can be more knowledgeable in a sophisticated manner. They would be the creative learner and later a group of genius who can give impact the upcoming future where the government needs the creative people most. If they can learn or they are being assessed in many ways they might have little lacking in their self-enriching period. If the government can implement such types of new techniques, then our students will get a better

opportunity of learning and they can compete easily with global students. Finally, society will get a group of gem citizens who will work for the betterment of society.

5.2.4 Implication for Knowledge

The language progress through alternative assessments provides students freedom more than traditional assessment as it has a wider range like discussions, presentations/projects, portfolios, self-assessments, peer assessments, essays, interviews, teamwork, and so on (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018; Chugai & Pawar, 2022; Cong-Lem, 2019; Ganasan et al.,2022; Gidiotis, 2021; Petre 2017; Shakoori, 2022; Sing et al., 2022). A teacher who prefers traditional assessments over alternative approaches (AA) does so because they believe that AA has no direct impact on learners and that traditional assessments are more teacher-centered (Minda, 2022). Teachers have trouble implementing AA because there aren't enough facilities, tools, or supplies in the classroom (Minda, 2022; Moqbel, 2020), there aren't enough students to teachers, the classes aren't long enough (Rahman, 2021; Ali, 2016), and teachers need to get used to this new method (Mansory, 2020). Teachers and students switched to some widely available and useful technological devices like smartphones, laptops, and desktop computers, as well as classes or meeting-enabling software applications like Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Classroom, and Facebook during the COVID-19 pandemic and, in fact, the nationwide shutdown of educational institutions (Hossain, 2021). Speaking and listening are not explicitly examined, but summative evaluations that test memorising and comprehensive abilities are the main way that English language evaluation is determined (Begum & Farooqui, 2008). In Bangladesh, primary teachers employed by government institutions lack the necessary alternative assessment expertise to meet their implementation issues. Additionally, private institutions in rural areas have not yet been studied, despite some prior study being done on university-level students in cities (Rahman, 2021).

The researcher explore the possible barriers of alternative assessments in rural S.S.C students. In addition, it is also described the earlier chapter that how do they overcome their problems while they came back to traditional assessments or face-to-face classes after conducting the online classes with alternative assessments almost one and half year.

5.5 Recommendation

➢ School authority should be more generous and supportive to implement alternative assessments.

➢ Government should train the teachers and familiarize with the variety of alternative assessment.

➢ Government should be more focused on building less interrupted internet services with low cost, and fix the mobile network issues.

➢ Mix method research can be done on this types of research so that more rich data can be gathered and explore all the barriers towards alternative assessments.

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Appendix A

Notational Conventions

1. I: Researcher
2. R: Respondent

3. (??)   Not clear

4. ?   Interrogative sentence or word

5. ….

   Ah   making some voice while thinking or speaking
   Amm
   Emm
   Eh

6. **   pause or stop talking for short time

7. Ha Ha   laugh

8. Oh! Ah!   Joy/Sad/Surprise

9. Yes   agreement
   Yeah

Interview Transcriptions Sample for Mahima

No.	Participants	Questions and Answers
1	I	What is your name?
2	Mahima	Syeda Mahima Akter Prokity.
3	I	Would you please share your medium of instruction in your educational background?
4	Mahima	Bangla
5	I	What is your school's name?
6	Mahima	Shaheen Academy School and College Feni.
7	I	Did you ever use Zoom before COVID-19 pandemic?
8	Mahima	No.
9	I	Do you have smart phone or you used your parent's phone?
10	Mahima	I used parent's phone.
11	I	Does your parents speaks English?
12	Mahima	My mother does not but my father does.
13	I	Did you get the information of ongoing online classes at that time?
14	Mahima	No, I did not. Actually, I went to my village and I got the information 2 months later that online classes was going on.
15	I	Does your teacher gives feedback regularly?
16	Mahima	Not regularly, sometimes. When he gives some task, he does sometimes.
17	I	Was your teacher sincere?
18	Mahima	He was late sometimes, sometimes he joins early.
19	I	Are you used to do your homework during COVID-19?
20	Mahima	I usually did not prepare my homework as my teacher is not used to check it or ask for it.
21	I	Did you enjoy online classes?
22	Mahima	Yes, I do.
23	I	Did you have all the necessary equipment's for online classes?

24	Mahima	Yes, I had.
25	I	Do you think online feedbacks were enough during online classes?
26	Mahima	Yes, feedbacks were enough & It works.
27	I	Do you think Portfolios, Assignments/Presentations were good techniques for learning?
28	Mahima	Yes, it is a good technique.
29	I	Have you faced any difficulties in terms of the verity of alternative assessments?
30	Mahima	Yes, it was problematic.
31	I	Which way it is problematic? What kinds of problem? How?
32	Mahima	Ah. When I was going to submit my papers my friends wanted to see my papers. They talked a lot, want to copy from one another as some new techniques were introduced. If I was not interested to show them, Sometimes it creates mental distance between us.
33	I	Have you faced any difficulties during self-assessments or peer assessments?
34	Mahima	No. I can check my errors.
35	I	Have you faced any difficulties of technical issues or internet issues during online classes?
36	Mahima	Yes, Wi-Fi was unstable, sometimes I could not find wifi signal. Electricity was also problematic.
37	I	Do you think online classroom environment is good enough for learning?
38	Mahima	I do think yes.
39	I	Do you think your school authority was fully supportive during online classes? Such as technical, internet data, other online equipment's?
40	Mahima	No. We did not get any support, they did not provide us anything.
41	I	How was your teachers' technical knowledge in taking online classes?
42	Mahima	Yes, he had good technical knowledge.
43	I	Did you feel any mental pressure with alternative assessment during online classes?
44	Mahima	Yes, It keeps us under pressure. After minimising the syllabus it was more challenging. It becomes tougher for us.
45	I	How could it becomes challenging?
46	Mahima	When we conduct 100 marks examination, it was ok. But 55 marks examination was tough to pass. It was a problematic issues.

47	I	When you got 80 out of 100, it was considered as A+, Can you please let me know what marks do you have to obtain to get A+ in short syllabus?
48	Mahima	40 for A+
49	I	Do you think attaining 40 out of 55 for A+ is more challenging than 80 for A+ out of 100?
50	Mahima	Yes, 100 marks exam was easier for obtaining A+
51	I	Did you faced spelling, grammar or other writing issues after going back to traditional assessments?
52	Mahima	No. I did not face that sort of problems.
53	I	Did you face any specific or major challenges after going back to traditional assessments?
54	Mahima	Yes. For instance, our teachers… did not come to the class timely. Even if they came, emm.. boys and girls make noise in the class. That's why we could not conduct class properly. Teachers were usually late.
55	I	Did you face any curriculum or syllabus related challenges after reopening the schools?
56	Mahima	Online was good. Ah. Emm.. Nobody needs not to wait for anyone. Offline is suitable for understanding.. Ah..for noise, everyone cannot get What teachers explain.
57	I	Well, what is your classroom size? Ah.. I mean the students number of your class.
58	Mahima	60-70 or less than that.
59	I	Does face to face class bring any problematic issues to you after a long time?
60	Mahima	Yes. When we studied short syllabus, it was easy to achieve. But when it became full syllabus, it was problematic. We were done with the short syllabus. Then suddenly our achieving skills reduce.
61	I	Ok. Memorising become difficult then when syllabus become broad. Right?
62	Mahima	Yes.
63	I	Short syllabus was ok for you. Was the syllabus is bigger than according to time?
64	Mahima	Time was short. They way syllabus increased time was not enough to cover it.
65	I	Did you face physical problem such as vision problem after conducting online classes long time?
66	Mahima	Yes. I faced physical problem. For instance, eye problem. Emm.. Eye irritation occurs after gazing at mobile for a long time. That's why it becomes a problem.
67	I	Did you face internet related or screen frozen problem while doing online class?

68	Mahima	Yes. Yes. It got stuck. I faced screen frozen problem.
69	I	So, how could you solve those problem?
70	Mahima	We told our teacher that, it is not clear or it become stopped. Then our teacher reconnected to the meetings and share the screen again.
71	I	Does your teacher rejoined or told you guys to reconnect?
72	Mahima	Teacher himself rejoined.
73	I	Does the problem solve here by rejoining?
74	Mahima	Yes.
75	I	Well, you solve the problem by rejoining. Does the noise of face to face classes or outside noise make your learning session problematic?
76	Mahima	Yes. It was problematic when our friend circle gossiping during the class.
77	I	Any noise from outside disturbs you or not?
78	Mahima	Bus, Trains horns were very problematic. Specially trains sounds and horn.
79	I	Ok. Thank You. It was a great time chatting with you.
80	Mahima	Welcome.

What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?						
Interview Questions **(1)**	**Subordinate key word of question** **(2)**	**Subordinate main point from conversation** **(3)**	**Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point** **(4)**	**Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as key word(s)** **(5)**	**Frequency of occurrence** **(6)**	**Ordering of discourse unit** **(7)**
Do you think online feedbacks were sufficient during online classes?	*Feedbacks	*Feedback works *Sufficient	Yes, feedbacks were enough & It works.	*Feedback Works *Sufficient	1	DU 26
Do you think Portfolios, Assignments/Presentations were good techniques for learning?	* Varieties *Good *Technique	*Good Technique	Yes, it is a good technique.	*Good Technique	1	DU 28
Have you faced any difficulties in terms of the variety of alternative assessments?	*Difficulties * Varieties *Alternative Assessments	*Problematic *Copy from one another *Mental Distance * Others talked a lot	Yes, it was problematic. Ah. When I was going to submit my papers my friends wanted to see my papers. They talked a lot, want to copy from one another as some new techniques were	*Problematic *Plagiarism *Talkative Peers	1 1 1 1	DU 30

			introduced. If I was not interested to show them, Sometimes it creates mental distance between us.	*Mental distance with friends		
Have you faced any difficulties during self-assessments or peer assessments?	*Difficulties *Self/Peer Assessments	*Can self-assess	No. I can check my errors.	*Can self-assess	1	DU 34
Have you faced any difficulties of technical issues or internet issues during online classes?	*Difficulties *Technical *Online	*Unstable Internet *Electricity Problem	Yes, Wi-Fi was unstable, sometimes I could not find Wi-Fi signal. Electricity was also problematic.	*Wi-Fi problem *Electricity Problem	1 1	DU 36
Do you think online classroom environment is good enough for learning?	*Online Class *Environment *Good *Learning	**Good for learning	I do think yes.	**Good for learning	1	DU 38
Do you think your school authority was fully supportive during online classes? Such as technical, internet, other online equipment's?	*School Authority *Supportive *Online, Technical *Equipment's	*Did not Provide	No. We did not get any support, they did not provide us anything.	**Did Support *Provide Nothing	1 1	DU 40

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How was your teachers' technical knowledge in taking online classes?	*Teacher's *Technical Knowledge *Online Classes	*Had Knowledge	Yes, he had good technical knowledge.	*Good Technical Knowledge	1	DU 42
Did you feel any mental pressure with alternative assessment during online classes?	*Mental Pressure *Alternative Assessments *Online Classes	*Pressure *Minimized Syllabus *Challenging	Yes, It keeps us under pressure. After minimising the syllabus it was more challenging. It becomes tougher for us.	*Keeps under pressure * Short Syllabus Challenging	1 1	DU 44

Sample of Inter Coding Template by Another Coder Mahima's Response to RQ 2(a)

What challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools?						
Interview Questions **(1)**	**Subordinate key word of question** **(2)**	**Subordinate main point from conversation** **(3)**	**Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point** **(4)**	**Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as key word(s)** **(5)**	**Frequency of occurrence** **(6)**	**Ordering of discourse unit** **(7)**
Did you faced spelling, grammar or other writing issues after going back to	*Grammar Issue *Writing Issues *Traditional Assessments	*No problem	No. I did not face that sort of problems.	*No problem	1	DU 52

traditional assessments?						
Did you face any specific or major challenges after going back to traditional assessments?	*Specific *Major Challenges *Traditional Assessments	*Teachers were not punctual *Students make noise	Yes. For instance, our teachers… did not come to the class timely. Even if they came, emm.. boys and girls make noise in the class. That's why we could not conduct class properly. Teachers were usually late.	*Teachers were not punctual *Classroom Noise	2 1	DU 54
Did you face any curriculum or syllabus related challenges after reopening the schools?	*Curriculum/Syllabus *Challenges *Reopening Schools	*Noise Problem	Online was good. Ah. Emm.. Nobody needs not to wait for anyone. Offline is suitable for understanding.. Ah..for noise, everyone cannot get What teachers explain.	*Online was good *No waiting *Offline better for understanding *Noise	1 1 1 1	DU 56
Does face to face class bring any problematic issues to you after a long time?	*Face to Face Class *Problem *Long time gap	*Full syllabus problematic *Memorising skills reduce	Yes. When we studied short syllabus, it was easy to achieve. But when it became full syllabus, it was problematic. We were done with the short syllabus. Then suddenly our memorising skills reduce.	*Short Syllabus easy *Full syllabus Problematic *Covered Short Syllabus *Memorising skills reduce	1 1 1 1	DU 60

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Did you face physical problem such as vision problem after conducting online classes long time?	*Physical Problem *Vision Problem *Online Class *Long Time	*Eye Irritation	Yes. I faced physical problem. For instance, eye problem. Emm.. Eye irritation occurs after gazing at mobile for a long time. That's why it becomes a problem.	*Eye Irritation	2	DU 66
Does the noise of face to face classes or outside noise make your learning session problematic?	*Noise *Face to Face Class *Outside noise *Learning Session	*Problematic *Friends Gossiping during the class *Bus/Train Sounds and Horn	Yes. It was problematic when our friend circle gossiping during the class. Bus, Trains horns were very problematic. Specially trains sounds and horn.	*Gossiping problem *Vehicle horn	1 2	DU 76 DU 78

Sample of Inter Coding Template by Another Coder Mahima's Response to RQ 2 (b)

How do they overcome those problems?						
Interview Questions **(1)**	**Subordinate key word of question** **(2)**	**Subordinate main point from conversation** **(3)**	**Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point** **(4)**	**Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as key word(s)** **(5)**	**Frequency of occurrence** **(6)**	**Ordering of discourse unit** **(7)**
Did you get the information of ongoing online classes at that time?	*Information *Online class	*Did not get the info *Missed 2 months later	No, I did not. Actually, I went to my village and I got the information 2 months later that online classes was going on. Later, I know from one of my friends by a phone call.	*Went to Village *Informed by a friend	1 1	DU 14
Did you face internet related or screen frozen problem while doing online class? If it yes, how could you solve those problem?	*Internet Problem *Screen Frozen Problem *Solve	*Got Stuck *Screen Frozen *Teacher Reconnect	Yes. Yes. It got stuck. I faced screen frozen problem. We told our teacher that, it is not clear or it become stopped. Then our teacher reconnected to the meetings and share the screen again. Teacher himself rejoined.	*Computer Hang *Reconnect and share again	1 2	DU 68 DU 70 DU 72

Appendix D

Sample Theme Generation Template

Research Question 1	What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?					
Interview Questions	Do you think online feedbacks were sufficient during online classes?					
Mahima (C1)	**Rafi (C2)**	**Nazim (C3)**	**Jannatul (C4)**	**Hamim (C5)**	**Subthemes**	**Themes**
Feedbacks Works (DU 26)	Check errors by self. (DU 14)	Not enough (DU 24)	They show grades (DU 24)	Feedbacks Self-Correction Recordings help (DU 26)	Not enough	Feedback Works Self Correction
Interview Questions	Do you think Portfolios, Assignments/Presentations were good techniques for learning?					
Yes Good Technique (DU 28)	Traditional good (DU 34)	Varieties are good. (DU 26)	Memory based learning not suitable Innovative techniques are good Got chance (DU 26)	Teachers did not familiarize with new techniques (DU 28)	Lack of orientation with new technology Rote Learning	Good Technique Varieties/Innovations are good. Traditional good
Interview Questions	Have you faced any difficulties in terms of the verity of alternative assessments?					
Problematic, Copy from one another, Mental Distance	Some Easy and Some Difficult (DU 36)	Creates Problem (DU 30)	No difficulties (DU 28)	No difficulties (DU 30)	Moderate	Problematic No Difficulties

(DU 30)						
Interview Questions	Have you faced any difficulties during self-assessments or peer assessments?					
No Issues (DU 34)	Faced Difficulties Elder One Helps out (DU 38)	Can Check my errors (DU 34)	Checking own script Very tough (DU 32)	Difficulties in English paper checking Writing Issues (DU 32)	Elder One Helps in Difficulties	Difficulties in Checking Script No issues
Interview Questions	Have you faced any difficulties of technical issues or internet issues during online classes?					
Yes Unstable Internet Electricity Problem (DU 36)	Did not get the phone (DU 40)	Falls under internet issues Cannot hear teacher's voice due to internet (DU 36)	Internet Problem Server Problem We cannot hear the voice (DU 40)	Signals down Mobile data not up to the mark. Missed many classes (DU 40)	Online Material Shortage Missed Classes	Unstable Internet/Server Issues Hearing Issues Electricity Problem
Interview Questions	Do you think online classroom environment is good enough for learning?					
Online Good (DU 38)	Traditional Good (DU 42)	COVID-19 online class environment was not good. Zoom was not good as	Online is not good Server Issue Blurry Screen Hearing Issues	Some friends bunk class during any task Internet problem (DU 42)	Bunk Classes	Traditional Good Online Good

		school learning (DU 38)	Offline is better (DU 42)			
Interview Questions	Do you think your school authority was fully supportive during online classes? Such as technical, internet, other online equipment's?					
Was not supportive (DU 40)	Was not supportive (DU 44)	Was not supportive (DU 44)	Was not supportive (DU 44)	Was not supportive (DU 44)		Unsupportive Authority
Interview Questions	How was your teachers' technical knowledge in taking online classes?					
Had Knowledge	Can Conduct (DU 46)	Nothing happened negative in online class Can conduct classes (DU 46)	Face problem while joining How to deliver speech in new situation (DU 46)	Technical knowledge was moderate If faced difficulties we helped him. (DU 46)	Problem in joining is speech delivery	Good technical knowledge
Interview Questions	Did you feel any mental pressure with alternative assessment during online classes?					
Yes Pressure Minimized Syllabus Challenging	No Pressure (DU 48)	Did not face any kind of pressure (DU 48)	No Pressure (DU 48)	No Pressure (DU 50)	Minimized Syllabus Challenge	No pressure

Research Question 2(a)	What challenges did they experience while facing traditional assessments after reopening of the schools?						
Interview Questions	Did you faced spelling, grammar or other writing issues after going back to traditional assessments?						
Mahima (C1)	**Rafi (C2)**	**Nazim (C3)**	**Jannatul (C4)**	**Hamim (C5)**	**Subthemes**	**Themes**	
No issues (DU 52)	Faced Difficulties with grammar and Spelling Writing Speed Slow (DU 50)	Do mistake in writing handwriting not fair Writing Speed was slow (DU 50)	No issues (DU 50)	Slow handwriting Difficulties in fair writing and spelling mistakes (DU 52)	Handwriting was not Fair	Slow Handwriting Grammar and Spelling Issues No Issues	
Interview Questions	Did you face any specific or major challenges after going back to traditional assessments?						
Yes Teachers do late Students make noise (DU 54)		Did not face any challenges (DU 54)	Did not face any challenges (DU 52)	Did not face any challenges (DU 54)	Teacher was not sincere	No challenges in TA	
Interview Questions	Did you face any curriculum or syllabus related challenges after reopening the schools?						
Noise Problem (DU 56)	Was Problematic Broad Syllabus Issue Time Shortage Memorising skills reduce (DU 58 & 60)	Broad Syllabus was problematic after reopening the school. Obtaining A+ is difficult.	Short Syllabus examination is tough Tougher than longer version Struggled to obtain A+ (DU 54)	More Challenging Full syllabus within short time (DU 54)	Memorising Skills Reduce Noise Problem	Short Syllabus Problematic Obtaining A+ is difficult.	

		(DU 56)			
Interview Questions	Does face to face class bring any problematic issues to you after a long time?				
Full syllabus problematic Memorising skills reduce (DU 60)			Noise related problem (DU 56)	First few days, I cannot set my mind. (DU 56)	
Interview Questions	Did you face physical problem such as vision problem after conducting online classes long time?				
Faced Physical Problem Eye Irritation (DU 66)		See blur after long time (DU 58)	Cannot use mobile for a long time Teacher font was ok but it becomes blurry after watching long time. (DU 58)	No Issues (60)	Eye Irritation
Interview Questions	Does the noise of face to face classes or outside noise make your learning session problematic?				
Problematic Friends Gossiping during the class		Noise occurs (DU 60)	Scolded those who makes noise Gave punishment	No Issues (DU 64)	Noise Issues

Bus/Train Sounds and Horn (DU 76, 78)			(DU 60)			

Research Question 2(b)	How do they overcome those problems?					
Interview Questions	Did you get the information of ongoing online classes at that time?					
Mahima (C1)	**Rafi (C2)**	**Nazim (C3)**	**Jannatul (C4)**	**Hamim (C5)**	**Subthemes**	**Themes**
Did not get the info Missed 2 months later		Information Gap (DU 32)				Information Gap
Interview Questions	Did you face internet related or screen frozen problem while doing online class? If it yes, how could you solve those problem?					
Got Stuck Screen Frozen Teacher Reconnect (DU 68,70,72)		Reconnecting zoom (DU 64)	Call the service provider Delay work Leave the class after multiple tries Recordings in Facebook (DU 62)	Mobile data was not enough Spend a lot of money (DU 68)	Spend Lots of Money	Screen Frozen and Reconnecting

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Rating for Participants Interview by Rater 1
Alternative Assessments

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

RQ1- What challenges did rural S.S.C students experience while facing alternative assessments during COVID-19 pandemic?				Inter-Rater		
Do you think online feedbacks were sufficient during online classes?						
Theme	Main Ideas	Discourse Unit	Verbal Support	Agree	Disagree	Comment/ Suggestion
Feedback Works.	Feedback Works. Self-correction	MAH 26	"Yes, feedbacks were enough & It works."	/		
		HAM 26	"In some ways, online feedback is good. Let's say, when our teacher gave oral feedbacks to our friends, we can saw it, and make correction to our scripts by ourselves…"	/		
Do you think Portfolios, Assignments/Presentations were good techniques for learning?						
Varieties/Innovations are good. Traditional good	Traditional Preferred	RAF 34	"No. Traditional was good." "Yes, it is a good technique."	/ /		Why JAN 36 is talking about modern techniques?
		MAH 28				
		JAN 36	"Now-a-days, memory based learning is not suitable for better learning. In this case, new techniques are good as those are innovative like presentations, everyone got the chance to share his or her own words. So I think these are the good techniques."		/	
Have you faced any difficulties in terms of the verity of alternative assessments?						
Problematic	Plagiarism issue arise. Create mental distance.	MAH 30	"Yes, it was problematic. Ah. When I was going to submit my papers my friends wanted to see my papers. They talked a lot, want to copy from one another as some new techniques were introduced. If I was not interested to show them, Sometimes it creates mental distance between us."	/		
Have you faced any difficulties during self-assessments or peer assessments?						

Difficulties in Checking Script	Senior helps.	RAF 38	"Yes, sometimes. When I faced difficulties my elder brother and sister help me out."	/		
		MAH 34	"No. I can check my errors."	/		
	Self checking is tough	HAM 32	"Yes. Checking own script is very tough."	/		
Have you faced any difficulties of technical issues or internet issues during online classes?						
Unstable Internet	Unstable/ Poor internet network	NAZ 36	"Yes, I falls under internet related issues. Sometimes I cannot hear teachers' voice due to internet problem."	/		
		HAM 40	"Most of the times Wi-Fi signals down. In our village, mobile data network is not up to the mark. I missed many classes due to internet problem."	/		
	Electricity Problem	MAH 36	"Yes, Wi-Fi was unstable, sometimes I could not find Wi-Fi signal. Electricity was also problematic."	/		
	Lack of Gadgets	RAF 40	"Yes. Sometimes I did not get the phone to use."	/		
Do you think your school authority was fully supportive during online classes? Such as technical, internet, other online equipment's?						
Unsupportive authority	Did not get any support or provide anything.	MAH 40	"No. We did not get any support, they did not provide us anything."	/		
		RAF 40	"No."	/		

Checked By: **Dr. Sabreena Ahmed**

Department of English and Humanities

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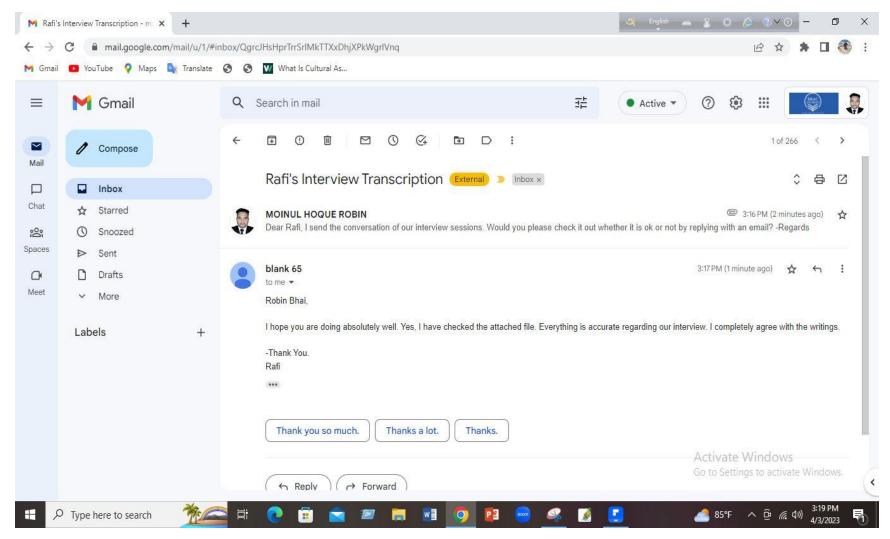Date: 11 April 2023

Appendix F

RATING FOR RELIABILITY

Percentage agreement =   Total agreements on main ideas   X   100

Total main Ideas Identified

14/15 x 100= 93.33 % Agreement

Appendix G

Member Checking

Appendix H

Interview Questions for the Participants

Interview Questions (IQ)	Background Info.	RQ1: Challenges of AA during COVID-19	RQ2(a): Challenges of TA after reopening	RQ-2(b): Overcoming Process
1. Would you please share your medium of instruction in your educational background?	X			
2. What is your school's name?	X			
3. Did you ever use Zoom before COVID-19 pandemic?	X			
4. Do you have smart phone or you used your parent's phone?	X			
5. Does your parents speaks English?	X			
6. Does your teacher gives feedback regularly?	X			
7. Was your teacher sincere?	X			
8. Are you used to do your homework during COVID-19?	X			
9. Did you enjoy online classes?	X			
10. Did you have all the necessary equipment's for online classes?	X			
11. Do you think online feedbacks were enough during online classes?		X		
12. Do you think Portfolios, Assignments/Presentations were good techniques for learning?		X		
13. Have you faced any difficulties in terms of the verity of alternative assessments?		X		
14. Have you faced any difficulties during self-assessments or peer assessments?		X		

15. Have you faced any difficulties of technical issues or internet issues during online classes?		X		
16. Do you think online classroom environment is good enough for learning?		X		
17. Do you think your school authority was fully supportive during online classes? Such as technical, internet, other online equipment's?		X		
18. How was your teachers' technical knowledge in taking online classes?		X		
19. Did you feel any mental pressure with alternative assessment during online classes?		X		
20. Did you faced spelling, grammar or other writing issues after going back to traditional assessments?			X	
21. Did you face any specific or major challenges after going back to traditional assessments?			X	
22. Did you face any curriculum or syllabus related challenges after reopening the schools?			X	
23. Does face to face class bring any problematic issues to you after a long time?			X	
24. Did you face physical problem such as vision problem after conducting online classes long time?			X	
25. Does the noise of face to face classes or outside noise make your learning session problematic?			X	
26. How could you overcome those problems?				X

Appendix I

Research Participation Consent Form

Hello Dear, I am Moinul Hoque Robin, doing an M.A. in ELT & Applied Linguistics at BRAC University, Bangladesh. For my ENG 698: Dissertation course purpose, I am doing non-sponsored Research on Alternative Assessments on Rural S.S.C students, Bangladesh. All of your privacy would be concealed in this research if any.

Please read the following statements and write '**OK'** beside the statements.

1. I have read the description and understood the information given which describes what this study is about and data collection methods will be taken

2. My participation is voluntary and I feel free to withdraw at any time

3. I agree to be audio taped for my voice.

4. The researcher has my permission to contact me through the following phone number or email address for any clarification after the completion of data collection

…………................... ....

Name: Signature

Date: /02/2023

Phone No.

Email address:

Appendix J

Audit Trail of the Study

Date	Activities	Records
26.09.2022	Approval of the Topic	Zoom Meetings
10.10.2022	Successfully shows the Gap of the Research	Zoom Meetings
13.03.2023	Shows the Conceptual Framework and Interview Protocol with Selected Participants	Zoom Meetings
	Got Feedback of the Mid Paper	Email
25.02.2023	Taking Interview from the Participants	Face to Face
11.04.2023	Shows The Inter-rater Reliability	Zoom Meetings
03.04.2023	Member Checking and Incorporating the corrections provided by the participants	Email
20.05.2023	Submission of the Final Paper	Email