

Difficulties in Learning English Faced by Secondary Level Students in Bangla Medium Schools in Bangladesh

By

Pragya Paramita Mandal
15303012

A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Pragya Paramita Mandal

15303012

Approval

The thesis titled “Difficulties In Learning English Faced by Secondary Level Students in Bangla Medium Schools In Bangladesh ” submitted by Pragya Paramita Mandal (15303012) of Spring, 2019 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English on 24-04-2019.

Examining Committee:

MD. Al Amin, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of English and Humanities
Brac University

Professor Firdous Azim, PhD
Chairperson, Department of English and Humanities
Brac University

Abstract

Learning English as a second language is indispensable in education system of Bangladesh. For Bangladeshi learners gaining proficiency is essential for higher studies in Bangladesh and abroad, in job sectors, and communicating with foreign agencies or international organizations. To develop English language proficiency secondary level education is considered vital in Bangladesh. However, published research and media reports often criticize the poor condition of Bangladeshi secondary students' English attainment. Secondary level students of Bangla medium schools do not have proficiency in English up to desired level even after passing several high stake national examinations. Students struggle a lot and face various kinds of difficulties in English classes. This research explored some of the reasons behind this poor attainment. Results shows that there are numerous factors responsible for this low attainment and for some of them students are responsible, some of the factors related to poor teaching conditions and some of the causes related to various contextual factors.

In conclusion, this study attempts to depict the real scenario of English classes in Bangla medium schools. At the end of the research some suggestions are made regarding how English classes at the secondary level can be made more interesting so that students can develop their language skills.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to my parents who gave me the life and brought me to this beautiful world. My father for whom I have studied in English department and chosen my major in applied linguistics and ELT.

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to thank Almighty for unfathomable blessings which gave me the strength and patience to complete the dissertation. I am also grateful to my family for their utmost love and encouragement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction:

Learning English as a second language is very important in Bangladeshi education system. English is indispensable in education particularly for higher studies in country and abroad. It is equally important in official work particularly in communication with foreign agencies or international organizations. Additionally, in IT based learning and operational practice English is the most essential language. Due to above mentioned reasons learning of English as second language has become very essential for students. Consequently, for future success in career, job sector or even higher studies students should have a sound basic knowledge of English language or a good foundation. In the context of Bangladesh, in Bangla medium schools, many methods are being followed for teaching English but still students face various kinds of difficulties in acquiring second language English. This study explored some of these factors that stands against learning a foreign language especially English.

1.2. Rationale:

Every human being is different from each other in terms of learning abilities. Likewise, each student is different from each other and they have different kinds of abilities. In terms of second language acquisition they have individual abilities to achieve it and everyone's ability is not the same. In some cases, learning abilities varies due to individual differences, sometimes for different cognitive abilities and sometimes for various aptitude complexes (Robinson, 2001).

In case of language learning, different person shows different abilities. For some it is relatively easy and for others they find it very difficult. However, there are many other factors that accelerate or inhibit language learning. In terms of first language learning, children learn it

very quickly and easily due to the convenient environment and greater exposure to the language. On the other hand, while second language learning children do not get that much exposure to the language in comparison to their first language in the context of Bangladesh, sometimes it becomes very difficult to learn a foreign language, especially English.

Another reason is that some students show lack of interest in learning second language in their English classes which leads to their inefficiency in English even after passing Primary Education Certificate (PEC) exam and Junior School Certificate (JSC) exam. As a result, students of secondary level face various kinds of difficulties in their English language classes while covering syllabus of class 9-10 for SSC exam. Every student might not face the same difficulty, as they are individually different from each other and have different learning abilities.

1.3 Central Research Questions:

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- A. What types of difficulties do the students face in their English classes in Bangladesh?
- B. What are students' views on making English classes more interesting for them?
- C. What are teachers' views on making English classes more effective?

1.4 Significance of the study:

This study is significant as it attempted to explore some of the difficulties students at the secondary level in Bangladesh face to learn English. It is often noticed that after many years of English study, and despite English being a compulsory subject from CLASS I students attainment in English after the completion of secondary level is not satisfactory. After passing Junior School Certificate (JSC) and Primary Education Certificate (PEC) exam our students from secondary level of Bangla medium schools lack competence and proficiency in English and their competency is not up to the desired level. Our students after the JSC examination have lacking in

basic English which should be achieved in primary level. Additionally, they lack interest in English. After passing JSC they face difficulties when they have to complete SSC syllabus of English and face various problems in their English classes.

Government of Bangladesh has provided multimedia facilities in many Bangla medium schools and still providing. In addition to this government provides different types of trainings for school teachers (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018; EIA, 2009). In spite of all these supports from government, the total scenario is not changing as per expectation. Although some other studies explored the difficulties students face in English learning in Bangladesh context, it is important to further explore what might be some of the causes of finding it difficult for students to study English in Bangladesh when government is providing many kinds of facilities.

In addition to exploring the difficulties this research also seeks teachers and students' suggestions on what they think will improve the situation. Also, this study tried to explore this phenomena using in depth qualitative study, a trend not so common in the Bangladeshi context.

1.5 Methodology:

This is predominantly a qualitative study. Both secondary and primary data were collected and used in this research. The researcher collected some primary data which were collected from some Bangla medium schools through interviews with teachers and students and analyzing various documents such as education policy, curriculum and various web materials. This qualitative research method in this study was used through qualitative data collection procedure such as taking interviews of some students and teachers, observing classroom and analyzing data qualitatively and studying the phenomena in detail.

1.6. Conclusion:

This chapter gave an introduction of overall process of the study and ideas about the study itself and what is studied in this research topic. In this chapter, research questions of this research topic are introduced which guided this research. This chapter also gave an idea about which research method had been used, which research instruments had been used, what were the limitations and significance and the contribution of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction:

This chapter reviewed various literature relevant to this study. Through this review, the researcher attempted to show the gaps in the research, the necessity of this research and how this research contributed to the existing literature in the related field.

In Bangladesh, students face various difficulties in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in their English classrooms as they have come from different backgrounds. In the following sections the researcher highlighted, based on the previous research, some of the causes and factors that are responsible for these difficulties.

2.2 Individual Differences:

Every student's ability cannot be exactly the same in acquiring second language. These differences of natural learning abilities vary from person to person based in age, sex, motivation, cognitive style, learning strategies and personality etc. (Meenakshi & Zafar, 2012). Teachers of language courses should be concerned and aware of these different ID's effects, and if the language teachers remain aware about effects of these differences and follow any new trick for those students who are facing difficulties in language acquisition then it will be effective for the students (Meenakshi & Zafar, 2012).

According to Ellis, in the past it was perceived that individual differences were influenced by self-understanding of learners what they will accept from second language instruction decided by aptitude battery which may forecast which learner would be successful

and who would not (Ellis, 2012). In present day researches the emphasis is mainly put on the explanation of why some of the learners do well in acquiring second language and learn the language fast in comparison to other learners (Ellis, 2012, p.643). On the other hand, Horwitz mentioned that the present day learners can be referred to “ a myriad of new terms such as integratively and instrumentally motivated, anxious and comfortable, field independent and field sensitive, auditory and visual ” (p. 532) Why and how influence of individual learning differences is affecting second language learning is being less emphasized.

Every student of Bangla medium schools is individually different and have different learning abilities. Dorneyi (2005) points out that ‘enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree’ are considered broadly as the individual differences which are being examined by the researchers. According to Robinson (2002) and Dorneyi (2005), language aptitude, motivation, personality, anxiety, intelligence, age, learning and cognitive styles, language learning strategies are considered as core factors of individual differences.

2.3 Aptitude:

Aptitude is basically natural ability to learn something. Students face numerous kinds of ability complexes in acquiring a second language. Language aptitude mainly inaugurates an exceptional ability for second language learning. Skehan states that these kinds of language aptitude special abilities include auditory ability, linguistic ability and memory ability (Skehan,1989, cited in Ellis,2012). Likewise, according to Ellis, intelligence and working memory are to be implicated in language aptitude (2012). Aptitude is being considered as a neglected area for second language research in last two decades (Robinson, 2012). The same

scenario prevails in Bangladesh too. Here, in Bangla medium schools in English language classes it is not being emphasized much that does the students face any kind of difficulties in understanding the English class or not and which kind of difficulties are they facing.

2.4 Cognitive abilities:

Cognitive abilities mainly refer to the mental abilities, memory and the information processing. The structure of cognitive abilities underlies aptitude (Robinson, 2012). The relationship between cognitive ability and second language learning is complex and subject to considerable debate (Dicks, 2009). It refers to individual's mental ability of learning and processing. Students' second language acquisition depends on their different cognitive abilities. Cognitive skill is mainly individual's ability of processing their thoughts and basically it is individual's mental abilities and activities in learning and solving the problems. Cognitive abilities generally mean abilities of learning new information, speech, written instructions of SLA and it means the activities which are related to memory. Cognitive abilities have influence on the problems which students face in their second language classes as cognitive abilities deal with the memory and mental activities.

Cognitive psychology is important too in second language learning along with cognitive abilities as it deals with learner's learning psychology, activities of memory and mental abilities. Eyesnck (2001) mentions that 'the subject matter of cognitive psychology consists of the main internal psychological processes that are involved in making sense of the environment and deciding what action might be appropriate'. Ellis has divided cognitive process in second language learning into micro and macro processes (2012). In the micro processes Ellis mainly examines to the specific mental operations which are present in separate stages of second language acquisition. (2012) On the other hand, Ellis describes in macro processes specify the

mental operations to more broad or narrow version for example, general approach towards learning used by the learners.

2.5. Contextual factors:

Apart from the internal and personal factors discussed above there are many external factors also influenced second language attainment. For example, exposure to target language environment (Huang et al. 2018), motivation for learning a language (Anderson, 2018), importance put from the government and school authority and the importance of the target language. As English is the Lingua Franca (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018) of the world and it is being used in every sectors in the world, people all over the world are very interested to learn English. Government of various countries put lots of emphasis and spent huge amount of money so that its citizen's English skills become better in order to participate in various global activities. Bangladesh is one of the countries where English is considered as one of the important skills that will help its citizen to become globally competitive. Bangladesh government is spending lots of money to improve the condition of teaching and learning English. Among the initiatives revising the curriculum, teacher training, providing multimedia equipment in the schools and introduction of creative questions are some of the important steps. Despite these initiatives published research, academic and media report suggest that the state of English attainment of the students in Bangladesh is not satisfactory. This research is going to address what might be some of the reasons of why students fail to achieve desired language skills and what are the students and teachers views on improving the situations.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction:

In this chapter an overview of the methodology which was followed in this research is described. Research instruments which are used in this study with proper details and its application while doing the research, participants, data collection and data analysis, presentation and the ethical considerations that were considered are discussed in this chapter.

3.2. Methods of Data Collection:

This is a predominantly qualitative research. Students' interview questions, teachers' interview questions, researcher's checklist for classroom observation and document analysis were used as the main tools for data collection for this research.

The interviews brought out the teachers' and students' opinion individually in response with the interview questions which were set for the research. The individual interviews were taken to maintain the privacy and confidence of the interviewees so that they can share their opinion freely. Due to individual interview sessions for both students and teachers they could share their thoughts and opinions in response to the questions set by the researcher for this study. In addition to this, the checklist which is used by the researcher for classroom observation created the scope to provide feedback about the English classes of secondary level at those Bangla medium schools.

3.3. Principles that were followed in designing research tools:

The researcher kept in mind about some of the factors and considered some of the aspects while setting the questions and designing the checklist for classroom observation. The researcher

designs two sets of questions for interview- one for students and another one for teachers. Caution was taken in choosing the words of the students' questions so that the questions are appropriate for the students. Likewise, while designing questions for teachers it was necessary to choose appropriate words to maintain formal and standard language. The student respondents were from secondary level - class 10 or 9 though all their language proficiency were not same. Some of them were advanced learners and more proficient in English than the average level. Another important factor was to set the standard for the checklist for classroom observation as the researcher collected data from five schools in which two were from a village. The schools are from town and village obviously will not be having same quality of education standard and teachers' efficiency, classroom environment, students' proficiency as the schools which are in Dhaka city. The researcher had to set the standard very carefully and wisely so that the standard may be appropriate in observing the village schools' English classes as well as the English classes in those Bangla medium schools which are in cities and towns.

Next aspect which was given importance was to keep the questions up to a certain limit for the interview as the interviews were taken within the school time and the researcher did not want to intervene in regular school class hours. While planning the interview it was followed that the interviewees specially the teachers can answer the questions within 10-12 minutes as regular classes were taking place and if any of the teacher or student are late for their class then the harmony of the class may be hampered.

It is essential to show an actual picture of the research procedure and how the result of this study is being evaluated and analyzed. As the research is being followed by qualitative method the researcher designed open ended questions so that the interviewees can share their

opinion and by analyzing their shared opinion and classroom observation researcher can find the desired result of the study.

3.4. Description of the Interview Questions for Students and Teachers:

While designing the questions for both teachers and students for interview purpose the researcher was always concerned about maintaining link with the literature review, which is done, in the previous chapter. Another important point, the researcher gave emphasis was to set the language standard for interview questions so that the students can understand the language. As the students were from different background, some were from village schools, some were from small town schools and some were from Dhaka city schools, some were from class 9 and some were from class 10 and that is why it was a challenge for the researcher to make sure to design an understandable language. The students were secondary level second language learners and all of their language proficiency is not same and it was considered while designing the questions. The similar issue was considered while designing teachers' questions as the teachers from village schools and from City schools obviously will not be having exactly same proficiency in language and efficiency too. The researcher kept in mind to maintain a standard or formal language in teachers' questions. There were 11 questions designed for the students and 6 for the teachers. The questions pattern was both open-ended and close-ended, but as it is a qualitative research, the study was more focused in open-ended questions where the respondents shared their opinion. The checklist for classroom observation helped the researcher to add comments, suggestions over the English language classes in those Bangla medium schools.

Excluding the background information there were two other categories and based on those categories the questions were set for both teachers and students. The categories were -

I. Perspective on the existing regular English classes and its flaws

II. Suggestions on how the classes can be more effective and interesting

Based on these two categories questions were designed and asked to both teachers and students. Under the first category, the questions were basically designed to focus on the thoughts, ideas, views and perspectives of the respondents on the existing regular English classes and its flaws. These questions were designed to explore respondents' views and problems of their English language classes and difficulties which they face in the English classes.

In the second category, questions were mainly designed to ask the respondents' suggestions to think of probable solution to their faced difficulties in their English classes. In this category of questions, respondents were asked how the English language classes can be more effective and interesting and the respondents- teachers and students shared their suggestions. Both categories created a scope for the respondents to share their thoughts, ideas, suggestions, feedback about the topic and the questions was designed with the help of both open ended and close ended questions where open ended questions had influential part.

3.5. Description of Classroom Observation Checklist:

The classroom observation checklist is from the researcher's point of view on this particular study. The researcher observed five English classes from five different Bangla medium schools. Among five schools three schools were from city in which two were girls' school and the other one was a combined school. The other two schools were one from a small town and another one from a village. After observing five English classes from five different schools of secondary level the researcher combined all the gathered information and then summarized it. The observation checklist also presents the evaluation procedure and standard of the checklist of researcher and it reflects researcher's knowledge and what had she learnt from academic study.

Furthermore, there is a fine line between the questions used for study purpose to respondents and the classroom observation checklist which differentiated them. Observation checklist was in the form of statements (Appendix C) on various points and it was graded from the researcher's observation and point of view. As per status of the observations of different points under checklist it has been graded depending on the weightage for example- 4 in case of Excellent, 3 in case of good, 2 in case of fair and 1 in case of poor.

3.6. Selecting the schools:

The researcher chose the easy and accessible sample of the study as it is not easy to get access in everywhere. As the research focuses on the difficulties in second language learning of secondary level students in Bangla medium schools at English classes, the researcher had to observe few classes in some schools and had to take interviews of few teachers and students. The researcher chose the schools for the research purpose keeping in mind that the schools are easy to access for her and they are renowned Bangla medium schools.

3.7. Sampling of the Study:

Researcher chose five Bangla medium schools for data collection in which three were in Dhaka city, one was in a small town and another one was in a village. From each school researcher observed one English class of secondary level as sample for the research and took interview of 4 to 5 students and one English teacher from each school. Researcher collected in total response of five teachers and twenty-two students in this research from those five schools. In this research the students were involved mainly from class 9 and 10 from those schools.

In the table below there is shown the samples which were selected and used for the survey:

Table no. 1: Number of participants

Institution	Students	Teacher
School A	4 (Class 10)	1
School B	5 (Class 10)	1
School C	4 (Class 10)	1
School D	4 (Class 9)	1
School E	5 (Class 10)	1
Total	22	5

School A, B and C are in Dhaka city, School D is in a small village and School E is in a small town.

3.8. Conducting Students' Interviews and Observing Classes :

For collecting students' response for this study, the researcher had to go to many Bangla medium schools for the permission from the respective authority. Researcher had to justify and give a proper explanation about the purpose of this study to the principals of those schools and had to ask for the permission for one English class observation of class 9 or 10. After the request, the authority gave the time and date for classroom observation and researcher was told to finish the interviews in the school time and not to take more than 4-5 minutes for each students, as they may miss regular classes. Most of the principals were helpful and gave permission for interviewing and they showed their interest in this research project. The respondents- both students and teachers were very helpful and co-operative and as a result the research could

collect enough information. The researcher designed the questions for the students by translating the questions in Bengali as the students may not understand the questions if it is asked in English - the target language. As the students were from Bangla medium schools and some of the surveyed schools were in small town and small village, their second language proficiency might not be good enough to response in English language after understanding the questions properly which are written in English. Another point is that the researcher had to explain all the questions properly to the students so that they can answer perfectly from their point of view.

3.9. Conducting Teachers' Interviews:

Most of the teachers except one or two were friendly and very helpful and they showed their interest in this research study. Permission was taken from the principals and from the participants and as per their consent interviews were taken. Some of the teachers asked questions and information about the purpose of this study and its background. Some of them added extra information apart from their interview questions to help the researcher in her research. The information what the researcher got from the teachers were useful for this study. The researcher faced some difficulties while collecting information from the teachers and taking interview of them as all of them were not friendly and helpful.

The researcher had to explain the questions in Bangla to some of the teachers as all the teachers' proficiency in English were not up to desired level and some of them were unable to understand the proper meaning of the questions. As some teachers were from village and town schools and their proficiency were not exactly like the teachers from city schools. Keeping all these issues in mind the researcher had to provide Bangla translation of the interview questions according to whoever needed.

3.10. Process of Data Analysis:

This research is designed following qualitative method and it consists of qualitative data like interviews, classroom observation. The process of data analysis was mainly focused on analyzing the data and information which were collected from the interviews of students and teachers and on the classroom observation. Researcher made the standard of the classroom observation checklist by keeping in mind several issues and scaled it from her perspective. Analysis of classroom observation is also a major part in the process of data analysis of this research. There were both close ended and open-ended questions in the interview questions, but the open-ended questions were most influential for this research. As in response to those open-ended question students and teachers shared their point of views and the answers varied from student to student and teacher to teacher and analysis of the similarities and dissimilarities among the answers will bring the expected outcome to the research.

3.11. Ethical Considerations:

Ethical approval was very important for this research which was obtained from the authorities of those schools. Before starting the interviews, the researcher took permission from all of the respondents both teachers and students that are giving the interviews willingly or not and they do not have any objection to participate in the study. After getting positive response from the respondents about interviewing the researcher made sure that they understood the purpose of this study properly. If anyone had confusion or doubt about the topic then the researcher made it clear and explained the topic properly so that they can answer properly. Furthermore, the researcher assured the respondents that confidentiality of the data will be ensured. Permission of keeping record of these interviews was also requested to the respondents. Moreover, it was made clear by the researcher that the respondents' shared information only will

be used for this thesis purpose. The researcher designed the questions by keeping in mind that the questions do not get sensitive so that the respondents get hurt or offended. Before taking interview, it was made clear that the study will not expose the respondents' real identity rather the research will keep the confidentiality of the respondents and they will be reported using pseudonym. Additionally, except the researcher no one will have access over these data, the researcher assured it.

3.12. Conclusion:

This chapter mainly emphasized on the instruments which are used in this research like the classroom observation checklist, interview questions for both students and teachers' interview and how these research instruments were used to complete this research.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction:

In this chapter findings of this study are discussed. In order to reach to any conclusion different types of data were triangulated to see if they matched and support each other.

4.2. Findings from Students' Interviews:

The following themes emerge from the students' interviews.

4.2.1. Difficulties in Class:

While the researcher asked about the difficulties that students face in learning English students talked about various problems that they face. These problems can be categorized in three broad areas. Some of the students said they do not like their English class, and they find it boring and very tough and that is why their interests towards the class are declined. Next, some of the students replied that they do not find their English classes either interesting or boring. If the topic seems easier to them then the class becomes interesting to them. Among 22 students only a very few numbers of students answered that they find their English classes interesting and they enjoy when the topics seems interesting to them.

Most of the students responded that they face problems in grammar. Grammar has different dimensions and in mentioning difficult topics and their answer varied person to person. Some students said they face difficulty in transformation, some said they found voice change very tough, some said they do not understand rules of right form of verbs, some said narration is very tough to them, some said they have problems in tense etc. Majority of the students replied they face difficulties in transformation and voice change.

In response to what types of difficulties do the students face in English classes, some students replied they do not understand meaning of some words in the class and those seem

difficult to them. If they ask to their English teacher, he does not clear the meaning and he shouts on them if they ask any questions. They also added that the teacher emphasizes more on the grammatical rules and not in the meaning. Some answered that they cannot write in English properly and cannot express their words in organized way while writing in English as they do not get any guidance regarding writing on how they can improve.

On the other hand, some students replied that they do not even understand their English classes and it is very tough for them to match the teacher's fluency and speed and as a result they do not understand any of the single topic at all. These are the reason behind why they do not feel any interest in their English classes rather it seems boring to them. Among 22 students' respondents, majority of them replied that they face difficulty mainly in grammar. They do not understand the rules and have to memorize all the rules and as a result they forget many of them. Another bunch of students said that the lectures and topics seem very boring to them as teacher speaks all the time and do not even give any scope to students to ask anything. They added that as their class time is short that is why their teacher rushes to finish the syllabus and sometimes teaches more than one topic in a single class. Then it becomes tough for them to catch and learn two or more topics together. Sometimes they amalgamate the topics and become confused. Furthermore, some of the students replied that they do not understand the grammar because it seems like mathematics to them as their teacher only teaches rules and according to that they are to solve the exercises. They claimed that they cannot relate the rules with the given paragraphs in the examinations.

4.2.2. Classroom Language:

When the researcher asked about the classroom language, majority of the students replied that their English class is taken in Bangla and teacher teaches everything in Bangla. They added

that even grammar is taught in Bangla and their teacher describes the rules in Bangla and only exams question is prepared fully in English. The rest of the respondents mostly said that their class is taken in both Bangla-English mixed language. They also said that their teacher translates the grammar rules in Bangla. Only few students of school B said that their English class is taken fully in English and if they ask any question then they are asked to speak in English.

Researcher also asked according to them in which language their English classes should be taken. In response to that students gave various answers and it varied from students to students. Majority of the respondents said that if the English class is taken in English-Bangla mixed language then it would better to understand properly. They told that if their teacher translates the topic in Bangla after describing it in English then it would become easier for them to catch the topic and relate it. On the contrary, some of the students said they think English class should be taken fully in English. They said that if the class is taken in English then they will be habituated with it and it would be beneficial for them in learning English and improving their proficiency. They also added that if the English class is interrupted by using Bangla and continuous code switching is done by the instructor then it becomes difficult for the students to follow. Only a very few students said that English classes should be taken in Bangla.

4.2.3. Use of Technology:

The researcher then asked students about the use of multimedia or technology in the class. These questions were about do they have multimedia system in their class or not, if yes then how often teachers use them, any kinds of videos are shown in class or not. In response students mostly from the city schools replied that they have multimedia in their classrooms, but their multimedia remains locked in their classroom and the teacher use it once in a month or sometimes even more rarely. They also said that videos are shown when teachers use multimedia, but it is very occasional. Movies are not shown as their class time is short and the

duration is maximum 40-45 minutes for each class and it is the main reason behind not showing any movie. On the other hand, students who are from village schools and town school answered that they have multimedia in their school but not in their classroom and it is never used and kept in the office room and is locked there. They added that any kind of videos including movies, cartoon, and animation film are not shown to them. Furthermore, students from school of district town replied that in their whole school there is only one multimedia and it is for all the classes and sometimes teacher take them along with students of other classes to computer lab to show them something in multimedia and it happens once in a couple of months.

4.2.4. Recommendations from Students to make English Classes Interesting:

Students also shared their thought about what they think would make the English class more interesting. Here, it was asked to the students that from their perspective how can make their English classes more interesting. In response students gave many ideas and shared their thought which varied students to students. Several students said if the multimedia of their class is used at least once in a week then they will find more interests in their class. Many of the respondents told that if English cartoons, movies or animation movies are shown in the class then it will enhance their interests and it will draw extra attention of them and through these funny videos or cartoons they will be able to improve their fluency in English too. Another bunch of students replied that continuous teacher centric lectures seem very boring to them and if the instructor arranges any kind of entertainment for them via showing videos or cartoons then the class will be very interesting and attractive to them. A student added that if English speaking practice is arranged in the class then they will be able to improve their English speaking through fun and it will make the class more interesting to the students.

4.2.5. Suggestions on Teacher's Role and Teaching Techniques:

Students also shared what they think about how teacher's role should be and what will make the classes more effective. In response, some students answered that if teachers arrange a solution class once in a week then it would be beneficial for them as they will be able to clear their all confusions about the topics. A few numbers of students shared another idea which was not giving any homework rather if teachers make them practice more and more class work then they will not feel pressurized at home. They told that sometimes teachers give so much homework that they cannot complete even and while solving the exercises at home they face some difficulties. They also shared that if the teachers arrange more class works and complete the entire study task in class then it would be great to them. They added that if teacher gives homework then it should be limited and not too much so that it does not become a pressure for them. Another bunch of students said that the teachers should not punish students for not bringing booklet or not being able to give correct answer. They think if the teacher makes them understand properly instead of giving punishments then they will be motivated. Some said that the teacher should make the lecture a bit entertaining so that it becomes interesting for students. Some of the students suggested that if the teachers tell English stories and relate it with class topics then it will be fun for them and will make the class more attractive and interesting.

4.3. Findings from Teachers' Interview Questions:

For this study the researcher interviewed five teachers all together. All of them are working in those respective schools as English teachers. The questions were mainly open ended so that the teachers can share their experience, perspective regarding this topic as it is a qualitative research. Among the five teachers three of them have related education background with teaching English along with completion of their masters in English. Two of the instructors

are not even from similar background rather they are graduate from other department which is not related with English language teaching at all. Except two instructors from village school and town school, others who are from city have received some trainings regarding English language teaching including CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). Each of these teachers spend 12-14 hours per week in taking classes. The answers were included under few themes that are described below:

4.3.1. Classroom Language:

Teachers were asked about their preferred language for teaching and they shared mixed experiences. In response two of them who were from two city schools replied that they prefer Bangla-English mixed language over pure English or pure Bangla in taking English classes. Only the instructor of school B which was in city replied that he prefers to take English classes in English. He said that as he will teach English language so it will be beneficial for the students if the class is taken in English. The other two teachers who were from a village school and a small-town school answered that they feel comfortable taking classes in Bangla. They said if they use pure English then the students will not understand the class lectures as students' proficiency in English is not up to desired level according to their class. One of them also added that even it would be tough for them too to take classes in English as the teacher came from different background.

4.3.2. Students' Proficiency and Difficulties:

Teachers were also asked about their opinion on students' proficiencies and teachers' difficulties on students' proficiency. Three instructors from the schools from Dhaka city answered that majority of their students' proficiency in English is in between elementary high to intermediate low level and to some extent it is intermediate mid though it is very rare. It varies

from student to student. Two instructors from a district town school and a village school replied that the proficiency in English of their students is not up to desired level according to their class. Both of them told that their students who are from roll no 1 to 15 have proficiency level between novice high to some extent intermediate low but the afterwards students do not have this proficiency even.

Each respondent agreed that they face difficulties in class regarding students' proficiency in English. They shared different kinds of problems what they face with this issue. One of the instructors told that as all of the students' proficiency is not same that is why it creates a barrier for the teacher in deciding in which language the class should be taken. Teachers told that they cannot take the class fully in English as because the students having lower proficiency will not understand the topics clearly and it will be tough for them to catch. Two of the instructors said that in their class they face difficulties in teaching writing composition and completing story. They said that as the students do not have same proficiency the teacher sometimes faces difficulty in grading the scripts and in setting the standard for marking. One of the instructors mentioned that due to unequal proficiency some of the students understand the lecture at the very first time and some of the students having lower proficiency do not understand the lecture even after explaining it repeatedly. They told that they have to finish the syllabus in time too and that is why they cannot give extra attention on the weak students having lower proficiency.

4.3.3. Recommendations for Improving Students' Proficiency:

Teachers also gave their opinion on how students can improve their proficiency in English. One of the instructors replied that he thinks students should watch BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) or CNN (Cable News Network) English news channels more for

improving their speaking and listening skill and pronunciation. Another teacher complained that students do not want to use dictionary for knowing meaning of unknown words from booklet topics rather they leave the word as it is, and it is hampering their learning too. He suggested that students should use dictionary often for knowing the unknown words and it will help them in improving their knowledge of vocabulary and second language proficiency. An instructor said that students should read English newspapers regularly, English story books or English short stories, fairy tales or English fiction stories and it will enhance their reading skill and vocabulary too.

4.3.4. Use of Technology:

When the participating teachers were asked if they use multimedia and technology in their class, they shared the following experiences. Three of the teachers from schools of Dhaka city replied in the positive that they use multimedia in their class but not very regularly. They said they use multimedia not very often as it is time consuming and they use maximum once in a month or sometimes even more rarely. The teacher who was from a school in a district town answered sometimes he takes his students to the computer lab and then use multimedia and it happens once in a couple of months. He said as they have only one multimedia in the whole school and it is used for all the classes that is why it is very tough for the teachers to take classes frequently with multimedia system. The teacher from village school answered that in his school they do not use multimedia as they are not skilled enough to use that. He added that teachers are still getting trained to use it.

4.3.5. Suggestions on Making Classes Effective:

Researchers also asked the participating teachers about their view on how to make the class more interesting and effective. In response majority of them answered that class time

should be increased as they cannot give enough time and proper explanation on each topic for shortage of time. They said most of their class duration is 35-40 minutes and it is not enough time for arranging an interactive class along with finishing the syllabus. One of them added that the syllabus should be reduced as due to excessive syllabus they had to teach more than one topic in a single class which results doing rush while teaching a topic without giving proper explanation. Another teacher told that students should keep calm and patience during class as class time is too short and if the teacher spends time in controlling the class then it becomes tough for him to finish the topics in class time. He also added that students should pay full attention to the class lecture to understand the topic properly as the teacher does not get extra time. A teacher commented that students' proficiency does not come in all of a sudden or in just a single class rather it is a long process. According to him if government provides more training to teachers from primary to higher secondary and more technical equipment to classrooms then the scenario will start to change.

4.4. Findings from Classroom Observation:

Researcher used a checklist for grading classroom observation. There were some findings which was observed and rated through a scale which includes outstanding, good, fair, poor. The findings were evaluated based on these figures:

4 - Outstanding

3 - Good

2 - Fair

1 - Poor

In the table 2 salient findings from classroom observation is shown according to different theme such as preparation, language, lesson presentation, classroom management, classroom

atmosphere, use of technology etc. It is scaled through a checklist. In school A, B, C, D and E which scenario was observed is shown in the table by putting A, B, C, D, E which are named alphabetically as symbol for maintaining confidentiality . A table with all the details is attached in the appendix C.

The details of the findings from classroom observation which is measured through scaled using checklist are given below. Researcher observed classroom and evaluated based on 5 themes which are discussed in the below paragraphs:

4.4.1. Preparation:

First theme was preparation of lesson of the instructor. In the very first point under this theme instructor had a clearly discernible lesson plan and announced the topic clearly only in School A, B and C. In these 3 schools it was quite good and in school D and E it was fair but not that much satisfactory. In all the schools' instructors could not do appropriate balance of structured and open-ended or communicative activities. It was poor in all the observed schools. In school B, D and E exercises and activities were introduced properly with well thought pre-task elicitation and it was quite fair. In school A and C, it is not followed at all rather teachers direct started the topic. Under the preparation theme monitoring the class was fourth point. It was quite good in school B and E. On the other hand, in school A, C and D teachers' in monitoring the class was very poor.

4.4.2. Language:

Second theme was language. Under this theme first point was language proficiency of the instructor in English. It was quite good and satisfactory in the instructor of School B. Oppositely

proficiency of instructors of school A, C, D and E in English was very poor. Second point was fluency of the instructor and instructor of school B was excellently fluent in delivering lecture and it was outstanding. On the other hand, fluency of the instructors of school A, C, D and E were very poor. Teacher talk time was appropriate and resourceful in school B and it was good. In the school A, C, D and E teacher talk time was not appropriate and not that much resourceful rather it was fair. Fourth point was student talk time in the class, and it was very poor in all the schools A, B, C, D and E. Fifth point was contextualization of examples with the grammar rules by the teacher and it was very poor in all the surveyed schools. Any of the instructors of those respective schools could not do it. Last point under this theme was interaction of instructor with students and it was not very satisfactory in all the schools. Only in school B teacher had a little interaction with students and it was marked as fair but in other schools' interaction with students was literally zero.

4.4.3. Lesson Preparation:

Third theme was lesson preparation. Lesson was presented clearly in school B and it was good. In school A and C, it was fair but in school D and E it was poor. Second point under this theme was activities or exercises chosen to achieve the objectives were effective or not. It was very poor in all the schools A, B, C, D and E. Time allotted for classes was not sufficient in all the schools and it was very poor. Fourth point under this theme was type and amount of teacher feedback was effective or not. It was not satisfactory rather it was very poor in all the schools but in school B it was quite fair but not good or outstanding.

4.4.4. Classroom Atmosphere:

Under this theme very First point was instructor divided his or her attention among students appropriately. It was quite good in school B and in other schools A, C, D, E it was very poor. Student participation was active and lively was quite appreciable and it was scaled good in school B and it was very disappointing in other schools A, C, D, E. which was scaled as poor. Third point was warm, open ended and accepting class atmosphere. It was fair in school B and in other schools A, C, D and E it was very poor. None of the schools it was satisfactory. Last but important point of this theme was instructor was sensitive to students' difficulties and abilities and it was very poor in all of the schools.

4.4.5. Use of Technology:

Last theme was use of technology. The very first point was use of technology such as video, audio, web materials in class was appropriate given the material being presented. It was very poor in all the schools and in none of the school multimedia or any kind of technology was used. Second point was relation of technological material with English class content. It was graded poor in all the schools A, B, C,D and E. The help of technological material in students' language learning was very poor in all the schools as there was no use of any technology in the class. Last point was use of technology outside the class like email etc. through giving home work. It was very poor too in all the schools as the teachers did not use any kind of technology in the class as well as outside the class.

4.5. In Response to Research Question A:

Central research question A deals with what type of problems do the secondary level students of Bangla medium schools face in their English classes and what are the prioritized

problems. This particular question's response is identified from the students' replies. It is found that students face various kinds of problems like matching with teachers' speed and fluency, grammar topics, punishments etc. It is understood that answer of research question A is brought to light through this research and the results matches to some extent with the expectation.

4.6. In Response to Research Question B:

Central research question B deals with how the English classes can be more interesting from the students' perspective. This question's answer is identified from students' shared experience and ideas. From the results it can be understood that students have various kind of recommendation for making the class more interesting such as arranging a solution class once in a week, speaking competition, feedback session, showing English movies or videos, not giving excessive home works etc.

4.7. In Response to Research Question C:

Central research question C deals with teachers' recommendations and suggestions on how the English classes can be more effective. This question's answer can be found in the findings form Teachers' interview questions. From the results it is noticed that teachers gave many suggestions and recommendations to make English classes effective such as students to pay full attention to the class lecture, keep calm, extend class duration, reducing syllabus, government to arrange more training etc. Most of the suggestions were students centric and tasks of students but they did not give any suggestion for developing their teaching skills to make the classes more effective. It is understood that answer of research question C is brought to light

through this research though in some points it matches with the expectation and in some points new result came.

4.8. Conclusion:

In this chapter, findings from students' interview questions and teachers' interview questions were described. Findings from classroom observation using checklist through a scale is also included and described in this chapter. How much this study meets the research questions are discussed here.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1. Introduction:

In this chapter the overall research, recommendations from researcher's point of view and concluding part of this research is discussed. The recommendations are based on the findings from teachers' and students' interview and classroom observation using researcher's own evaluation checklist.

5.2. Summary of Findings:

From the findings it is understood that in most of the surveyed schools' English classes are taken in Bangla or to some extent Bangla-English mixed language. It is noticed while taking interview from the students' expression that they do not feel any interest towards their English classes, and they are afraid of this subject. A very few students enjoy their English classes if the topic seems interesting to them. Most of the students face difficulties mainly in grammar topics and it indicates that in previous classes if they would get better foundation then afterwards this scenario could be averted. Students' complain about teachers' shouting on them for asking questions which reveals that teachers are not enough sensitive to students' difficulties and classroom atmosphere is not open and accepting. It is understood from the replies that due to lacking in previous classes in foundation students cannot catch the lecture, instructor's fluency and the speed. Majority of the respondents complained that they had to memorize grammar rules like mathematics, and they face difficulties most in grammar topics. These are the reasons behind why they are afraid of grammar topics and it is not only fault of students but also the inefficient

teaching which introduces more than one topic in a single class without proper explanation and contextualizing it.

Teaching more than one topic in a single class for urgency of completing huge syllabus in a short time period results in students' amalgamation of the topics. It is noticed that teachers use Grammar Translation Method (GTM) in class and students prefer English-Bangla mixed language in English classes which reflects that they are habituated with this GTM method as from childhood they are getting GTM method based English classes. It is clear from the findings that in none of the school's multimedia are used so often. It reveals that the school authority does not use the multimedia at all rather they keep it locked and do not have any headache on using the multimedia and making the English classes interesting and easier to the students.

From teacher's response it is understood that due to shortage of class time and huge syllabus teachers cannot give extra attention to the students who have lower proficiency and facing challenge in understanding the topic. Due to students' different and low proficiency in English, teachers face difficulties in setting the standard for grading the scripts.

In none of the schools, interaction with students is not found rather the classes were mainly teacher centered.

5.3. Recommendation:

The recommendations provided here are based on the overall findings from two interview questionnaire of both students and teachers along with classroom observation using researcher's own evaluation checklist.

- Students need to pay full attention to the class so that they understand the topic properly and they need to have patience and keep calm otherwise it distracts

others as well as the teacher. Students need to watch BBC, CNN, use dictionary, read newspaper (Raja & Selvi, 2011, p.44), English story books etc. to improve their speaking, listening and reading skills.

- Instructors need to pay extra attention while teaching grammar topics as most of the students face difficulties in grammar topics such as voice change, transformation etc. Teachers need to contextualize the grammar topics with real life examples and teaching should be fun- oriented (Shawkat, 2014) rather not to teach just like mathematics. Speaking practice class (Raja & Selvi, 201, p.44) or speaking competition need to be arranged so that students' speaking skill and fluency can be improved.
- Teachers need to take English classes in English or in English-Bangla mixed language but not in Bangla. If the classes are taken in Bangla, then students will be used to this system and will not learn the target language fast.
- Multimedia needs to be used often so that the English class becomes interesting to the students. English cartoon movies, documentary film, videos need to be shown in class to make the class effective and attractive to the students. More multimedia needs to be provided in each school so that every class can avail the benefit.
- Teachers need to be more sensitive to students' difficulties and they should listen students' confusion and problems with patience. More training for teachers must be available for all the teachers (Shohel & Banks, 2010). Teachers need to give feedback to students. Last but not the least class time needs to be extended as it seems very short to complete even the syllabus and giving feedback.

5.4. What I have Learnt:

Doing this research study on this particular topic I have learnt many things. Maintaining a warm, open and accepting classroom atmosphere is very important. If I proceed my future career as a teacher, then it will be my first priority because only open and accepting classroom atmosphere and being sensitive to students' response can make feel comfortable a student which results in best learning. Showing interest in students' learning brings more respect and trust to the teachers from the students. Furthermore, contextualizing the topics is important as it converts a tough topic into an easier one. Nevertheless, giving equal importance to each student is necessary as it will make them feel confident. If I chose my future career in teaching, then I would like to follow communicative teaching and to treat each student equally so that no one feels neglected.

5.5. Future Research Prospect:

This study is based on five schools in Dhaka city, a district town and a village. Future researchers can maximize the sample to get exact results in a broader view. Further studies can also be done focusing on other dimensions like students' difficulties based on cognitive abilities, aptitude complex or individual differences. Moreover, future researchers can take the other dimension - teachers' difficulties in teaching second language in account to conduct their studies.

5.6. Conclusion:

From the findings of the research it can be concluded that in all the Bangla medium schools the scenario may not be the same. Only five schools from urban and rural areas were surveyed and observed. The result and analysis of this research is based on these five schools, 22

students and 5 teachers. As English is second language in Bangladesh and for higher study and office works, students need to learn this language. Teaching of English language needs to be improved in Bangla medium schools. Students face lots of difficulties in their English classes and the authority needs to take care of these issues to make the classes more effective. Based on this secondary level foundation of English, students have to study further and build their future career. This is the reason foundation of English language is very important in this stage for students. Students as well as teachers need to concentrate more on English classes and English teaching.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for Students' Interview

1. How do you feel in your English classes?
2. Which topic do you find most difficult?
3. What types of difficulties or problems do you face in your English classes?
4. In which language your English classes are taken?
5. In which language English classes should be taken from your point of view?

6. Do you have multimedia system in your class?
7. How often teachers use multimedia in your class?
8. Any kind of videos, cartoon, movies, animation film, and documentary are shown in your class?
9. How the English classes can be made more interesting and attractive from your perspective?
10. What do you think what teachers should do to make the English classes more interesting and effective?

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Interview of English Language Teachers

1. In which language do you feel comfortable to take class?
2. How is the English language proficiency of the students in your class?
3. While taking class do you face any difficulty with students' proficiency in English? If yes then what are those?
4. Do you use multimedia in your class? If yes then how often?
5. How students' proficiency in English can be improved from your perspective?
6. What are your suggestions to make the English classes more effective?

Appendix C

Checklist for Classroom Observation

Class: _____

Section: _____

Instructor: _____

Number of students: _____

Topic of the lesson-----

Observer's Name: _____

Date: _____:

Rating Scale4 - *Outstanding*; 3 - *Good*; 2 - *Fair*; 1 - *Poor*

Statements	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor
i. Preparation				
Instructor had a clearly discernible lesson plan and announced the topic clearly.		School A, B, C	School D, E	
2. There was an appropriate balance of structured and open-ended/communicative activities				School A,B,C, D,E
3. Exercises and activities were introduced with well thought Pre-task elicitation			School B, D, E	School A, C
4. Teacher monitored the class well		School B, E		School A, C, D
ii. Language				
1. Language proficiency of the instructor in English was satisfactory		School B		School A, C, D, E
2. He was quite fluent in delivering the lecture	School B			School A, C, D, E
3. Teacher talk time was appropriate and resourceful		School B	School A,C,D,E	
4. Students talk time was appropriate and adequate				School A,B,C,D,E

5. Teacher contextualized the examples with grammatical rules			School B	School A,C,D,E
6. Interaction with students were proper and enough			School B	School A,C,D,E
iii. Lesson Preparation				
1.The lesson was presented clearly		School B	School A, C	School D, E
2. Activities/exercises chosen to achieve the objectives were effective				School A,B,C,D,E
3. Time allotted for class was appropriate				School A,B,C,D,E
4.Type and amount of teacher feedback was effective			School B	School A,C,D,E
iv. Classroom Atmosphere				
1.Instructor divided his or her attention among students appropriately		School B		School A,C,D,E
2. Student participation was active and lively			School B	School A,C,D,E
3. Class atmosphere was warm, open and accepting			School B	School A,C,D,E
4. Instructor was sensitive to students' difficulties and abilities				School A,C,D,E
v. Use of technology				
1.Use of technology (video, audio, web materials) was appropriate given the material being presented.				School A,B,C,D,E
2. Technological material was related to English class content				School A,B,C,D,E
3. It helped in students' language learning				School A,B,C,D,E

4. Use of technology is limited in the classroom, but used appropriately outside the class (e.g. for email, drilling, background, etc				School A,B,C,D,E
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