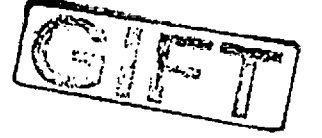


# **Students' Learning Difficulties in English at the Secondary Level of Education in Bangladesh**

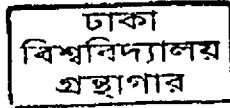
A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

465319



Supervisor:

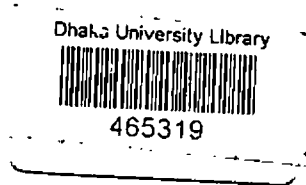
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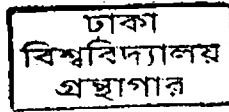
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August, 2011

## **Declaration by Author**

This thesis is my original work, and contains no materials which have been published by any other person. Whatever other materials have been used in the study have been duly acknowledged and mentioned in the text as well as in the reference section. I have clearly stated sources of the borrowed materials, reports, and other contributions which have been used to make the study authentic. So, the content of the thesis is the result of my own research work which I have conducted during my candidature of higher degree. No part of this work has been submitted to any where for any other degree. To the best of my knowledge any other higher degree has not been offered to any one on this particular topic.

465319



Mariam Begum

Researcher

Registration: 93

Session: 2007-2008

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis, "*Students' Learning Difficulties in English at the Secondary Level of Education in Bangladesh*" submitted by Mariam Begum for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is a record of excellent research work done by her under our guidance and supervision and that this is her original work. It is also certified that no other research work has been done on this topic for the award of any degree, diploma, or fellowship. The researcher has done the work under UGC fellowship which is a great honour for her.

Supervisor:



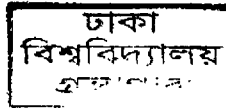
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I would like to dedicate the thesis to my parents as well as to the teachers and students of a remote school in Dhamrai.



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Dhaka University of Science and Technology Library

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The study investigated secondary students' perceptions about their difficulties in learning English. Participants were purposively selected from both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. Self reported data were collected through questionnaires. Other methods included classroom observation, FGD and experts' interview. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed for the analysis to have a clear and in depth understanding of the difficulties of the students. Following Madelene Ehrman(1996)'s concept of learning difficulties in English the conceptual framework of the study has been developed. Findings prove existence of both phonological and syntactic difficulties and show students' difficulties are mainly linguistic, speaking and listening topping the list. Among the grammar points, construction of sentences, various forms of verbs, use of articles, preposition, and changing sentence forms pose difficulty for the students. Insufficiency of vocabulary hindered their free flow of writing. Abundant use of unfamiliar words was their source of difficulty in reading. 'Pace' assumed a great obstacle in all the skills.

The study could not establish any significant relationship between the psycholinguistic or affective factors and their difficulties in learning English. Nevertheless it identified the presence of speaking and examination anxiety. The study further revealed that socioeconomic backgrounds of the students most significantly influenced their difficulties in English. Most of the parents being only primary graduates, students receive zero assistance from their family. Teachers' authoritative appearance in class increases anxiety among the students. Students expect friendly behavior from the classroom teacher. There were some matches and mismatches between the opinions of teachers and students.

Probable explanations for this may be that classroom practices frequently tend to be traditional. The classroom situation requires more students' friendly atmosphere. In relation to this the authority should seriously pay attention to the teachers' concern. Above all coordination among all ongoing ELT programmes is highly significant.

<b>ANOVA</b>	<b>Analysis of variance</b>
<b>BRAC</b>	<b>Building Resources Across Communities</b>
<b>BELTA</b>	<b>Bangladesh English language teachers' association</b>
<b>CLT</b>	<b>Communicative language teaching</b>
<b>EIA</b>	<b>English in Action</b>
<b>ELT</b>	<b>English language teaching</b>
<b>EFL</b>	<b>English as a foreign language</b>
<b>ESL</b>	<b>English as a second language</b>
<b>FGD</b>	<b>Focus group discussion</b>
<b>FL</b>	<b>Foreign language classroom anxiety scale</b>
<b>FLL</b>	<b>Foreign language learning</b>
<b>HR</b>	<b>High ranking</b>
<b>HSC</b>	<b>Higher secondary certificate</b>
<b>IER</b>	<b>Institute of Education and Research</b>
<b>IML</b>	<b>Institute of modern languages</b>
<b>UGC</b>	<b>University grants commission</b>
<b>L1</b>	<b>Language 1 i.e. native or mother language</b>
<b>L2</b>	<b>Language 2 i.e. second language</b>
<b>Lr</b>	<b>Low ranking</b>
<b>LD</b>	<b>Learning disability</b>
<b>LCDH</b>	<b>Linguistic coding deficit hypotheses</b>
<b>MLAT</b>	<b>Modern language aptitude</b>
<b>MoE</b>	<b>Ministry of education</b>
<b>NAEM</b>	<b>National academy for educational management</b>

<b>NCSC</b>	<b>National curriculum and syllabus committee</b>
<b>NCTB</b>	<b>National curriculum and textbook board</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non government organization</b>
<b>PACE</b>	<b>Post primary and continuing education</b>
<b>SSC</b>	<b>Secondary school certificate</b>
<b>SLA</b>	<b>Second language acquisition</b>
<b>TG</b>	<b>Teachers' guide</b>
<b>TB</b>	<b>Textbook</b>

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**INTRODUCTION**

**1.0 Background of the study**

English is considered one of the knowledgeable significant languages through which people can make them comprehensible to each other across the globe. In the present time any members of the same globe cannot afford to undermine the importance of learning English. So, for any modern citizens of today acquiring the communication skills in a foreign language like English is indispensable quality. Bangladesh being a member of this globe properly perceived the need for the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, and accordingly put proper emphasis on the learning and teaching of English at the secondary level. As a result English maintains its place as the most frequently required subject of school, college and university curriculum in Bangladesh. Besides, there has always been unanimous support given to English both by the general public and by education authorities owing to its demand in the corporate world of jobs.

Since its inception Bangladesh has gone through a long journey of different phases of ELT during different regimes, but with an unsatisfactory outcome. Consequently the nation had to pay a high price of producing a bulk of unemployed and unskilled manpower without the requisite communication skills in English. To improve the situation, process of curriculum revision and development of text materials have been done. Different projects involving huge amount of money have started working with the aim to improve the quality of ELT. Despite all these incessant efforts the study of English language has remained quite hopelessly the same as before.

A small number of studies have been conducted in the field of ELT in Bangladesh covering the areas of curriculum, teaching methodology, and students' performance in English language skills. No significant <sup>Study has</sup> studies have so far been done dealing with learning difficulties of the students, so there is an infinite scope for research work (to do in this field. To <sup>address this</sup> comply with the situation a study has been undertaken to explore the difficulties of students in learning English at the secondary level, as the learning of English in Bangladesh has been struggling hard to mark some significant rise in its standard to achieve a level reasonably compatible <sup>with</sup> other countries of the world. The

study focuses on learning difficulties of the secondary level students in English to investigate the reasons of a large number of failures in English in the public <sup>examinations</sup> exams (SSC & HSC) which is putting <sup>an</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>sheer</sup> unmanageable pressure to policy makers, educational experts, and teachers who are relentlessly striving hard to minimize this type of national loss. In the education system of Bangladesh secondary level is considered very crucial for its economy. As a large number of students join the work force of the country after completing this level of education, <sup>the</sup> This group needs to be equipped with sufficient knowledge of English to contribute to the national economy. But the present education system has evidently failed to improve the situation. Two recently published public examination (SSC & HSC) results ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~sufficient enough to~~ provide <sup>a</sup> ~~us with the~~ <sup>but sufficient</sup> succinct evidence ~~to this~~. The result shows that the number of students passing increased gradually though the overall picture of English language <sup>teaching and learning</sup> is not <sup>very</sup> ~~much~~ encouraging. This situation led the researcher to investigate the reasons behind this appalling condition.

### 1.1 Significance of the study

The majority of researches on ELT in Bangladesh have focused on the methods <sup>used</sup> approaches of teaching and physical problems, but the learners' variables were ~~inexpiably~~ <sup>largely</sup> neglected ~~to some extent~~ ~~in the areas~~ of EFL research. Very few researches have been conducted dealing with socio-psychological aspects like motivation, attitude of learners but to date no significant research has been conducted addressing the affective issues relating to the difficulties of the secondary learners. To fill up the colossal vacuum this study endeavors to address the linguistic as well as psycholinguistic factors influencing remarkably the tangible difficulties of the learners in learning English as a foreign language. This situation has inspired the researcher to conduct a study in ELT covering both linguistic and psycholinguistic difficulties of the students at the secondary level. In addition to that, other factors which acted as the driving force are described below.

For the first place researcher's experience as a student and later as a teacher of English language and literature had given her the impression of a gravely appalling and extremely complicated language learning situation, where after going through English as a compulsory subject for long 12 years students can hardly use simple

English for daily communicative purposes. The present prevailing situation of Bangladesh does not require English for daily communication though its use and practice in the corporate world demands sufficient proficiency in the language. For this reason English is one of the most demanding subjects at the tertiary level. Besides, the researcher feels concerned about the fact that a large number of failures in two public exams (SSC & HSC) is in English, which could not be explained from the point of view of the prevailing theories of SLA. She believes these theories did not give sufficient weight to the special psychological, cultural and socio-economical conditions of the language learners in Bangladesh. Much of the literature of SLA appeared to be written from a "Western" viewpoint where certain assumptions, not applicable to Bangladeshi learners and their teachers, are constantly made. Further to add, she has selected this current research topic because of her special interest in the area of ELT. She began to develop this topic during her master of education course. At that time she conducted one small scale study in the area of reading and writing at the higher secondary level (Begum:2000). This study motivated her to pursue other areas of ELT in more detail. Since then she has been trying to find out the actual difficulties of Bangladeshi students in learning English. Research conducted in ELT in Bangladesh is very scanty. <sup>Moreover</sup> Again, most of the studies dealt with the physical problems of teaching and learning EFL in Bangladesh. There are only a few studies that so far has specifically focused <sup>on</sup> secondary level students' own point of view relating to their motivation, anxiety and difficulty. Thus the present study will contribute to the previous researches conducted in ELT. It will employ both quantitative and qualitative <sup>research</sup> methods to answer the set of questions about Students' motivation, anxiety, self efficacy and difficulty.

The study will be felt more relevant if the present perspective of ELT in Bangladesh is analyzed properly. The picture that emerges from the analysis is so depressing that after 12 years of schooling, a reasonable number of students go for their higher studies without being able to speak, write or understand English adequately. This disappointment is further aggravated by the report of four major studies conducted in the field of ELT in Bangladesh. It provides sufficient information about the present deplorable standard of ELT in Bangladesh. The first extensive study into the proficiency levels of English was carried out by the English Teaching Task Force

(1976). A large sample study of Classes 9 and 12 at 45 schools and colleges was carried out on the basis of proficiency tests. It found that at Class 9, students were 2 years behind the level assumed in the course-books while at Class 12, they were 4 years behind. Rahman, McGinley and McGinley (1981) also found a 4-year lag in English proficiency among students entering tertiary education. The UGC report (1988) also found a wide gap between proficiency needed to successfully perform at tertiary level and those actually achieved at the end of the higher secondary stage. The 1990 Baseline Survey of 1400 students at 20 schools in different parts of the country showed no improvement in spite of the fact that English had been made compulsory at primary level since 1976 and new textbooks had been introduced at all levels. Proficiency tests administered to Classes 6 and 8 students were based on language items covered in the prescribed textbooks at those levels. Poor standards of English is somewhat equally true for the teachers too, their lack of training and competence also have been regarded a major cause for the overall disappointing situation. Indeed the 1976 Task Force Report had stated that only 15% of English teachers were capable of teaching up to Class 10 and, a matter of great anxiety is that 14 years later, the 1990 Baseline Survey did not find any improvement on teachers' performance. The Baseline Survey reported that most communication during the study time (even when it required interacting with native speakers of English) had to take place through the medium of Bangla, teachers' mother tongue. In the same way, it reported that written proficiency tests administered to trainees at 5 teacher training colleges revealed that only 25% of the teachers achieved a score of 75% on a Class 8 level test (considered a minimum requirement to teach with confidence at that level).

The majority (75%) of the teachers scored only 50% marks. The proficiency of teachers teaching Classes 9 and 10 were equally disheartening. And yet this same group of teachers continue their service with the Ministry of Education (MoE) quite comfortably being in high demand for teaching English at the secondary level.

<sup>In the mean time</sup>  
 Surprisingly ~~enough though~~ to cope with the increased requirement for English teaching staff, MoE raised the retirement age of teachers by three years in 1997. Consequently the general feeling has been that urgent measures were needed to reverse the decline in English standards, and to meet a critical need for curriculum reform and teacher development. (Rahman, Kabir, Afroze:2006). It is quite apparent

from the discussion that in ELT an important contributing factor has frequently been a failure to diagnose the difficulty in terms of a sound understanding of the language.

Complete mastery of the language is the ideal to be sought, if rarely attained. Facing these failures and inherent difficulties of giving adequate instruction in English, too many educators have found it easy to forget the importance of training in the mother tongue. Current trends in English education in Bangladesh have shifted its focus to promoting communicative competence from learners' point of view. A shortage of trained English teachers and lack of knowledge about more balanced teaching has put the current state of English education in Bangladeshi schools in jeopardy. Teaching methods still to date depends heavily on traditional grammar translation method emphasizing only reading, verb conjugation exercise, completion of cloze passage and composition comprehension exercises, transformation of sentences etc. In the meantime common people in Bangladesh have begun to realize the important role of English in the job market which has led them to think how to improve English education for the modern generation. As a result the government of Bangladesh has initiated several projects to improve the English education at the secondary level. So, it is apprehended that a research could probably shed some light into the difficulties of the students in learning English at the secondary level and the findings may help change the future course of ELT in Bangladesh. A single research in this area is not enough nevertheless it is expected to assist the teachers in determining general objectives regarding curricula development and classroom materials preparation. Most importantly this study aims to provide insights into the nature and causes of the difficulties that students usually encounter in course of their study of EFL. This was the rationale of the study. In the light of above discussion it can be said that there is always an infinite scope for research work to do in this field.

The results of this study will help policy makers, educational experts, ELT specialists, and teachers to review curriculum, text materials, and redesign teaching methodologies. The findings of the study will also inspire other researchers to do more studies in ELT. It has been a proven fact that research in the field of social psychology provides some insight into individual perception of difficulty. Such as attribution theory (Weiner, 1980; Hewstone, 1989) argues that the way we attribute the cause of difficulty can be a motivational factor because perceived difficulty can



affect the process of L2 teaching and learning (Horwitz, 1987; Tajino, 1997; Dornyei and Schmidt, 2001). Thus a study trying to identify the difficulties of the students in English as perceived by the students and the teachers seemed essential to the researcher. As explorations of teachers' and students' views of difficulty may provide insights that could help sustain teachers' and students' motivation over the long periods of time required to build second language vocabulary (Smith and Tajino :2006).

Along with identifying the types of linguistic difficulties in English and some psycholinguistic factors (motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy) that are seemingly perceived to have strong influence on learning an FL require investigation in the context of Bangladesh where learners usually are exposed to English for consecutive 12 years, yet are totally unable to achieve an operational level. This picture is very disheartening for overall education system of Bangladesh. Here rests the major significance of the study.

Moreover, recent innovations in ELT ideally aimed to produce a steadily increasing competence in both reading and writing, but unfortunately not all the learners' progress is similar. Teachers point out that individual differences in English ability are very marked from the early stages of their education. How these individual differences can be productively nurtured? Why some learners are more successful than others? How should the basic program in English be modified for the less able learners? How the affective variables influence the learning of the students? Why learning of English appears difficult to some learners? These are some frequently asked questions in the learning of EFL. In this context the present study seems critically pertinent to be an attempt to seek answers to some of these questions. Furthermore, the researcher anticipated that conducting a study in this area in Bangladesh might help Bangladeshi teachers develop an improved understanding of their students' actual difficulties (linguistic/psycholinguistic) in learning EFL.

The study aims to detect valuable information about the learning difficulties of the students by exploring their motivational factors, self efficacy, anxiety and their relative effects in learning of English. In addition to identifying both linguistic and psycholinguistic factors, some other aspects, like the behavioral pattern of classroom teacher which might be associated with their difficulties have been considered

important for investigation. Dhaka University Institutional Repository Practically, this study will provide empirical evidence of students' learning difficulties in order to assist teachers, teacher trainers, administrators, policy makers, researchers, curriculum developers, textbook writers and above all the learners in EFL learning situation, particularly in Bangladesh. This seems very urgent as the standard of learning of EFL is gradually diminishing because of the political, economic and social changes during the past two decades.

Therefore, the results of this study may be of use to all the concerned personnel mentioned above when they want to make informal decisions regarding curricula development and classroom materials based on their students' difficulties.

### 1.2 Statement of the problem:

The increasing demand of learning English as a foreign language has attracted the attention of the scholars and researchers to delve into the problems of low achievements of the learners at the secondary level which is being viewed as a huge national educational loss. Teachers and researchers have been continuously working hard to find out a long term solution to these problems. Consequently they have been trying to respond objectively to these special needs of the learners, especially the need to successfully overcome any academic difficulties students have in learning English.

In the context of Bangladesh where English enjoys a prestigious position as the most widely taught foreign language at all the stages of education, the students start learning English as early as preschool, yet the poignant problem is that most of the students are far below the desired level of proficiency in receptive or in productive skills or in both. The reasons behind the poor level of achievement in foreign language skills of students at the secondary level have long been a matter of sheer concern for the educators. The present study deals with the secondary level students, and more precisely with classes IX and X as they join university after another two years or proceed for professional life. The difficulties of the targeted students face English as a foreign language will be investigated and students' self reported perceptions of the reasons for the difficulties will also be examined. It tries to find out whether the problems are due to such factors as the students' lack of knowledge of the language rules (e.g., lack of knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation rules), lack of motivation for the foreign language or lack of self efficacy or due to FL

anxiety or lack of proper training in the language. It also tries to explore whether the learning materials, gender, and socioeconomic background have any impact on the way they perceive and cope with the difficulties. An enormous amount of time, money and efforts have been spent but learners either cannot go beyond the basics or they experience difficulties in developing their level of proficiency.

While many discussions about learning a second/foreign language focus on efficacy of teaching methodologies, little emphasis is given to the contextual factors- individual, social and societal- that affect Bangladeshi students' learning. These contextual factors can be considered from the perspective of the language, learners, and the learning process. The present study does not explore the contextual factors. In recent time research on language learning has witnessed prolific and vigorous growth in both foreign and second language contexts. Numerous studies around the globe have heightened the knowledge of people's motivation to language learning and factors affecting success or failure in learning. Empirical evidence has also lent strong support to the significant relationship among the affective factors and language learning. In such a context research is required to <sup>examine</sup> look into the problems of learning difficulties from their own point of view. It is held that despite the pressure of rapidly increasing enrolments in Bangladesh educational system, quality still remains out of reach is the highest concern. It is believed that there are immense potentials in all the learners for high achievement of English language skills at the secondary level. So, it is apparently a perceivable fact that if the students seized the opportunities to learn, it will have profound and long lasting influence upon their learning. The problem of the study may be conceived from Hoque (2004:94) as he contends about the decline in the standard of English in Bangladesh: "the present state of English reveals an appalling ELT scenario in Bangladesh". The standards of teaching and learning have so miserably declined that the government as well as the conscientious section of population have recently realized that something somewhere is seriously wrong in the whole business of teaching and learning of English in the country. On the other hand, proficiency in English language is required for all the branches of knowledge at the higher levels of study. Even mathematicians, and scientists, who use a large proportion of non-verbal symbols, are at an advantage when they are well prepared in English. Learning English as a foreign language will never reach its full possible

degree of success until it is accepted as a common responsibility of both students and teachers. So, successful English courses should not only prepare students for their higher English courses, but also provide them with a medium of communication which they may use effectively all through their lives. On the basis of this philosophy English in Bangladesh has been made a mandatory course for all the students from primary to secondary level. Yet that could not solve the problem of students' learning of English. In modern days many of the prestigious and <sup>Incentive</sup> ~~incentive~~ occupations require the essential ability to communicate effectively in written and spoken English and to comprehend reading materials. The first reason for studying English, then, is its practical value. Skills acquired in reading and writing are basic to most other subjects studied at school and college and are useful, if not vital, in later life. Verbal skill is very closely linked with success in other subjects. Second reason for studying English is its civilizing value. Learning and teaching EFL is often termed as challenging; in case of Bangladeshi teachers and learners, the task is formidable in many cases, mainly because of learners' lack of adequate proficiency, self efficacy, insufficient motivation, and fear of learning a foreign language. So, it is probable that learners' perceived difficulties caused by CLT (new approach in Bangladesh) had their source in the differences between the underlying educational theories of Bangladesh and those of western countries. Still to date repeatedly asked question is "why most Bangladeshi learners cannot attain the desired level of proficiency in English?" Within the frame of this study, it is assumed that the relation among the factors that presumably cause difficulties in language learning is a missing point of discussion in Bangladesh. For the purpose of smooth understanding of the study some related terms have been used repeatedly in the study. Most importantly, the specific terms that form the very title of the study need some interpretation, so a brief explanation of the following terms has been given below.

**Difficulties-** difficulties have been used in this research as both teachers and students perceive as learning barrier and will be determined on the basis of the opinions provided by both the group of research population as sample of the study.

**EFL-(English as a Foreign Language).** EFL refers to a non-English speaking community or country where students do not have opportunities of being immersed in the target language outside the classrooms, in the socio cultural contexts.

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ESL—English as a second language. ESL refers to language learning situation involving instruction of English to non natives of English in an English speaking community or in non native contexts where there is use of English in socio cultural contexts. As Richmond Amato (1988:179) explains, English is the dominant language in the area where it is being taught. Outside the classroom students are surrounded by the target language in the community. Sometimes it is termed as the survival language.

FL- refers to a foreign language.

L 1- refers to a first language or native language of second language learners.

L 2- refers to a second language or target language.

Learning—Longman dictionary of contemporary English defines: “learning means knowledge gained through reading and study.” Here learning refers to reading and studying of English language by the students. It means the knowledge and understanding of English language while going through the study during the course of study i.e. at the secondary level.

Psycholinguistics- A term that links psychology and linguistics. This means it links learners’ psychological variables (perception, motivation, personality traits, beliefs) and the language learning and speaking process. The aim of psycholinguists is to find out about the structures and processes, which underlie a human’s ability to speak (Aitchison, 1998:1).

Students / learners –both the terms have been used alternatively to mean the same group of people. The term refers to persons learning at schools or colleges. The original form is singular here it is used in plural form.

Secondary level— level between primary and higher secondary usually having the population of 14+ age-group. The present study includes grades IX and X students.

Interpretation of other related terms have been presented in chapter two.

### 1.3 Research questions

The researcher intends to find answers to the following broad (area) questions leading to some other related small questions from the study. The general questions are as follows:

- What linguistic items appear to be difficult for secondary level students?
- What are the common perceptions of the students about the causes of their learning difficulties?
- What are the types of motivation prevailing at present among the secondary level students in Bangladesh?
- To what extent are the psycholinguistic variables like (motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety) related to their FLL difficulty?
- Are there any significant differences in their perceptions of difficulties in learning English on the basis of gender?
- Is there any negative relationship between the socio-economic backgrounds of the students and their difficulties in English?

#### 1.4 Limitations of the study

The study had <sup>the</sup> following limitations.

In Bangladesh secondary level starts from class VI and is continued up to XII class. But for the purpose of the study only the students of classes IX and X were selected. Besides, the education system comprises several streams, but the present study considered only the general stream students. This study cannot be generalized beyond Bangladesh. Samples of the study were selected with special care and attention covering all the major geographic regions of Bangladesh representing properly the different educational and socio economic groups by means of choice of schools, but naturally one can never be completely sure that the sample <sup>do not</sup> matches the target population (secondary Bangladeshi learners of EFL) on every variable of interest. There are a number of affective factors that are undeniably important for understanding the students' learning difficulties in EFL. The present study took into consideration three most relevant affective factors, motivation, self-efficacy and anxiety to determine the students' actual difficulties in learning EFL. Further studies will be required to cover other affective factors. Contextual factors like learning environment, exposure to English etc. are important in learning English but present study did not include these factors. Besides, it is very difficult to accommodate all the factors in a single study.

### **1.5 Structure of the study**

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The study consists of six chapters. A brief description of the chapters and their organizations are given below.

The first chapter is introduction which covers the background, significance, statement of the problem, research questions, limitations, and the structure of the study.

The second chapter contains the context of the study which presents the historical background of ELT in this region. In addition to that it states the place of English in the present curriculum and different education commission's report etc.

The third chapter, on the other hand, is a review of related literature which provides the conceptual framework of the study and previously conducted researches in the relevant field.

Research methods of the study have been presented in chapter four. Besides, detailed description of the research design, tools used for the purpose of the study, their process of preparation, piloting, finalization of tools, selections of research sites, description of samples have been depicted in this chapter.

The fifth chapter provides analysis of data, findings of the research along with discussion. Answers to the research questions also have been presented in this chapter.

The last chapter or the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter is conclusion and recommendations of the study. Implications of the research and suggestions for further research have been also discussed in this chapter.

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Present chapter has presented the background and significance, statement of problem and a brief structure of the study. The context of the study and the present status of ELT in Bangladesh are discussed in the next chapter.

## THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the context of the study without which it is difficult for anyone to understand the perspective of English language teaching and learning in this region from the past to the present. In addition to that this chapter gives an idea of the government's attempts to impose a policy without proper planning and the consequences (Khan: 2004:112). Furthermore it describes the various phases of English language teaching in Bangladesh and tries to analyze the situation for the benefit of the present study. It has contextual significance as this background ultimately influenced the foreign language policy concerns of Bangladesh.

### 2.1 A brief history of English language in the subcontinent (previously known Indo-Pak)

To start with the past experience the analysis goes back to as far as 18<sup>th</sup> century when Persian was the official language of this region and the English traders who came to trade in this region with their trading companions, had to learn Persian. For achieving the utmost benefit of smooth flow of business activities the traders normally had to obtain permission from the ruling emperors and this compelled them to learn Persian. With the passage of time the exchange of trade and commerce between the English and the people of this region gradually increased. As a result both the groups felt the need to learn each others' languages to transact among themselves without any assistance of interpreters. There were some other languages in use nevertheless English became the first priority of common people to enjoy privilege from the missionaries as well as from the English traders. At the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century English schools were being established in Kolkata to meet the demand of commercial importance of learning English. But due to the absence of proper institutional training of the teachers it was not easy for the common people to learn English. It was necessary to learn English for better employment opportunities. On the other hand those who didn't know English would get low ranking jobs (Broomfield:1968). One interesting saying about learning English was that if anybody wanted to learn the



language, s/he would have to read English, listen to English, speak English, even has to dream in English. So it turned out to be hard work for those who wanted to learn English. Probably it does not need to be mentioned here that all the famous Bangalees of 19<sup>th</sup> century; Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Bidyasagar, Michael Madhusudhan Dutta, Krishna Mohan Bandyapaddhay, Nabin Chandra Sen, Bankim Chandra Chattapaddhay, Raj Narayan Basu, Ramendra Sundar Tribedi, and Rabindra Nath Tagore were bilingual. They knew not only both English and Bangla but also some other languages. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the use of Persian diminished from this region and at the same time English took its place in Bangladesh. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present time those who contributed to the formation and shaping of Bangla culture- from Poet Madhusudhan to Poet Shamsur Rahman, all were the products of Bangla – English bicultural tradition. In 1835 when Macaulay formulated the education policy in this subcontinent, he had to decide on the language policy, the medium of education also.

It is now clear that the association of English language with this part of the subcontinent is more than 200 years old. To trail back its origin mention of the year 1600 is important, when the queen Elizabeth I granted a charter to a few merchants in London giving them a monopoly of trade in India (Kachru 1983, p.19 cited in Rahman, 2007, p.70). In this way it came with the British Colonizers who came to trade in this part of the world, and the missionaries who started to preach their religious ideologies, established a number of educational institutions to serve their own purpose. It is now evidenced from the above discussion that much argued Minute of Lord Macaulay was the first policy regarding the introduction of English in this region: they required “a group of people who are Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.” (Aggarwal 1993:54, cited in Rahman, 2007, p.70) Thus Macaulay’s Minute espoused a selective and elitist approach to education; it ignored the education of the masses and rejected the native languages (Sridhar 1989:19, cited in Rahman, 2007, p.70). Macaulay understood that it would not be possible to educate all members of society (Penny cook 1994: 78, cited in Rahman, 2007 p.70), nor was it the intention of British Colonial policy. In fact Macaulay’s Minute was the first major language policy which had a profound impact on the teaching of English and other languages in the subcontinent for a long time to

come (Rahman 1999: 11). So it was perceived by Macaulay that these small groups of people are supposed to help the British to rule this subcontinent without any hassle. But for the educational purposes most of the time the native language was in use. On the other hand for the betterment and enhancement of the education system in India some philanthropists also advocated for the English education on the plea that English was the passport to the modern scientific, technological and philosophical western knowledge. In this context the name of Raja Ram Mohan Roy tops the list of national reformists (Aggarwal,1993,cited in Rahman,2007,p.70) who along with other national leaders wanted the people of this subcontinent to learn the language of the rulers so that they can communicate their demands to the rulers effectively. This is proved from the above mentioned list of famous Bangalees. Some others analyze the emergence of English language in the colonial countries as more complex than the 'powerful white man's' imposition of a foreign language on 'powerless native brown man'(Canagarajah,1999:60, cited in Rahman,2007,p.71). However, by the early twentieth century English got its place in the secondary education all over this subcontinent. Most strikingly, even then English did not see the desirable success. It is evidenced from the comment of West(1956cited in Rahman,2007,p.71) as "difficult situations." At present the place of English in this region is more or less similar to that of other post colonial countries; vernacular for mass education, a mix of vernacular and English at the secondary level and only English at the tertiary stage(Rahman:2007:71).

During the 1920s and 1930s there was a time when English experienced a kind of low estimation in public demand due to the nationalist movement to drive away the British from Bengal by the great non co-operation movement leader Mahatma Ghandhi. This wave of movement was accompanied with establishment of a number of local educational institutions that were supposed to deliver education in the model of nationalistic idealism. But that was quite a temporary trend, as the great national leaders felt that if they are to realize their demand from the ruling power they have to be able to communicate appropriately with the ruling power. In this way within a short period English regained its position as a tool of resistance to voice the legitimate claims of the oppressed in a language that the oppressor could understand (Rahman:

2007:71). Rahman termed this as ironic that most of the nationalist leaders (who were against the English) were products of the private English medium school system.

## **2.2 ELT in the then East Pakistan (1947—1971)**

The movement against the British in this subcontinent gave birth to two states consisting of three parts having India in one and East and West Pakistan combining two in one Pakistan. The most important drawback of this division is that this combination of East and West was done on the basis of religion only, having two different cultures and languages. The long distance of 1200 miles between the two provinces made it difficult for the mass people to feel the sentiment of same nationalism, as a result, only after nearly 25 years, this part of the region had to experience another war of independence

Immediately after the long awaited freedom, people of a new nation seem to be particular about their education system so they go for national language policy to determine the medium of instruction and to decide on which language is to be learnt as a second language (SL) or as a foreign language (FL). Because language gives us the national identity, based on this idea every new nation selects a language for official use and for academic purpose. In 1947 as a new state when it was time for selection of language, Pakistan unanimously selected Urdu as the national language without considering the hopes and aspirations of the other part of the country, East Pakistan, where almost all the people speak their native language, Bangla. English remained the common language of administration, courts, higher education, and communication for the people of two provinces. During this period, in the school curriculum, English was studied and taught as a compulsory subject from grade 3 to grade 10. In grades 11 and 12 (higher secondary level) the medium of instruction was both Bangla and English. Students could study in any of the mediums. But the tertiary education was provided only in English. As a matter of fact, India and Pakistan were two multilingual countries for which they required one common language as a link all over the state, so India felt the need of English and Pakistan felt the need of Urdu, but for the East Pakistan where only Bangla is used did not need such a common language. For this reason, whenever the decision of Urdu as the national language came from West Pakistan, it was vehemently protested by the same group of national

leaders who struggled over the partition of indo Pak subcontinent. In a real sense, language planning and the status of English in post colonial period appeared similar in most of the countries independent from the British rule (Kachru:1983 cited in Rahman:2007, p.72). But the issue of national language remained unresolved as there were attempts to establish Urdu/Arabic scripts replacing Bangla (T.Rahman: 2002, cited in Rahman, 2007, p.73). It happened so as the founder of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the policy planners in the early days of Pakistan were in favour of 'one state one official language model'(Musa:1996, p.68). This decision gave rise to serious political disturbances in East Pakistan (present Bangladesh). This type of language hassle continued until it got its climax in 1952 which witnessed the sacrifice of young bloods in protection of their mother tongue, Bangla. This was just the planting of the independence seed that bloomed in the year 1971 into the built of Bangladesh as a free, independent and sovereign state.

### **2.3 ELT in Bangladesh (From 1971---Present)**

As a new born state, Bangladesh did not have to face any problem in selecting a national language. Due to the strong patriotic feeling, people not only deserted Urdu but also excluded English from all important places like administration, education and from the judiciary (Muniruzzaman, 1979, cited in Rahman, 2007, p.73). The constitution was written in Bangla and declared Bangla as the state language (Part 1, Article 3) so the selection of state language was rather a simple formality for a newly established government. There was no mention of English in the planning. In 1987 the Bangla Procholon Ain was implemented, as a result English lost its importance for the time being. Bangladesh facts finder reports that almost 95% of the total population today speak Bangla (BANBEIS: 2003). Owing to the implementation of the law 'Bengali was to be used in all spheres and at all levels for government purposes' (Banu & Sussex, 2001a, p. 126). Nevertheless, a few indigenous communities living in the hilly regions have their own oral language which they are now struggling to establish as a medium of primary education to save the language from extinction. Besides, there are various dialects spoken by the people of different regions but still Bangla is the only language of arts and crafts, education, music, everything. Bangla enjoys this kind of supremacy for some time letting English to be the language of the

elite of the society giving them better chances in higher education abroad and lucrative jobs in home and abroad. Language policies in 1970s reduced the role of English to a substantial degree (Banu & Sussex, 2001a; Hamid, 2006b; Rahman, 1991). The nation had to pay their respect to their dearest heroes who sacrificed their lives for their native language, Bangla. Consequently the government introduced Bangla as the medium of instruction at all levels of education (Ministry of Education, 1974 cited in Rahman:2007, p.78). Even it was circulated that the textbooks of difficult disciplines should be translated in Bangla at government expenditure (Khan: 2004, cited in Rahman: 2007, p.74). This was the first official document of policy regarding language in Bangladesh.

The patriotic feeling was so acute that at one period English was withdrawn from both primary and graduation level but it was there at the secondary level. The decision came all on a sudden though all the English medium schools were transformed into Bangla medium. Higher education suffered a lot; lectures were delivered in Bangla. Translated books being rare made it more difficult for the students to complete their studies in Medicine, Engineering, Science and Technology. As Rahman (1999, p.13) contends paradoxically, more than 90% of the textbooks at higher levels of study remained in English. Consequently, the students were unable to read their textbooks in English or express their thoughts and ideas in English. Thus very rapidly the status of English changed from ESL into EFL due to only philanthropist attitude of some people working at the policy level without considering the long term impact on our education system. In relation to the status of English in Bangladesh Kachru (2005 cited in Rahman: 2007) posited : “Bangladesh has not adopted a consistent policy towards the role of English; it falls between an EFL and ESL country” (p.67). Some Bangladeshi scholars consider English as a foreign language and place it in Kachru’s Expanding Circle (Khan, 2002, cited in Rahman, 2007). On the other hand some consider English as a second language (Khan, 2004, Zaman, 1998, 1999, cited in Rahman, 2007, p.73). This strong favor for our mother tongue Bangla created a lot of difficulties in making a careful language policy which was a timely need for a developing nation like Bangladesh. During this transition phase no steps were taken to let English a rightful place, for which the education system has been suffering still to date. Gradually it became so that people started to feel the requirement of English

again ( R. S. Khan: 2004, cited in Rahman:2007,p.74). This situation of English at this region was rightly described by Kachru (1996:20 cited in Rahman: 2007) as “experiencing life after near-death.” So, this was very natural that like other neighboring countries, Bangladesh immediately after the independence, did not feel the need of a foreign language, rather it encouraged the use of native language everywhere. It may seem very strange that there were opportunities for those who had interest in learning English could develop their skills in the language. In fact English at this time survived in two forms as Rahman (1988) described “a sterile but compulsory presence at the school curriculum and a covert but robust form through the surreptitious patronage of an elitist minority.” This was the national situation though there were a number of English medium schools which continued to deliver English education to interested and elite group. The decision of providing education through mother tongue or vernacular was appropriate with the global policy encouraging vernacular education at the primary level (UNESCO, 1953). Dr. Rahman (1991) rightly emphasized the idea of a clear language policy at this period to tackle the secondary education having two folded benefits of developing an effective English language program for the secondary stage and to prevent producing large bulk of inefficient teachers with very poor language skills. She also insisted on preventing the laying of deeply ingrained faulty foundations of English language from the primary stage.

#### **2.4 The place of English in the educational planning of Bangladesh**

In any country the national educational planning is done to address the needs and requirements of the general mass of the country. So far the discussion has already mentioned that in a real sense there is no such clear language policy in Bangladesh. The English language policy may be understood from the government’s educational pronouncements, reports and memoranda that have been issued from time to time. The following table presents a list of important directives regarding English language teaching and learning in Bangladesh.

Table 2.1

**Government Decisions about ELT in Bangladesh**

Year	Decisions
1972	A government circular was issued informing that Bangla should be the medium of instruction at both primary and secondary level. There was no mention of English at this stage.
1974	English was made compulsory from grade 6 to grade 12. The reason mentioned was for historical reasons and for the sake of reality, English will continue as a second compulsory language.
1976	There was a change again in the planning, English was made compulsory from primary level (grade 3 up to 12).
1986	Another decision was to start English from grade 1 and continue up to 12 grade.
1990	CLT was introduced in teaching and learning of English at the secondary level. Communicative texts for classes 6—12 were developed.
1992	A major decision was taken to implement the Private University Act which gave rise to a number of private universities allowing the affluent of the society to taste US model education system. The medium of instruction in these universities is English.
1994	English was re-English was re introduced in the BA syllabus which was abolished in 1972.
1996	Compulsory foundation courses on English and Bangla were introduced in all the public universities under graduate programs. Of course in the mean time various departments used to deliver lectures on their courses either in English or in Bangla or in some cases there was flexibility i.e. mixed languages were used.
1996	In the same year another important change was made regarding the English language teachers; the retirement age of all government school English teachers was increased for 3 years without any consideration of their quality or qualification as there was already a great demand for English teachers at the secondary level. Due to this decision we had to compromise with the quality of English language teaching.
1997	English curriculum was reviewed to make it competency based curriculum. Separate learning outcomes were identified for each skill. But the system of evaluation did not cover all the four skills, though it was supposed to do so.
2000	Inclusion of separate grammar books for grades 6 up to grade 10. Distribution of marks were revised, some portion of marks were allotted for grammar. Junior secondary level put more emphasis on grammar than the secondary level.

Source: Rahman, 2007, p.76

In 2008 Bangladesh government decided to change the status of English language from foreign language to second language, though the present practice does not allow the situation to be second language one in respect of both teaching and learning.

Most of the decisions other than the recent ones are usually available in the following documents:

- Report of the National Commission on Education, 1974
- Report of the English Teaching Task Force, 1976
- Report of the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee, 1978
- Report of the National Curriculum Syllabus Committee, 1985
- Ministry of Education Memo, 1993
- Ministry of Education Memo, 1995
- Report of the National Commission on Education, 1997
- Report of the National Commission on education, 2003
- Report of the National Curriculum Committee, 2009

These bodies usually work in the field of education though most of the decisions were based on top down model only. These types of top down decisions usually fail to cope with the local requirements. Probably this was the missing link that our education system is always unaware of. Another thing that created trouble during the early days of education system in Bangladesh is the absence of one central body to handle the education system of a newly established nation. This was mitigated in 1976 in which the National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee (NCSC) was formed and it worked until 1983 when the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), a permanent government body with huge responsibilities was set up. The functions of NCTB are manifold:

- Develop and disseminate curricula, select syllabus according to level,
- Examine curricula and syllabi and suggest revision,
- Pre-test and evaluate effectiveness of the curricula, syllabi and textbooks
- Develop teaching learning materials
- Approve currently available books and reference,
- Provide directives and set criteria for state examination boards for testing.



Besides, another responsibility of NCTB is to provide orientation to the teachers from time to time to inform them of the recent innovations implemented in the education system.

## **2.5 Proposals of different Education Commission Reports on English**

The first commission recognised the importance of English as an international language and emphasized on teaching language rather than literature and recommended English to be taught from grade 6 to 12. In 1975 English Teaching Task Force was formed to assess status of ELT in Bangladesh and to suggest ideas to enhance the situation. Some of the important findings of the task force were:

- In all three categories of schools visited (government, private urban and private rural), the majority of students are not attaining satisfactory levels of proficiency, as measured against the requirements of the syllabus and textbooks in use.
- The situation is particularly serious in the non-government rural schools, where over 95% of the students in Class 6 and 8 are failing to reach the expected standards of proficiency. In addition, over 70% of these students at Class 6 and 80% at Class 8 have a command of English which is close to non-existent.
- Given these results, it is almost inevitable that the weaker students (i.e. the vast majority) will fall progressively further behind as they move up through the school. The lower scores achieved at Class 8 than at Class 6 suggest that this is happening.
- The situation is a little better in the government schools, but even here, over 50% of the students are failing to reach the supposed standards at Class 6, and at Class 8, 75% appear to be falling behind.
- In the Teacher Training Colleges, the majority of trainees (80%) cannot be considered proficient as teachers in material taught at Class 8 (i.e. they scored less than 75% on the class test), yet they are expected to teach up to Class 10. Of these trainees, over a quarter are failing to reach the minimum level of proficiency (50%) required of the students.

- The results indicate continued low levels of English language proficiency throughout the secondary school and teacher training levels. In the non-government rural schools, the situation can only be described as deplorable.

*(Baseline Survey of Secondary School English Teaching and Learning 1990: 24)*

The situation they found out was very disappointing, so they recommended introduction of age and grade appropriate syllabus together with appropriate textbooks.(see report of the English Teaching Task Force:1976:1). Some of the other recommendations included:

- English should be taught compulsorily either from class 3, or 6. If English is made compulsory from class 3, English language as a subject and training in teaching English should be made compulsory at each Primary Teachers' Training Institutes.
- The single biggest obstacle to English teaching in Bangladesh is the lack of competent teachers at all levels. Large scale short and long term training programmes should be undertaken for secondary school teachers.
- An appropriately graded syllabus should be introduced at each level together with new textbooks related to the needs and capabilities of students.
- The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) should test comprehension and writing skills in meaningful contexts and discourage rote-learning.(English Teaching Task Force 1976: 34—36).The recommendation was immediately complied with the introduction of English at grade 3 in 1976. The provisions for teaching English from class 3 was made on the ground that there was a need for a good foundation in English (Report of the National Curriculum Committee 1978: 265). English was made compulsory from class 3 in 1980. Harrison(1976, cited in Rahman:2007, p.78) reported about one powerful workshop that was organized to find out the short comings of ELT in Bangladesh, it pointed out students' three types of needs; social, occupational and academic. It reported that the present English syllabus is unable to prepare the students for their future life as the most part of the syllabus failed to address their communication needs in reading and writing. This was also supported by Kerr (1976, cited in Rahman:2007, P.78). Based on the reports of the Task

Force and the Workshop in 1976 National Curriculum and Syllabus Committee (NCSC) developed syllabus on English engaging an English Syllabus Committee. In line with the recommendations of these committees new textbooks were written by a group of local experts together with some ELT foreign specialists. The series of textbooks i.e. texts for classes 6 to 8 and one combined book for classes 9 and 10 again another combined text for classes 11 and 12 were completed by 1986. An extra grammar book was accompanied with the present text. This is very encouraging though all the materials designed, developed and distributed by the government and made easily available to all the teachers and students throughout the country, the majority of the rural even some urban schools' both teachers and students tend to rely on low quality guide books with readymade answers for the preparation of examination (Rahman:1999).

## **2.6 Present English Curriculum at the secondary level**

The major step regarding curriculum revision taken by NCTB was to introduce "communicative language teaching" (CLT) at the secondary level. The objective mentioned in the NCTB document is :

English needs to be recognised as an essential work-oriented skill that is needed if the employment, development and educational needs of the country are to be met successfully. English should, therefore, be taught as something to be used rather than as something to be talked about. The same document also describes teaching methodology to be a joint effort by both teacher and student. Main emphasis is on the practice of functional language. Teacher student relationship is of foremost importance in CLT (1996, p.153). Besides, NCTB has set some criteria for effective teaching learning and specified some learning outcome. Contact hours of English, usual class size and allocated time have been presented in two tables below.

**Table 2.2***The Structure of English Courses for Secondary Students*

Class	Compulsory	Contact hours per week		Marks	Course objective	
	Text	P-I	P-II		Everyday Functional English	Emphasis on 4 skills
10	Eng for today-5	5	3	200	do	Do
9	Eng for today-4	5	3	200	do	Do
8	Eng for today-3	5	3	200	do	Do
7	Eng for today-2	5	3	200	do	Do
6	Eng for today-1	4	2	200	do	Do

Table 2.2 displays the structure of English classes at the secondary level. It shows that similar structure is followed from junior secondary to secondary level. There are total 8 periods weekly, each period is of 35 to 40 minutes duration. The exception is only for class six which has total 6 periods per week, other than this exception everything is the same ; total weight for all the classes is 200 marks, objective is to develop functional English so emphasis is on 4 basic skills.

**TABLE 2.3***The Class Size and Allocated for English in Bangladesh State School*

Level	grade	class size	length of a lesson	number of lessons per week	total hour of el input (per week: total of the mean)
Secondary	9	56—78students (mean=67)	35—45 minutes(mean=40)	3—8 lessons(mean=5.5)	220 minutes
Secondary	10	42—70 students(mean=56)	35—45 minutes(mean=40)	6—9 lessons (mean=7.5)	300 minutes

Source: Yasmin, 2007, p.141

## **2.7 Recent Attempts to Reform ELT in Bangladesh**

It has been discussed earlier that ELT in Bangladesh has gone through different phases during the past 30 years. Repeated attempts were made to reform the curriculum of ELT. Government, NGOs and several foreign aided projects have been working to bring about a change in the learning and teaching of English. In addition to that the British Council and professional bodies like BELTA have been involved in building the capacity of the teachers by organizing short trainings, workshops, seminars and national, and international conferences. These aimed variously at curriculum reform for secondary school English, developing new textbooks, developing teacher training strategies and attempting to reformulate testing. A brief description of the major ELT projects run from the beginning to the present time at the national level with donor-assistance is given below.

**OSSTTEB (1990-1994):** There was a baseline study, syllabuses from Classes 6-12 were revised, textbooks for Classes 6-8 were rewritten, the English syllabus for the B.Ed courses at TTCs were developed, and English teachers of 20 government schools were trained.(Task force report:1996)

**BRAC (2001-till date)** Under its post primary and continuing education (PACE) program provided training to the English language teachers all over the country. (Manual, BRAC PACE).

**CAMPE-** Campaign for popular education an NGO provides subject based training to the secondary level teachers.(Manual CAMPE).

**ELTIP (1998-2002):** Developed textbooks for Classes 9-12 on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), developed a cluster approach teacher training strategy and a training manual, set up 16 regional training centres and trained about 5,000 secondary school teachers but in its attempt to revise the testing system, there was no success.(Report, NCTB)

**SESIP: (2002- on-going)** with its focus on TQI (Teaching Quality Improvement Project) aimed at the institutional capacity-building in secondary education (Manual, SESIP, GoB)

**The British Council** provided training on teaching methodologies in English to both primary and secondary teachers. It started a project termed as English for Teaching

and Teaching for English (ETTE). ETTE started working in 2008 and puts emphasis on both teaching methodology as well as on the development of teachers' own English language skills. Prior to introduction of the project, the BC conducted a teachers' survey and it revealed that teachers badly require their own language development. Recently ETTE has completed its pilot phase and expects to continue with PEDP-III, a joint project of the Government and ADB.(ETTE Flyer).

**English in Action (EIA):** A long nine year joint project of the Government of Bangladesh and DFID started working in 2009 with the aim to develop 25 million people's English functional skills through the use of ICT and media. In the meantime EIA has conducted a series of baseline researches. On the basis of the findings they have produced teaching- learning materials, attractive audio materials, teaching aids. They are providing training to the teachers on the use of technology in class.(EIA Manual).

Moreover, NAEM as the country's apex training institute runs regular teacher training courses in Communicative English for both government and non-government schools and colleges. BIAM also runs ELT and teacher training courses. The National University has an agenda to provide intensive English teacher training courses in CLT. Recently with a call for all regions to set up English medium private schools, NCTB is currently translating primary level course books in different subjects into English to cater for this demand. The question, of course, arises: how will the schools provide qualified teachers to carry out this English medium teaching? (See *Baseline Survey of Secondary School English Teaching and Learning* 1990 that found the English proficiency of English teachers far below what it should be. The language proficiency of other subject teachers can be presumed to be at perhaps an even lower level).

It is important to note that although conceptually valuable and sound in principle, most of the reform attempts have failed to produce impact for a long term and suffered from lack of effective planning, for not providing supportive resources, for being isolated attempts and for lacking a coordinating focus among the programs. Perhaps that is why in spite of a bulk of activities on various fronts, the results have been far from satisfactory (Rahman 1999). In this context the review of related literature and previous studies conducted in the field of ELT seem pertinent for the

present study. Next chapter discusses relevant literature and the conceptual framework of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conceptual framework of the study. The relevant factors which are assumed to contribute to the difficulties of the students' learning of English are discussed here. There are a number of linguistic, and psycholinguistic factors that are considered to be pertinent for learning a second or foreign language such as age, aptitude, attitude, motivation, amount of exposure, belief, and anxiety etc. Besides, social psychologists are of the opinion that other than the variables mentioned above some other socio-psychological variables like individual differences, intelligence, and the learning strategies applied by the learners as well as the socio-economic background of the learners impact learning a foreign or second language immensely. So it is not possible to cover all the aspects of learning a foreign language in a single study. The present study deals with only linguistic and some psycholinguistic variables, like motivation/attitude, anxiety, and self-efficacy or self-esteem. For the purpose of the study only the related concepts have been discussed here. Therefore, a review of literature is presented below for a better understanding of the social psychological factors like, motivation, attitudes, anxiety and their relationship with the learning difficulties.

#### **3.1 Review of related literature for the study**

According to the social psychologist Gardner (1985), learning a second language is purely a socio-psychological phenomenon. It depends on the development of communication skills between an individual and members of another culture or community. For this reason recent researches focus on various socio-psychological variables. Recent trend in researches in the area of language learning, especially a foreign language learning, show attempts to account for affect and cognition in unified frameworks (e.g. most notably in attribution theory; Weiner, 1986 cited in Dornyei:2001:11). In this respect the theory given by John Schuman (1986) is more relevant to language acquisition. According to Schuman second language acquisition is primarily driven by emotion for the most part but to some extent it is related to



cognition. It is supported by Arnold (1999) and Young (1999) in their recently edited volumes on affect in second language learning. In line with this Lee (2007) contends in addition to the quest for effective teaching methods, research on what is going on inside the learner has gained much notice. The discoveries of Gardner and Lambert (1959) are noteworthy: one's attitude and feelings in learning a foreign language play an important role and negative feelings lead to poor performance (p.60). Similarly Stephen Krashen (2002) also hypothesizes that 'affective filter' that consists of various psychological factors, such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence can strongly enhance or inhibit second language acquisition. An input rich environment is required where the learners can be relaxed, motivated and self confident in acquiring the second language successfully. Krashen (2002) contends that learners with high motivation, self confidence, a good self image, and a low level of anxiety are well equipped for success in second language acquisition. In addition to that students' difficulty in learning a foreign language may arise from the distance or dissimilarities of their native and the target language. As Lado (1957) mentions, "We assume the students who come into contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements which are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult" (p.7). On the other hand, in relation to students' difficulty Corder (1973) says, "Difficulty is clearly a psycholinguistic matter, whereas difference is linguistic, and until we can relate the two 'measures' in some principled fashion we can only note the overall relation between difficulty and difference, but not measure the psycholinguistic learning difficulty of particular linguistic differences" (p.230). So it is prominent here that the sources of students' difficulties may vary from linguistic matter to socio-psycholinguistic matters which are again purely contextual. As some times students' difficulty is estimated on the basis of their teaching materials being difficult or easy, it is not learned within a short time. In other words, a learner takes much time to learn certain material because it is difficult or not well-presented.(Higa 1966: 168 in Rahman 1998-99). In line with the above discussion this study followed the framework presented by Ehrman (1996), "in looking at student difficulties, I have found it useful to think about feelings using a conceptual framework of attitudes related to the learning event. The three elements in the framework are motivation,

self-efficacy, and anxiety” (p.137). Similarly the major concern of this study is motivation, self efficacy, anxiety and their influences on the learners’ learning and ultimately posing difficulties in their learning of English. The main confusion lies on the definition of different terms used in social psychological researches, specially, attitude and motivation, efficacy and anxiety etc.

### **3.1.1 Concept of difficulty**

The term difficulty has been seen from different perspective by different specialists. Not all the views have been considered for the purpose of this research. Following are some of the views.

Difficulty is best described, according to Higa(1996,cited in Adams,1993), operationally, in terms of the amount of time or number of trials needed to learn something. Absolute difficulty does not exist and it is ‘the learners’ past and present learning experience which makes any learning easy or difficult.’ From a linguistic point of view, difficulty may be analysed firstly in terms of the ‘gap’ of effort or time between competence and performance; secondly in terms of the ‘gap’ between defective competence and desired performance and thirdly any temporary lapse or breakdown in competence and performance due to extraneous factors. There appear to be a number of factors affecting difficulty, like aptitude, motivation, atmosphere, mood, personality, intelligence, behavioral strategies, socio-economic backgrounds etc. This fairly formidable list of variables affecting difficulty is partly investigated by McDonough (1986, cited in Adams: 1993). There is no attempt by him to investigate difficulty as such and this reluctance is shared by the major works on the subject of psychology and second language acquisition (Leontiev (1981, cited in Adams,1993), Krashen (1981, cited in Adams, 2007), Pimsleur (1971), van Els (1984, cited in Adams, 1993).

Researches on socio-economic backgrounds affecting students’ learning are scanty in Bangladesh though there has been a recent enquiry done into the Sociology of language learning: Social biographies and school achievement in rural Bangladesh. Hamid (2009) was aptly able to establish that students’ family economic background significantly influences their achievement in schools. Some other available literatures prove similar fact as mentioned above, James (2002 cited in Hamid: 2011) in his

study found that parental education and employment influence students' choice of higher education.

In this regard Cronbach(1984, cited in Adams, 1993) is mentionable as he has seen the difficulty from psychological point of view. He looks at difficulty in terms of anxiety, which 'expresses motivation to avoid psychological failure.' Perceived difficulty acts as an intensifier and a person with strong motivation is attracted to activities where success appears highly uncertain and makes great efforts in such tasks. Defensive students will prefer easy tasks. Prediction is difficult, once again, because of a series of variables similar to those of McDonough (affiliation, prestige, sexual roles, peer pressure etc.). McDonough (1980:311) points out, "psychologists have objected that there is no reason to assume that linguistic complexity is itself a cause of learning difficulty" (in White:188, p.51).

In the literature, the broad notion of difficulties/ constraints has been examined from various angles. One frequent cause of difficulties in EFL learning is the mismatch between learning style and teaching style(Allwright, 1984; Ehrman, 1996) or the gap between pedagogical agenda and learning process (Nunan, 1995). This has also been evidenced from the study of Ms. Rahman (2005) conducted among the Bangladeshi tertiary level freshers. Another perspective on students' difficulties is to think about feelings using a three element frame work of attitudes related to the learning event: motivation, self efficacy (self esteem) and anxiety (Ehrman, 1996).

For example Ehrman (1996) emphasizes two kinds of motivation in EFL learning: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is very powerful in triggering deep learning, while extrinsic motivation without intrinsic motivation is likely to lead to surface learning. Surface approaches to learning have been linked to "quantitative" (as opposed to "qualitative") conceptions of learning and both are associated with learning difficulties (Benson & Lor, 1999; Biggs, 1987, 1992, 1993; Watkins, 1996). Learning difficulties/constraints are also often concerned with insiders' perceptions of teacher- learner roles and relationships, which are grounded within a certain culture of learning. Like the Chinese culture Bangladeshi students also remain passive in the class and unconditionally accept whatever the teacher says and the students are unaware of the newly applied method (CLT) (see Cortazzi & Jing, 1996 a, b ; Hu, 2002 ; Jin and Cortazzi, 1998). However, other researchers (e.g. Chang, 2002;

Littlewood, 1999, 2000, 2001; Liu and Littlewood, 1997) argue that cultural attributes should not be used as a convenient explanation for problems arising in ESL/EFL practice, as it is also well known fact that similar is the case of Bangladeshi students as Chinese students' apparent passivity in the classroom is more likely to be a consequence of students' lack of proficiency, confidence and motivation and the wider socio- educational context( e.g., the examination oriented educational system, unsuitable methodologies and inadequate trained teachers). These latter arguments seem to indicate two dimensions of learning problems: linguistic difficulty and socio-psychological constraints.

Of the methods for measuring difficulty, the researcher has chosen to look mainly at students and teachers' perceptions of difficulty as she believes this is what is really communicated between teacher and student, and student and student in the guise of anxiety defined by Cronbach (cited in Adams, 1993) above. Researcher suggests that 'absolute' difficulty may remain constant, 'personal difficulty' be so varied an amalgam of McĐnough's (cited in Adams, 1993) elements that a systematic and universal removal of these difficulties may be impossible, often for political, cultural, or economic reasons ( size of classroom, level of training of teacher, varying status of target language). The measurement of such difficulty is likely to be purely academic. A symbiotic relationship of attitudes in teacher and student is, for example, a large difficulty which may be removed by decisive action on the part of teacher and administrator. As will become clear later, difficulty in learning of English in Bangladesh is a complex problem with a great number of contributing factors. Many of these factors are practically unquantifiable, even illusory. Moreover, the problem of difficulty frequently lies in the complicated relationship between the varying factors rather than their individual strengths. This complicated relationship is also likely to vary from one individual to another. As the aim of this study is to unravel the mystery of this difficulty and examine the inter relationship of the factors in creating difficulty of the students, mere physical measurement of difficulty in performance is likely to prove a sterile and unproductive exercise.

### 3.1.2 Attitude and motivation

Researches conducted in SLA made no clear distinction between attitude and motivation (Ellis 1985, p.116). On the other hand Dornyei (2001, p.8) posits that by definition, motivation concerns the direction and magnitude of human behavior that include, the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expended on it. In line with this to Ehrman (1996, p.137) motivation is the perceived "pay off" for the students' investment of time, energy, and effort. It has to do with why the student is there in the first place and what keeps him or her working. The motivation may be positive, or it may be negative. There are a lot of factors that bring students to given learning settings and keep them there. There are other definitions of attitudes or motivation but for the purpose of the present study some relevant sources have been used. Language dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1992, p.199) describes language attitudes as the attitude which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's language. According to Lambert, et al. (1968) attitudes about language affect second language learning. Similarly Wolf (1964, & 1959)'s studies show that attitude toward a language affect the intelligibility of language variety. Annamalai (1979, p.37) contends that attitude of speakers is determined by socio-cultural, political and historical factors which are external to the language. This idea is supported by other linguists. As Balasubramanian (2003) terms it as inhibition. According to him, in language learning, the initial inhibition to use the target language may be a great hindrance. In his study, he put a question to the interviewees to compare the difficulty in learning the two languages, Tamil and Malayalam. Invariably all the informants, both Malayalam and Tamil native language speakers, expressed that Malayalam could be the difficult language to learn. On the other hand Galloway et al.(1998, p.42 cited in Ehrman:1996) contend that as a straightforward concept motivation is uninteresting. It is challenging to find how it helps teachers to understand children's progress and behavior and in this way helping them to evaluate their classroom practice and teaching methods. In this regard Dornyei and Otto's explanation seems more relevant and consistent with the present study. She says that motivation is the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected,

prioritized, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out( Dornyei and Otto 1998, p.65). For better and clear understanding of the concepts of motivation and anxiety Gardner's socio-educational model may be used which is presented in the figure that follows:.

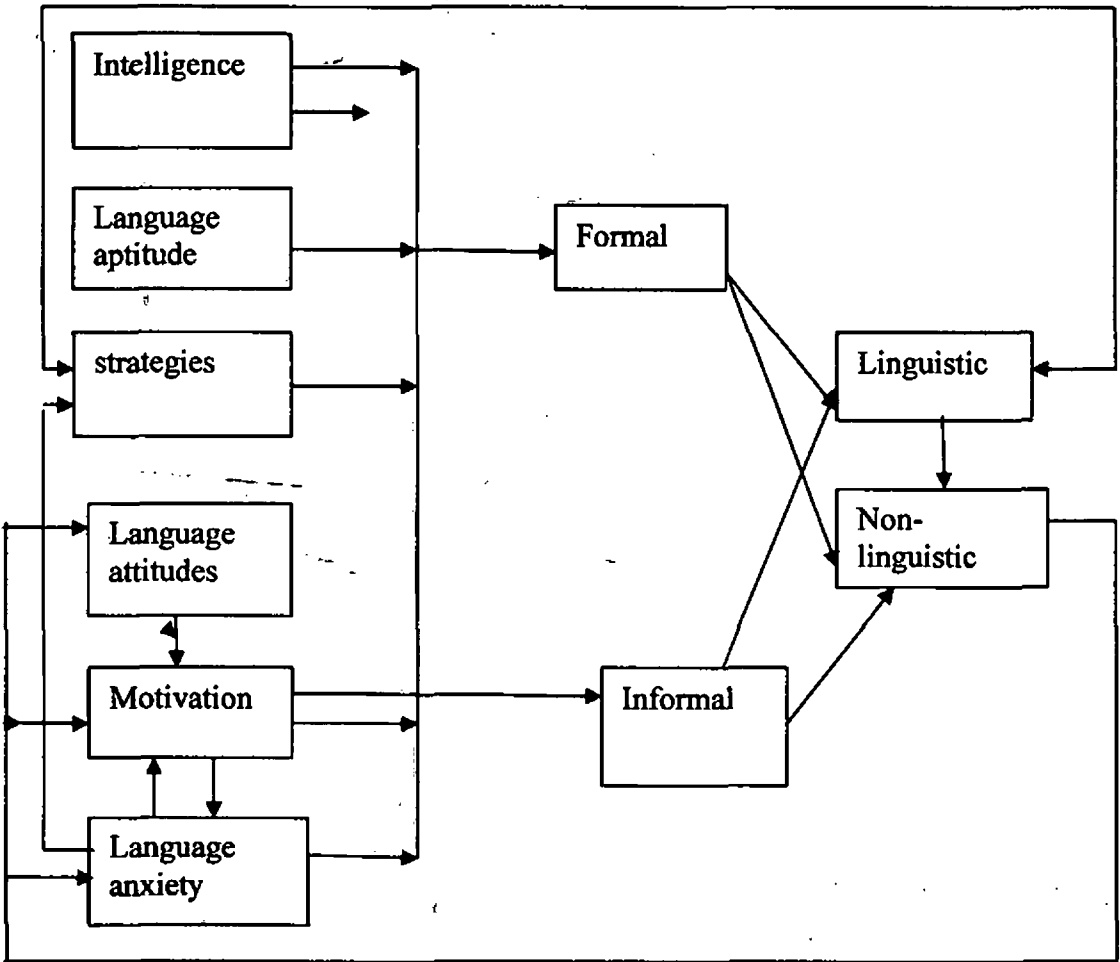


Figure 2.1 Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, p.8)

The model clearly presents four distinct aspects of the second language acquisition process: antecedent factors, individual difference (i.e. learner) variables, language acquisition context and learning outcomes. Gardner (1985, p.166)'s intention here is not to prescribe the above model as the final one but he assumes that the elements included in the model are essential so it demands further investigation to open up new horizons in the field of second language acquisition. So following the socio

educational model Tremblay and Gardner,(1995, p.505) extended the model adding two more component as shown in the next figure:

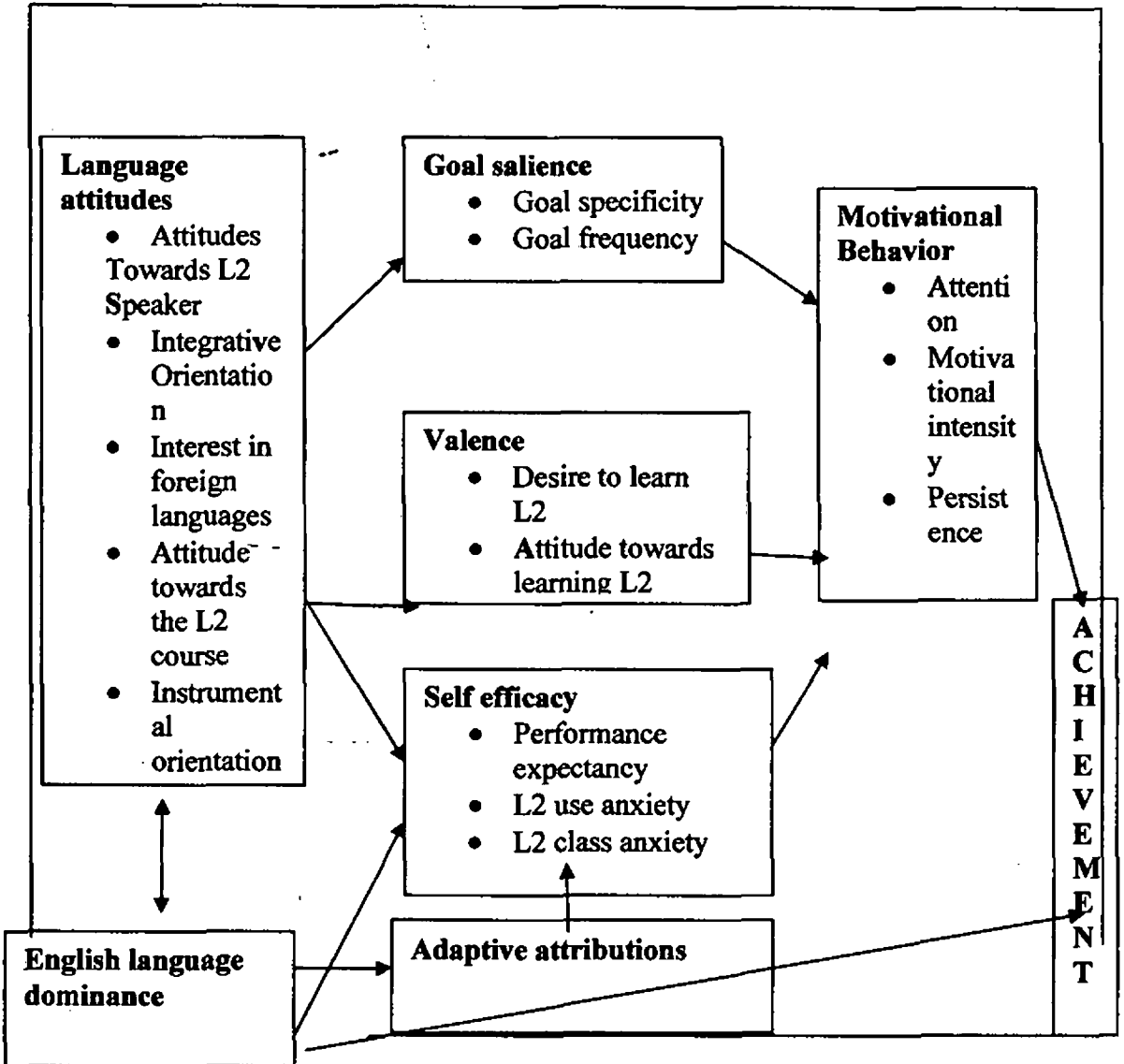


Figure: 2.2 Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) model of L2 motivation

This model is more adaptable in L2 learning as it includes a clear suggestion of *language ⇒ attitudes ⇒ motivational behaviour ⇒ achievement* sequence three connecting variables between attitudes and behavior; goal salience which refers to learner's goal specification and the frequency of their learning strategies used. On the other hand, the interesting feature of the model is the inclusion of valence that

represents learners' value related components, i.e. their desire to learn L2 and their attitudes towards learning L2. The model further includes self efficacy consisted of performance expectancy and L2 anxiety. It is conceived from the later model that Gardner's claim of adaptability of the previous model is possible without hampering its integrity (Dornyei, 2001, p.54). Based on the later model the present study has been adapted to find out that students' difficulties are not only linguistic but also psycholinguistic factors may impact their learning. So, while conducting researches in the field of learning difficulties in a second language, psycholinguistic factors should be considered equally important to research for finding evidences of the students' difficulties in learning L2. In consistent with this the conceptual frame work of present study has been designed. In the study not only students' linguistic and psycholinguistic factors have been investigated but also their family background has been examined to see whether they have any significant influence on their learning of English. In the light of this the following frame work has been developed to conduct the study. The frame work is presented in the next page.



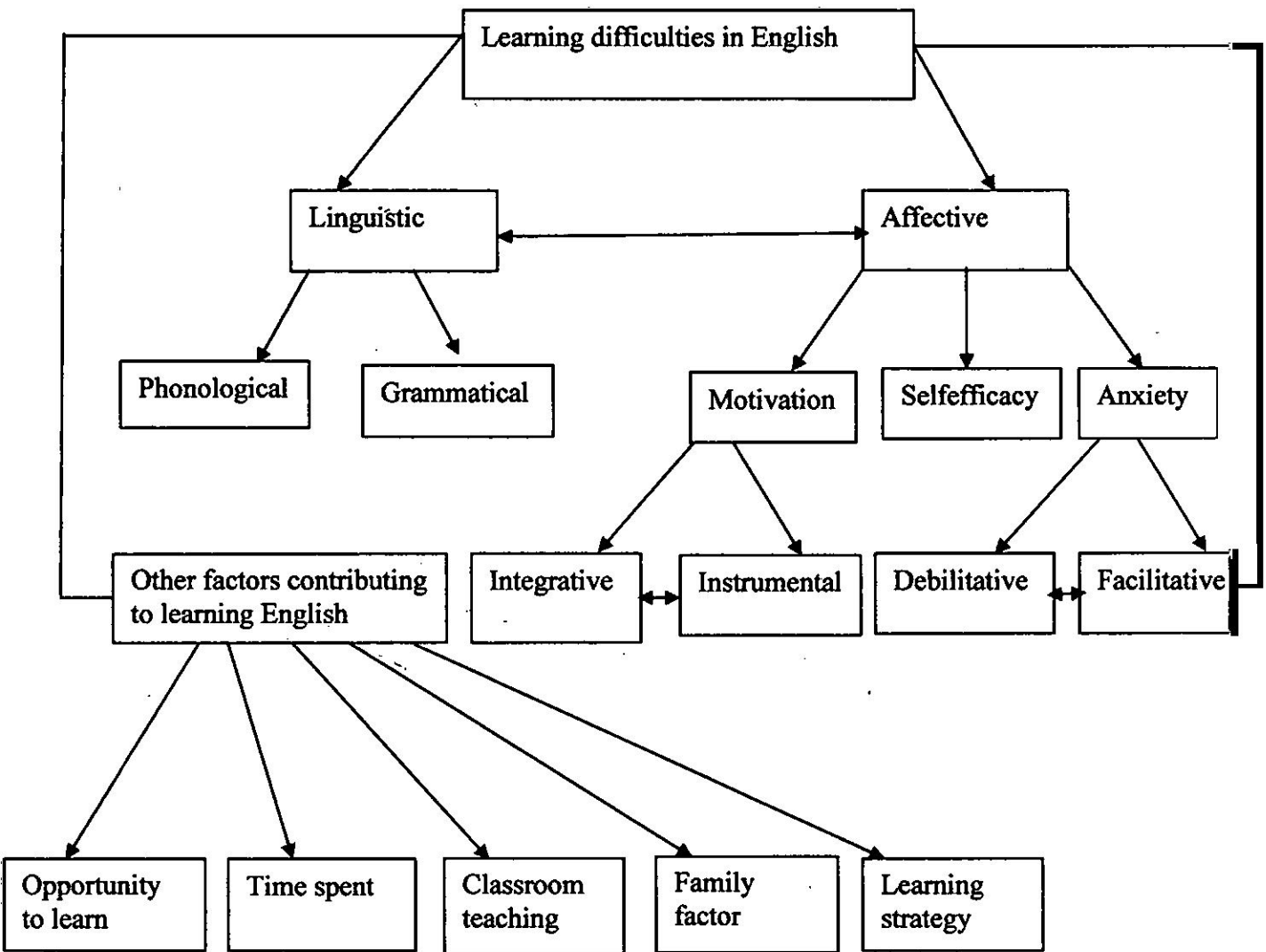


Figure: 2.3 Factors contributing to the difficulties in learning of English.

Figure 2.3 shows the inter relation among the linguistic and psycholinguistic factors. It shows that linguistic factor is divided into two major factors, grammatical and phonological, on the other hand affective factors i.e. motivation and anxiety are subdivided into integrative and instrumental motivation, debilitative and facilitative anxiety respectively. It is presumed that due to the absence of right kind of motivation, students may lack self efficacy, and in the same way if students lack self efficacy, there is possibility of the presence of debilitative anxiety which is a very common feeling among the students of any foreign language (Which will be

supported by various research reports discussed later in this chapter). On the other hand students' linguistic difficulties may be grammatical as well as phonological. Similarly, their psycholinguistic difficulties might include both of the two types of motivation and anxiety. Due to absence of right kind of psycholinguistic factors students may experience difficulty in English. In addition to the linguistic and psycholinguistic factors under investigation in the study, there are some other factors which are interlinked with learning of a foreign language. But the present study was confined only to the investigation of the types of linguistic elements perceived difficult by the students and attempted to explore the influence of the association of only three affective factors, viz. motivation, self efficacy, and anxiety following Ehrman's proposed model of second language learning difficulty. It needs to be explained here that in the present study psycholinguistic and affective factors have been used synonymously.

### **3.1.3 Self efficacy**

Self efficacy, the term has been used here to signify inter-changeably, self-esteem or self concept or the confidence of the participants. Laine(1987) contends, "the totality of an individual's thoughts, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and values having reference to himself as object." (P.15). The theory of self esteem refers to people's judgment of their capabilities to carry out certain specific tasks, at the same time their self efficacy will guide their choice of activities together with their level of aspirations and the amount of effort they are ready to put forward and their status of persistence (Dornyei :2001: 22). It seems relevant to quote Bandura (1993, p.118, cited in Dornyei : 2001, p.22 ), who also proposes that self efficacy is determined by four factors:

- Previous performance
- Vicarious learning, i.e. learning through observing models
- Verbal encouragement by others
- One's physiological reactions (e.g. anxiety).

According to this theory people who lack high sense of self efficacy in any area, assume the task difficult and a threat to his/her own self, as a result they concentrate on their own lacking and difficulties they come across rather than performing the task efficiently. They lose their confidence very easily and are likely to end up without

completion of the given task. On the other hand high level of self efficacy increases one's own level of faith in accomplishing the required task and facing any adverse situation with strong perseverance. It is relevant to mention that self efficacy beliefs are directly concerned with real competence and capabilities as they are the product of complex process of self-persuasion which is based on cognitive processing of diverse sources (e.g. other's opinions, feedback, evaluation, encouragement or reinforcement; past experiences and training; observing peers, information about appropriate task strategies) (Dornyei, 2001, p.23). On the other hand Ehrman (1996) posits self efficacy as the degree to which the student thinks he or she has the capacity to cope with the learning challenge. She limits the use of these terms to the domain of learning. A learner can experience a sense of self-efficacy in one domain(e.g., physics or language learning) but not in others(e.g., social interaction with strangers), though often a sense of effectiveness in one or more areas of skill can overflow into how one feels about him-or herself in general, too (p.137)). Self-efficacy has been found to be strongly linked with language anxiety. Krashen (1980, p.15: cited in Young 1991, p.427) suggests, "the more I think about self - esteem, the more impressed I am about its impact. This is what causes anxiety in a lot of people. People with low self- esteem worry about what their peers think; they are concerned with pleasing others. And that I think has to do a great deal with anxiety." Individuals who have high level of self-esteem are less likely to be anxious than are those with low self-esteem (Horwitz et al. 1986, p.126). According to Terror Management Theory (TMT), "People are motivated to maintain a positive self image because self-esteem protects them from anxiety (Greenberg et al., 1992, Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999, p.229 cited in Tanveer,2007).

#### **3.1.4 Anxiety**

Horwitz et al. (1986) considered language anxiety on the basis of performance and investigated in relation to three related performance anxieties: a) communicative apprehension (CA), b) test anxiety, c) fear of negative evaluation. Due to its emphasis on interaction, the construct of communicative apprehension is also relevant to the conceptualization of foreign language anxiety (McCrosky, 1977: cited in Horwitz,et al 1986, p.127).

Similarly Freeman and Long (1991, p.187 cited in Horwitz, 1986) contend that all humans presumably experience anxiety but their level of anxiety experience is not same; some people might be more anxious than others resulting obstacle in their learning of language. Chastain (1975) conducted one study among the American university students applying Sarason Text Anxiety Scale and Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale then he correlated the students' scores on the scales with their final course grade in an FLL. Chastain (1975) found out that anxiety was a significant predictor for those studying Spanish, and the correlations were high across languages but it was not consistent always. In some cases the correlation was negative, indicating hindering effect of anxiety in other cases positive, enhancing performance. In evidence of this Alpert and Haber's (1960 cited in Horwitz, 1986) distinction between facilitating and debilitating anxiety can be mentioned. According to Scovel (1987, p.139) cited in Ehrman, 1996): "Facilitating anxiety motivates learners to "fight" the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approval behavior." Debilitating anxiety, in contrast, motivates the learner to "flee" the new learning task; it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behavior. Kleinmann (1977, Scovel, 1987 and Bailey, 1983a cited in Ehrman, 1996)'s studies presented similar effects of facilitative and debilitating anxiety. Bailey's study suggests that actually the effect of anxiety is not permanent predisposition rather it is the result of feeling at particular moment that determines whether the anxiety is facilitating or debilitating. Several authors (e.g. Noels, Clement & Pelletier, 1999; Yan, 1998) have suggested a possible negative relationship between anxiety and motivation in view of the opposing effects of these two constructs. However, no formal studies have been conducted to examine in depth connection among these factors and students' learning difficulties. In this respect it seems relevant to note Ehrman's view: anxiety relates to the response a student has to a perceived threat to his or her sense of security or self esteem. This threat may be direct, such as a bad grade on a test, or more indirect, such as having to give up cherished beliefs about the uniqueness or superiority of one's own native culture, or even deeper, a threat to the perceived integrity of one's identity.

### **3.1.5 Socioeconomic background**

To shed further light on the difficulties of the learners, the family background of the students seemed pertinent though the socio-economic factor is not the major issue of the present study. Substantial research has been carried out on the effects of social backgrounds, particularly of socioeconomic status (SES), on learners' academic outcomes, i.e. broadly in education (Hamid : 2009, p.9). Studies conducted in this field elsewhere usually tried to find out and prove any kind of relationship between the academic performance and socio-economic backgrounds of the learners. For analytical purposes, there is no single agreed measure of individual or family socio-economic status. Common measures include parental employment category, family income, and parental education levels (James 2002:9 cited in Hamid, 2009). The present study examined the utility of two variables for investigating if the students' parental education and occupation impact their learning difficulty.

### **3.2 Review of previous researches conducted on difficulty, motivation, and anxiety**

Very few studies have been conducted in the perspective of Bangladesh, nevertheless there are a large number of studies conducted in other countries where English is used as an FL/SL and students face similar type of socio-psychological constraints as in Bangladesh have been reviewed to have a clear justification of the present study. Before starting discussion on the review of researches for the purpose of the present study, it needs to be made clear here that the present study does not deal with the difficulties which is faced by special (physically or mentally challenged) learners. This difficulty refers to linguistic and psycholinguistic difficulties in English as encountered by the normal students. So, foreign language learning disabilities have been excluded from the discussion. Hence, difficulties refer mainly to dimensions of learning, constraints include institutional, socio-psychological and cultural dimensions of obstacles in EFL learning.

The literature outlined above (3.1) provides a background to EFL learners' difficulties in general and the socio-psychological constraints that Bangladeshi students may encounter in the Bangladeshi EFL context. Research conducted in the field of difficulty and other factors are discussed below.

In relation to this Jing (2005)'s study is most valuable and mentionable in the field of difficulty . He detected the nature of Chinese EFL learners' difficulties. Jing (2005) posited that these insights did not come out of examination of learners' beliefs, expectations, attitudes and concerns. The research that Jing (2005) conducted through studying the diary data indicates that students' difficulties for the first place lay in limited vocabulary in all the cases of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Speed was second most rated difficulty identified by the diarists as they expressed that when they read or listened any material that was too fast or slow for them. Their difficulties included grammatical structures and deployment of appropriate strategies for the given task. Jing (2005)'s diary extracts revealed students' own perceptions regarding their reading speed, sentence complicity, unknown vocabulary. Most referred linguistic problems included vocabulary difficulty. In Jing (2005)'s study students did not mention about speaking and writing difficulties; as for writing, what kind of strategies these group of students use will be discussed later in this chapter. In line with this Jing (2005) conducted another follow up study with the same group of students and surprisingly enough to be said that even after two years the students again reported of their vocabulary difficulty and at the same time they informed that they had not found an effective way to acquire a reasonable amount of words and to use those words in an appropriate way in their real life communication. Specifically one of the diarists expressed that English has many words for a single idea and that English words are used in so many different ways, so it posed difficulty common to all junior college students. Jing (2005) ultimately conceived the fact that if the responsibility of a teacher is to assist the students to overcome their difficulties and constraints in EFL and involve them in independent learning activities, they should be aware of learners' own perceptions of their learning processes and difficulties. Based on Jing (2005)'s apprehension the present study identifies teachers' ideas of students' learning difficulties. In his study Jing (2005) first identified the linguistic difficulties and then he tried to explore the non-linguistic, i.e. the socio-psychological constraints. The extracts entry in his study relates students' both linguistic and non-linguistic constraints. The data present the interplay of several difficulties, like complicated sentence structure, reading comprehension, strategy deployment and reading speed. In case of socio-psychological constraints the diarists mentioned about teachers'

authoritative role in directing them to solve their problems in reading, which was agreeable to some of them but for most of them it was non negotiable command. Besides, there were mentions about anxiety of examination, negative self evaluation, slow progress in EFL, obstacles in independent learning and resistance to instructional materials. The study mainly revealed the linguistic difficulties though, a close observation exposed that this limitation is mainly the result of the pressure of the examination that is placed on them. The socio-psychological dimensions of difficulty are not frequently mentioned though by the diarists, Jing (2005) argued that socio-psychological factors substantially affected learning. The findings of this study may not be generalized, but insights derived from it can be related to similar contexts, students face learning difficulties and do not have a part in implementation of the programs. Hence, the present researcher feels confident in conducting the study following the direction of Jing (2005).

Similarly, Castro and Peck (2005) opine that facing linguistic problem in learning a foreign language has been a consistent problem for the language specialists over the years to struggle. Different explanations are available though one line of thought is that the source of difficulty is at linguistic coding deficits. Based on the existence of phonological, semantic, and syntactic linguistic code necessary for foreign language learning, Sparks and Ganschow (1993) proposed the existence of a linguistic coding deficit hypotheses (LCDH). They contend that students who face difficulty in processing at least one linguistic code in their native language, positively will face difficulty in foreign language classroom. Sparks and Ganschow (1993) conclude that deficits in L1 are at the root of foreign language learning difficulties. Some other linguists, as Downey, Snyder, and Hill (2000) proposed in the same way that they revealed in their study existence of phonological processing difficulties in foreign language learning. Carroll & Sapon (1959) have used the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) to test cognitive abilities in a foreign language. The test contains assessment of auditory and memory abilities for sound meaning relationships, word and sentence recognition, analogy and understanding of syntactic structure, rote memory etc. the MLAT has been used with considerable success in identifying students with low score for their placement in modification courses in a foreign language. Despite scoring high in MLAT students encounter extreme difficulties in

learning a foreign language. Although these students do not show any language learning deficits, even then they struggle in foreign language classes. It is evident from these findings that other than language learning deficits there are other factors that contribute to students' foreign language learning success.

It has been also proved through researches that affective factors are complementary to learning a foreign language. Fillmore (1979) found that variables like gender, motivation, and personality impact on learning a foreign language. From the discussion this can be conceived that learning a foreign language is not only the matter of linguistic factors but also it is determined by social and personal issues. Krashen first proposed this as affective filter hypothesis (see Krashen and Terrell, 1983) and henceforth has been used in foreign language learning researches, such as (MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) studied the variable of anxiety in second language learning. In the same way Sparks and Ganschow (1993, 1995) contend that anxiety is the byproduct of language learning deficits. These observations are confirmed with the findings of Dinklage (1971), he found that students having extreme difficulty in learning a foreign language were either disabled or deficient (not proved) in their native language proficiency. Dinklage posited that anxiety was not the cause but the result of failure in learning a foreign language. On the other hand, according to MacIntyre anxiety affects learning a language profusely. As the above mentioned linguists' interest was to identify the relationship between students' language learning difficulties and their learning styles, they started their work with this apprehension. In this regard Ehrman (1996) could be quoted, mismatches in learning styles have been cited as one of the significant factors influencing learning difficulties. She contends that students are required to discover some unknown world of learning and while doing so they might encounter hindrances which cannot be addressed all at a time so they should be prepared to use different learning styles appropriate to their learning. In the same way, Castro and Peck (2005) used the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory to identify the students' learning style preferences. However, the study did not directly explore students' difficulty on the basis of their affective variables but the common characteristics of the student population disclosed the fact that students who are extremely anxious, perfectionist, highly analytical or not analytical enough all crowded for getting admission in foreign



language modification program. Castro (2002) explained this, in the way that the degree of success in regular and/or modified classes cannot be fully predicted from diagnostic testing. Some students with low scores in MLAT (Carroll & Sapon, 1959) have done well in both the programs, while others with high scores have not been able to complete the program, or have encountered extreme difficulties in finishing the sequence. Another interesting finding of the study is that they could not establish any significant correlation between learning styles and grades of the students through a chi square analysis. To conform with the objectives of the study the researchers concluded that information about preferred learning styles would be beneficial for exploring language learning difficulties. As in their result of a longitudinal study on learning styles and foreign language learning difficulties, they found that regardless of any specific language learning deficit or difficulty, the learners' preferred learning style can hinder or promote foreign language learning. Apparently, it seems to be irrelevant to the present study, but its relevancy could be understood with the fact that in the selection of strategies, students often tend to rely on their affective aspects like motivation and attitude.

On the basis of this finding the present study includes motivation/attitude. Which finds its validity again with DiFino and Lombardino (2004)'s article, "Language Learning Disabilities: The Ultimate Foreign Language Challenge" where they have identified three areas of difficulties that are most common to all the second language learners across the globe. Because of their (problematic areas) universality the authors preferred to use the term language learning "paralysis." These are memorization, anxiety, and grammar confusions. In their opinion, memorization is an essential part of any kind of learning, especially in learning a second language. They contend that learners with poor memorization skill suffer immensely in their foreign language class and ultimately face great challenge in their performance.

According to them anxiety is a common phenomenon in a foreign/ second language learning and anxiety can be disastrous for any language learner if felt consistently. Students usually experience some kind of fear while mispronouncing any foreign sounding word or doing grammatical mistakes. Whereas, academic anxiety maybe facilitating for learning as it keeps the students "on the ball" and motivates the students positively, but enervative anxiety is so destructive in the sense that it can

ruin any learner's desire to utter even a single word in a foreign language, let alone learning the language. Lexical grammar confusion can affect a learner's learning a foreign/ second language in a way of hindering them from learning a concept in the target language to comprehending the real meaning of the term lexically. There are some textbooks claiming to be used in CLT approach and enhance second or foreign language learning, but the design of the textbook presents traditional grammar structures with definitions as used in grammar translation method before 1970s. The second author conducted one observation study on the students experiencing learning disabilities and found that the students who can identify their problem before entering college and can avail all accommodation facilities addressing their problems can achieve success in life avoiding all psychological stress and depression. This finding may not be directly related to the present study but it can be connected with the idea that students learning a foreign language should acquire the techniques of minimizing psychological stresses like anxiety and self efficacy. Besides, the identification of difficult aspects of learning a second or foreign language may be significant in determining the difficulties of the secondary students of Bangladesh. Furthermore, the strategies suggested for foreign language instructors in the study may hold a fruitful prospect for all the foreign or second language classrooms.

In the modern world increasing demand for learning a foreign language has put pressure on the teachers and educationists to find suitable techniques to enhance the performance of the students who encounter difficulties in learning a foreign language. They are on consistent run to investigate cases that may direct them to find a new path in the field of learning an FL/SL. In line with this Ferrari and Palladino (2007) tried to explain the processes underlying FL acquisition (see Bernhardt, 2000) in their study, "Foreign Language Learning Difficulties in Italian Children: Are They Associated with Other Learning Difficulties?" Previous researches carried out in learning an FL mainly focused on the predictors of failure and success in FL acquisition (see Carroll, 1962; Carroll & Sapon, 1959; Pimsleur, Stockwell, & Comrey, 1962 ; Service, 1992; Skehan, 1986, 1989 ; Sparks & Ganschow, 1991; Sparks, Ganschow, & Fatten, 1995; Sparks et al., 1997).

But Skehan (1986) in his study, Bristol language project found the relevance of aptitude in a foreign language learning, he observed high correlation between the

progress rate in foreign language acquisition and aptitude test. Ehrman & Oxford (1990,1995) also showed strong correlation between cognitive aptitude and speaking and reading proficiency in FL than any other variables. Quite a number of researches (Dufva & Voeten, 1999; service, 1992; Service & Kohonen, 1995) have been in line with the prediction that phonological skills and phonological memory, together with the ability to compare L1 syntactic –semantic structures predict foreign language proficiency in young students. Sparks et al. (1997) noticed FL grade and FL word recognition as predictive of FL oral and writing proficiency in high school students. A series of studies are available on the fact that academic proficiency in L1 is predictive of success in FL learning Further studies in the field provided evidence in favour of verbal memory in foreign language learning ( Baddeley, Gathercole, & Papagno, 1998; Cheng, 1996; Gathercole, Hitch, Service, & Martin, 1997; Masoura & Gathercole, 1999; Palladino & Cornoldi, 2004; Service, and Gathercole, 1999). In the same way, phonological awareness was found to be complementary in foreign language learning ( Hu, 2003). Memory variables have also been found to be contributory in learning L1, L2 and learning difficulties. However, the study by Ferrari and Palladino did not examine the affective factors (e.g. anxiety, motivation), cognitive variables and their influence on FL learning on the plea that these are less relevant than cognitive variables, and verbal skills are predominant compared to non verbal skills in their relationship with SL/FL. They drew comparison between successful and unsuccessful language learners to see whether there is any difference in L1 and FL aptitudes and cognitive and academic skills.

Sparks, Ganschow, Javorsky, Pohlman, and Patton (1992a) identified L1 deficits in two groups of low and high risk FL learners in high school. In the study self report of academic development and FL learning history were considered. According to their teachers' evaluation the low risk students were strong FL learners and scored low risk in foreign language screening test, on the other hand the high risk students were weaker FL learners and scored high risk in FLSI-H (Foreign Language Screening Instrument for High School). Participants were tested on measures of both native and foreign language aptitude skills. The test included phonological (i.e. spelling, word identification, pseudo word reading, auditory perception, and conceptualization of speech sounds), syntactic ( e.g. knowledge and use of punctuation and capitalization,

orthography), and semantic skills (i.e. passage comprehension, vocabulary knowledge). Carroll, & Sapon (1959) tested FL aptitude with subtests of phonology, syntax and semantics through The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT). In further studies Sparks et al. (1992a) observed considerable differences between groups on the FL aptitude test as LR students performed better than HR students. On L1 measures also LR group outperformed the HR group. It was revealed on the L1 skills that significant differences persist between groups on phonology and syntax but there was no difference recorded on semantic skills. The conclusion drawn by the same study (Sparks et al.) was that HR FL learners exhibit difficulties not only in FL but also in their L1. The difficulties were prominent in the areas of phonology and syntax but the thing should be mentioned here that none of the HR group had learning disability (LD) problem. The HR group was average on their scholastic achievement though they showed difficulty in FL. Again, in another study (Sparks, Ganschow, Javorsky, 1998) high school group having HR and LR for FL learning difficulties was compared with HR and LR group with LD in FL learning no difference was reported between the native language skills and the FL aptitude. Similar result was experienced by (Sparks, Artzer, Javorsky et al., 1998). This is evident from this study that phonological and syntactic processing poses difficulties for the FL learners whereas semantic skills may not be that much relevant in comparison to the FL learning. The results of the studies appear confusing though the solutions can be sought from some other affective factors related to FL learning which will be discussed later in this chapter. Next possible explanation to the confusion may be resolved through a study (Sparks, & Ganschow, 1993a, 1993b) of five profiles of the students with FL difficulties presenting performances in the areas of phonological, syntactic, and semantic codes, opened up the idea of the “garden path” in the field of learning difficulties in foreign or second language. The result of the study provided support to the previous results of the prevalence of phonological and syntactic difficulties among the FL students with average semantic abilities.

The studies reviewed above indicate that native language phonological, syntactic skills are closely related to foreign language learning (e.g. Ganschow & Sparks, 1993a, 1993b; Sparks et al., 1992a). These findings support the fact that the students who have phonological and syntactic difficulties in their native language may

experience difficulties in their foreign language learning. Several other researches conducted on the relationship between reading skill and second language learning provided support to LCDH (linguistic coding differences hypotheses). Meschyan and Hernandez (2000 cited in Sparks, et al. 1992a) in their study found that native language decoding skills predicted second language proficiency in adult students. It was also observed by the researchers (Bernhardt, 2000; Weber, 1991) that various similar types of skills are required to comprehend both L1 and FL. As it is usually seen that FL reading comprehension skills in most of the cases have something common as native language reading skills as both are sensitive to the same variables like background knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, verbal working memory, strategy knowledge and meta cognition (see Miyake & Friedman, 1998 and for review, Bernhardt, 2000). In relation to this Ferrari and Palladino's(2007) study found that group differences in reading accuracy and speed were not statistically significant and LR FL learners scored average in reading accuracy and their reading speed was compatible with the average performance for their age and grade. The results of their study indicate that many foreign language learners experience same kind of difficulties as was highlighted in Sparks et al (1992a, 1992b). When Ferrari and Palladino compared the HR and LR FL on phonology, syntax, and semantic measures, differences were noticed in the first two areas but not in the latter. The outcome of above mentioned studies may be applicable for the present study in determining the secondary students' linguistic difficulties that may be similar to the previous studies. Another important study, Japanese Language Students' Attitudes toward Kanji and Their Perceptions on Kanji Learning Strategies by Mori and Shimizu explored interpretable factors underlying Japanese language learners' attitudes toward Kanji and their self - reported Kanji learning strategies. Students learning Japanese as a second or foreign language often view Kanji as one of the most challenging aspects of Japanese language (Gamage, 2003; Mori, 1999a; Okita, 1997; Toyoda, 1995). There are a good number of studies on Japanese L2 students' views on Kanji learning (Gamage, 2003; Okita, 1997, 1998; Toyoda, 1995; Van Aacken, 1999), most of them focus on perception of difficulty and do not offer much insight into how such learner perceptions can facilitate kanji learning. The researchers conducted a questionnaire survey among college students learning Japanese as a foreign language. The result

showed multidimensionality of students' perceptions in learning Kanji. Perception of difficulty was found to be associated with negative attitudes towards Kanji learning which are, sense of helplessness, misbelieve, ineffective meta-cognitive strategies, morphological analysis, and extreme dependency on rote memorization. Through questionnaire survey it was revealed that multiple pronunciations in Kanji posed more difficulty for the students than visual complexity. However, this result may not be generalized in the sense that learners' perception of strategy use has relation to some other variables that were not investigated for the purpose of the study and this cannot be associated with the learners' achievement. It is evident according to Mori and Shimizu that a large portion of individual differences in learning strategy use could be attributed to language aptitude or L2 proficiency and factors other than students' perceptions play an important role in learning an L2 or foreign language. Moreover, individual's ability or linguistic knowledge alone does not explain sufficiently why some students attain higher proficiency than others, nor does it yield any useful suggestions for unsuccessful learners. An examination of learners' perceptions can provide more useful pedagogical insights as it offers explanatory accounts for individual differences: they approach a challenging task differently because of their various perceptions of the specific task.

To facilitate further support Ellis (2006) in his study, "Modeling Learning Difficulty and Second Language Proficiency: The Differential Contributions of Implicit and Explicit Knowledge", investigated students' learning difficulties in some selected grammatical items on the basis of their implicit and explicit knowledge. Unlike DeKeyser (2003, cited in Ellis, 2006) who distinguished grammatical difficulty in terms of objective and subjective difficulty, Ellis conducted his investigation in terms of implicit and explicit knowledge. Ellis claims that he was concerned with only subjective difficulty though as it is a relative concept, i.e. it may vary from learner to learner. Nevertheless there are a lot of learner variables that impact on learner's learning difficulty, but this is a universal feature of learning. This means the same item may be difficult or easy for all learners, this idea is strengthened by ~~one~~ study conducted by Dulay and Burt (1973) <sup>and</sup> Krashen (1977, cited in Ellis, 2006) (The natural order) in the field of SLA. So it is clear from this discussion that there exists a major problem regarding the notion of difficulty in both absolutist and universalistic

sense. This problem is perceived from the presentation of grammatical features in different syllabuses. For this reason Ellis (2006) in his study tried to find out what is easy or difficult to acquire as implicit knowledge or to learn as explicit knowledge. Ellis (2004, 2005) distinguished two types of knowledge and showed how these two types of knowledge are processed for learning and language use. After the presentation of their differences, he claimed that learning difficulty should be examined separately in relation to each type of knowledge. Ellis (2006) further contends that actually the criteria for measuring difficulties are a mixed bag full of input frequency (linguistic environment), linguistic factors (nature of grammatical features), and psychological difficulty (learn ability). Then Ellis explained the determinants of difficulty or ease of different grammatical features on the basis of the studies by N. Ellis (1999); Goldschneider and DeKeyser (2000); Hulstijn and De Graaf (1994) and Pienemann (1999). For conceptual clarity Krashen (1982) distinguished formal and functional structures. As example of formal or functional simplicity of the structures he mentioned about articles which have only three forms and seem to be very simple in their form but are very complex in their function. There are however some other examples of grammatical features which are very simple in their form but very complex in their function. However Ellis (2006)'s study explored relative difficulty of a range of grammatical features in terms of learners' implicit and explicit knowledge of them. Main findings suggested that difficulty of grammatical structures varied according to the two types of knowledge and structures that are easy in terms of implicit knowledge may be difficult in terms of explicit knowledge or vice versa.

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To establish the idea of grammatical difficulty Esma (2004)'s study provides a strong evidence of students' learning difficulties in English and their strategies; as her study was in the same line having the title: Secondary School Students' Perceptions of Learning Difficulties and Strategies, which is a part of her bigger study conducted among junior secondary students of Tunis. In the study she collected self reported data on all the four language skills from the students. She started with the assumption that the students' difficulties would be linguistic and reasons would vary from course level, sex/gender, socioeconomic and cultural background and their strategy use and frequency would also vary with gender. The respondents were from grades 6 and 7

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totaling number 130 of which 91 were females and 39 were males. Data were collected through two sets of questionnaires. Her respondents identified listening and writing as the hardest skills in learning English. All respondents irrespective of sex and socioeconomic backgrounds informed vocabulary, meaning, and accent, pronunciation as the major obstacles encountered while listening. They put less emphasis on topic, content, fact, ideas, and grammar. In this skill teachers' responses were in total agreement with the students. In writing skill together with mechanics they had identified similar problems as in listening. There were differences of opinions between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders; they agreed on grammar, vocabulary, meaning but the 6<sup>th</sup> graders put more importance on mechanics, argumentation and exemplification. However, on the whole grammar, vocabulary, meaning, and writing mechanics were the trickiest items for both male and female students; but the discrepancy was observed among various socioeconomic groups. Most of the respondents mentioned that their main impediments in speaking were to think first in French then translating in English. They had to face problems of lack of knowledge of English grammatical rules, use of vocabulary and pronunciation. While reading they confronted with the same problems as in speaking, in addition to that lack of motivation had a major role. The researcher sums up that the target group of her research had linguistic difficulties mainly and had some lexical, semantic, grammatical and phonetic problems and their difficulties were cognitive. Concerning gender Esma found similar result as of other researchers in the field that girls lacked self assurance more than boys. The respondents also added that they apply a number of strategies both social and affective to overcome the difficulties.

Similar type of findings provide strong evidence of existence of phonological, lexical, and grammatical difficulties in English among the students of Hong Kong secondary school where Adams (1993) conducted a research to identify the problems of English language learning difficulty. Adams' study was divided into two projects. In the first project he defined the concept of difficulty from the perspective of different view point and compared the errors of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> language learners as well as the perception of difficulty of both teachers and students. Second part of his study was concerned with the areas of difficulty identified prominently by students and teachers (linguistic factors); the general learning environment (sociological/logistic factor) and



the learning style and approach (a main psychological factor). Through three close classroom observation he attempted to find out the teachers' intervention to overcome the difficulties. The study concluded that according to both teacher and students' conception of difficulty socio-psychological factors figure prominently, but not predominantly. It was also revealed that teacher and students do not always have the same conception about the difficulty. Students seem more concerned with basic language knowledge than their teachers. Non-linguistic factors also appeared important in the conception of language learning difficulty. Teachers have ample opportunities to encounter the difficulties of the students but they rarely intervene. However Adams proposed a model of Transactional Analysis as an intervention in the form of further research area. Two researchers, Smith and Tajino advocated for explorations of teachers' and students' views of difficulty which may provide insights helping to sustain teachers' and students' motivation over long periods of time required to build second language vocabulary. Their study was on how upper secondary school teachers view the difficulties their learners face in learning new words. The study found some consensus on relative difficulty of the words though there was a wide range of principled reasons for teachers' beliefs. This may be due to their variety of teaching situations. It also suggested that the discovery of the words being difficult or easy to learn may be important but to identify the reasons of ease or difficult, whether actual or perceived appears to be more important in providing a ground for taking decisions about teaching and learning. Furthermore, it proposed that teachers who use frequency lists in their teaching can experiment with their sub-lists as an attempt to confirm their perceptions of the degree and cause of learner difficulty.

One significant research in the area of difficulty of mechanics of writing was done by Mugnarbil, Hanan (1999). Their study, Second Language Learners' Punctuation: Acquisition and Awareness, focused on the types of writing problems the second language learners encounter. The study also aimed to investigate the order of acquiring the punctuation marks by the second language learners, the difference in their placement accuracy between monitored and unmonitored punctuation conditions and their awareness of punctuation rules. Two groups of second language learners were selected as low and high English proficiency on the basis of a writing scale

prepared by the American Language Institute at the University of Southern California. The groups were given two conditions to complete the activity, for the unmonitored condition, compositions written by the two groups were collected and analyzed for correct usage of punctuation marks. For the monitored condition, a set of thirty sentences was distributed to the participants of both the groups and were asked to punctuate the sentences as well as describe the rules of their own punctuation use. The scripts were analyzed for correct placement of punctuation marks and awareness of rules. It was found that most correctly used punctuation mark was the period in L2 learners' own piece of writing discourse. On the other hand the semicolon was the least correctly used mark in the writing of advanced L2 learners' own discourse. In the similar way, proficient L2 learners often misused the comma in their writing discourse. While both advanced and less advanced L2 learners were asked to focus on form, the exclamation mark was the least often correctly placed mark by both the groups. In a monitored condition, both L2 proficient and less proficient groups were unable to articulate the rules of punctuation marks they used. In addition to that the study revealed that in an unmonitored condition the period and the semicolon were the first and the last punctuation marks respectively to be acquired by the groups. In consistent with above mentioned studies, there is one experimental study found conducted in the field of language communication problem.

The researcher, Clark, Margaret Lou (1999) investigated the use of suggestopaedia in teaching French as a second language to English speaking Tamil students born and residing in Auroville. For experimental design an international community located in South Bulgaria was selected to determine any significant difference in language learning theory. Both control and experimental groups comprised 20 members. No pre test was necessary for any group in French. Observational data of suggestopaedia were collected through video tape recording. At the end of the course vocabulary test was administered to each group. Using a questionnaire with Lickert type 5 point scale the researcher tested the hypothesis, "there will be a significant difference in second language proficiency between a control group traditionally taught and an experimental group exposed to suggestopaedia". The analysis was done statistically with the help of ANOVA to measure any exact significant difference between the two groups on the basis of the test scores. Then the results were compared to determine the relative

effectiveness of each teaching method. Findings asserted significant difference in the achievement of the test scores in favour of the experimental group. They showed their positive attitude towards suggestopaedia and preferred it over the traditional method. The teacher also supported that suggestopaedia was more effective, especially in the area of listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

A host of studies have been conducted in the field of difficulty in India. Among them, N.S. Nair investigated the common language difficulties in English of the children of classes VIII, IX, X in Kerala and identified the causes of these difficulties. On the basis of the findings he suggested methods to prevent the difficulties and correct them. For the purpose of the study he corrected 1362 scripts and analyzed the errors on the basis of the following criteria: a) common difficulty of the pupils of that class b) mistakes of the same type which are found in pupils' writing with a high percentage of frequency and diffusion have been classified as common language difficulties in English of the secondary school pupils. A strict kind of classification was difficult though one kind of error merged into another, the common language difficulties as reflected by the errors were classified as follows: i) difficulties with structure and patterns ii) difficulties in the area of verbs and verb forms iii) difficulties regarding vocabulary (words, phrases, and idioms) iv) difficulties with spellings and v) difficulties related to punctuation. Findings of Nair's study suggested that more than 60% of the total errors were in the area of grammatical structures and the reason for that was the distance of sequence of words in sentences of the students' native language. Twenty percent of the grammatical errors was in the use of articles and the causes of errors in the use of preposition were due to the inability of the students in fixing the preposition in a group of words. Lack of sufficient vocabulary created difficulty in students' writing also. Students' poor reading habit contributed to their misspelling of words. Punctuation mistakes were identified owing to the absence of its practice in the class. It was also revealed in Nair's study that students are unable to use appropriate "object" after the transitive verbs. Nair 's findings are consistent with the findings of Jing, Adams, and Esma, all of them found grammatical and lexical difficulty as the most frequently prevalent among the foreign language learners. Nair suggested not only to avoid the wrong practices of correction of mistakes but also presented desirable methods of correction in his study.

Like Nair, Dave and Saha (1968) identified the common errors in English and suggested remedial treatment. For the purpose of the study they collected 92 scripts from the higher secondary examination board of education, Delhi. Their area of investigation was restricted to errors of grammatical structures, errors of words, phrases and idioms, errors of punctuation and errors of spelling. The important findings of the study included 45% of the errors were in grammatical structures and the next highest percentage of error was identified in spelling. Nearly nineteen percent errors were found in lexical use and in the usage of idioms. On the other hand errors in the punctuation was not that much significant. The researchers recommended that early years of teaching learning to be spent effectively in ensuring consolidation of sentence patterns in pupils' minds. Special attention should be directed towards preventing pupils' mistakes spill over into the secondary course.

In a similar attempt Misra (1968) using a questionnaire survey from a large sample of 820 teachers and interviewing 500 other teachers and through 150 classroom observation tried to find out the practical difficulties of teachers in teaching language. Findings of the study revealed that nearly 66% teachers experienced difficulty in teaching prose for explanation, paraphrase and meaning. More than 50% teachers preferred translation method, most of the teachers felt the lack of facilities, all of them felt the necessity of daily newspaper as authentic materials but very small number of them encouraged students to read news paper. Teachers reported that wrong pronunciation of the students was caused for misspelling of words. Fifty percent of the teachers considered teaching explicit grammar useful whereas 25 % of the teachers claimed that functional and applied grammar are more useful. To the experienced teachers teaching grammar is most challenging due to the shortage of time, lengthy syllabi, 65% teachers did not have time to teach composition. Students faced difficulties in construction of sentences, expression of ideas and composition. Most of the teachers complained about students not doing their homework and the present examination system tested only students' memory and knowledge. Misra's findings are important in the sense that the study was conducted more than three decades back but still they are consistent with recently conducted studies. This analysis indicates that through the years the situation has not been changed a little.

A recent study conducted in the field of writing by Mohammad (1986) is mentionable here as it identified major errors in written English of pre degree students and classified the errors into major functional and grammatical areas and gives the impression that the errors committed by the foreign language learners are very common and have distinctive features. The researcher categorized the errors into major proportions according to their importance and identified the causes of errors. Data collection tools included diagnostic test, intelligence test, general data sheet, interview, and consultation. Seven hundred samples were selected from affiliated colleges of the University of Calicut. Then the researcher divided the sample into 29 categories depending on 12 variables that were supposed to influence the proportion of errors. Major findings included: a) errors in 17 grammatical areas by the whole group b) significant differences were found in mean scores of errors in all the grammatical areas among the sub groups in pairs like; urban-rural; boys and girls; c) 22 subgroups had significant in the percentage of the incidence of errors in different grammatical areas; d) negative correlation was identified between errors and achievement in English.

Very few of the researches discussed above provide evidence of socio economic problems of the learners. Concerning this Sharma (1986)'s study may be discussed as his major findings suggested that socio cultural problems caused the standard of English become gradually lower. Efficient teaching was absent due to the lack of trained teachers. Misconception about ELT, traditional methods of teaching, uninteresting text and their mishandling by both teachers and students were identified as some of the common problems of secondary school. At college level the problems varied from use of faulty method to teaching literature rather than linguistics items etc. The study also found that students encounter difficulty in pronunciation, sounds of their mother tongue interfered in their pronunciation of English. Controversies existed regarding the aims and objectives of teaching English at various stages. Further attempts to establish psycholinguistic factors responsible for students' learning difficulties in English include Chandra (1988) who investigated the factors which contributed to the success of some and failure of others. Besides, the researcher further attempted to validate a model of language learning. Specific objectives of the study were to identify the linguistic and psycholinguistic factors related to enhancing

writing skill and to examine the interrelatedness of the factors among the sampled group of students. Taking 560 samples (both boys and girls) from 16 higher secondary schools data were collected using questionnaire, objective test of grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing composition in English and Tamil. Results of the tests were analyzed applying various statistical formats. Major findings consisted of; a) the existence of significant correlation among the proficiency in English, the linguistic, psycholinguistic factors such as knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, positive attitude towards English, syntactic and lexical usage, family background, parents' occupation, habits of reading and the opportunity to use English outside the classroom; b) writing proficiency in English was found to be strongly correlated with the status of the family, education and income of parents. On the other hand gender or location of the school did not have any influence in their writing proficiency rather it was related to the medium of instructions, i.e. the English medium students excelled more than their Tamil counterpart. c) Correlation was found between the achievement of English and other school subjects. d) Students' perception of their performance was also correlated with their proficiency in written English. Chandra's (1988) findings might have a strong base for investigation in the present study as the present study also aims to explore the interrelatedness among the linguistic and psycholinguistic variables.

In line with this Jayashree (1989) attempted to identify the difficulties in teaching and learning English as second language among the high school students in her study, "Identification of the difficulties in teaching and learning English as a second language among the high school students." Among her seven objectives, consistent with the present study are a) to find out gender based differences in their experience of difficulties in teaching English, b) to identify the learning difficulties of the high school students in ESL, d) to determine in which area of study the students encounter more difficulty in learning English prose or English grammar. Using a questionnaire responded by 50 teachers and through a seminar attended by 30 teachers she found out that teachers faced great difficulty in making students understand English and that students delayed in answering teachers' questions because students were short of vocabulary. The teachers also reported that students' comprehension ability was normal and their participation in English class was not good.

In this regard Sarma's (1991) study provides further evidence of errors caused by linguistic, psychological and sociological factors. He aimed to suggest necessary changes in the approach to teaching as well as in the development of teaching materials and methodology. Collecting data from 207 Assamese students of class XI studying at three higher secondary schools and a college, he discovered that learners committed errors in 73% of the sentences and the most frequent errors were in the areas of verbs, tenses, passives, articles and prepositions and the serious type of errors comprised of word order, S.V. agreement, verbs, lexical items, sequence of tenses, prepositions, articles and yes, no questions. Use of 'the', prepositions, s-v agreement, negative formations, conditional and relative clauses, passive expressions, and sequence of tenses proved very difficult items for the sampled group in grammar. Major sources of errors were in language transfer and were at syntactic level.

Singaravelu (2001) conducted a very significant study of students' difficulties in learning English. His study was concerned with identifying problems related to learning English. He adopted normative survey method. He selected 570 students of both sexes from 38 high schools covering all the types in Thiruvavarur district. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires, one for the students and the other for the teachers. Besides, an achievement test was administered to identify students' problems in learning English. Other than these sample groups a few interviews were conducted with some relevant personnel, like the head teachers, education administrators, parents, and community members for first hand information. The findings of the study suggest that the higher secondary students in Thiruvavarur district have specific problems in writing essays, using phrases and idioms, transformation of sentences, stress shift, pronunciation, faults in intonation pattern, shortage in vocabulary, wrong expressions, errors in punctuation marks and mistakes in the structure and grammar. The study concludes that lack of audio-visual aids, computer technology, and library are major causes of the existing problems of the students. It was also found that remedial teaching is required for the rural students who study English as a second language. Teachers hesitate to speak in English in their class room teaching, there is a great need for using modern technologies in the classroom. The major recommendations of the study include: a) create awareness for the need of English language among the rural students, b) organize training program and

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workshops for changing teachers' attitudes and for improving the quality of teaching, c) poor condition rural schools should be provided with library books and modern equipments like audio-visual materials for effective teaching, d) evaluation should focus on the language skills rather than memory test, e) the students should be encouraged to take part in debate, elocution, discussion and drama at higher secondary schools. The researcher recommended for further studies on problems of teaching in the same area, remedial teaching, in-service programs for teachers and on textbooks.

To add sufficient support to the previously done studies, Swift (1993) discussed five reasons that he examined for poor performance in the area of language during the ten years period of his teaching and research. The reasons were cited by people from different industrial backgrounds though learners believe them to be valid. It was proved in many instances that these reasons together with other reasons have contributed to the psychological debilitating influence in learning of a language; even in some cases it instilled negative attitudes among the learners before the beginning of the course. In his article Swift (1993) presented the importance of each of the reasons and suggested why and how they were important as well as attempted to explore the ways, the trainer can help reduce the excuses of the learners in a language program. For this reason it is important for the language trainers to be cognizant of in depth understanding of the actual problems the learners encounter during their course of study. Thus the trainers become able to design courses suitably meeting the demands of the learners. Five reasons that the author identified are discussed in brief.

**Choice of foreign language:** selection of an appropriate foreign language often creates problems for the business executives as not all the markets require the same language. Sometimes it becomes the responsibility of the trainers to guide their learners in their selection but the trainers expect their learners to resolve the issue before enrolling on the program. In the real sense this is not an easy matter to decide on the part of the customer either. There are so many things to be considered before determining the suitability of the language by the executives, as there are categories like market languages, languages of marketing value and language of market contact. Theoretically no language is easy to learn, that also depends on so many factors among which psychological factors are not less important. One of the research



questions of the present study is to ascertain the possible link between the psycholinguistic factors and the difficulties students encounter in learning English. Among the psycholinguistic factors anxiety is a dominant one.

So, some studies on anxiety were also reviewed. The first study considered on anxiety is by Kunt, Naciye (1997) who investigated beliefs about language learning and FL anxiety of 882 Turkish students studying at the preparatory schools of two universities located in North Cyprus. The researcher also identified the relationship among the FL anxiety level and the beliefs about language learning using the BALLI (Horwitz, 1983a, 1987), the FLCAS (Horwitz, 1983b) and a background questionnaire. Findings suggested that the sampled group's language learning beliefs were different from other students in previous studies. FLCAS scores revealed Turkish students' lower level of foreign language learning anxiety than the other students in previous studies. It was concluded in the study that this variation of anxiety level may be owing to the result of the different cultural backgrounds.

In the area of relationship between anxiety and language learning difficulties, Chang and Goretti (2004) tried to explore the possibility of the existence of causal links between anxiety and language learning difficulties. Using Horwitz's classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) they attempted to identify learning difficulty variables. After application of varying statistical analysis they found 36.80% variance of anxiety in learning difficulties. It was also revealed from their study that some anxious students had a history of English learning problems like obtaining low grades, suffering difficulties with classroom learning and exhibiting poor developmental skills. In this respect the study of Na (2007) is mentionable as she found out that high anxiety plays debilitating role in high school students' learning of language. In her study Na also mentioned some other studies conducted in mainland China, all of which using Horwitz's scale, FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) found negative correlation between anxiety and achievement. All the previous studies were conducted among the college students so Na selected high school students as her participants. Na also compared the anxiety of males and females. She also used an achievement test in her study to see the students' achievement in English. Her findings provided support that high school students had the feeling of anxiety in their English classrooms and they experienced fear of negative evaluation. As reasons for

highly anxious students suggested that those of low ability were more inclined to use 'bottom up' learning strategies for the oral test, such as memorization and translation. Wilson's study also revealed that participants' expected grades were statistically and significantly correlated with their language anxiety. It implied that more anxious the students were, the lower the grades they thought they would obtain in this subject. It showed that participants' language anxiety was seen to correlate negatively and significantly with their actual course grades, as measured by the oral test score and by the average mark for their written test, implying that more highly anxious students had lower expectations of their test marks and in fact they did more poorly in their tests.

Similarly, in a study of reading anxiety in three languages (French, Japanese, Russian) using end of semester grades "as a global measure of performance Saito et al.(1999, p.211) found that students with higher levels of reading anxiety received significantly lower grades than the students with lower anxiety level. In addition to the above studies, Cheng (2000) who examined language anxiety in relation to the writing skill, used students' marks for their end of course writing grades as a measure of achievement. Cheng (2000) also found negative relationship between the grades and anxiety.

Very scanty number of researches on English language learning and teaching has been found in Bangladesh. Nevertheless two remarkable researches have been done on motivation. Rahman (2006) explored various socio-psychological orientations of undergraduate students of private universities of Bangladesh towards learning English. He came up with the result that in case of Bangladeshi students except only one statement that falls under integrative orientation according to Gardner and Lambert's theory, all other statements supported to be instrumental. In the context of Bangladesh he found out that the dominant and primary objective of learning English proved to be instrumental or utilitarian. That means students at undergraduate level learn English to get a good job or to pursue higher study abroad. Rahman's (2006) findings completely rejected the ideas presented by the other researchers in this field, Maniruzzaman and Haque (2000) who claimed in their research that integrative orientation is the dominant motivation for the students in Bangladesh. Comparing his result with Agnihotri and Khanna, Lukmani (1972 cited in Rahman, 2000) Rahman

evidenced that even in a country like India where English is one of the official languages, students learn English for instrumental purpose. On the other hand, there is no scope for English to be the national language, so instrumental orientation seems to be the only driving force for learning English in Bangladesh. But the presence of integrativeness may not be ignored at all. Another interesting finding of Rahman's study is that all the respondents felt the need for learning English important even at their graduation level. Moreover they reported that they were not properly taught at their secondary level which is responsible for their low performance in English as a whole. Their secondary level English put emphasis on grammatical competence rather than communicative function. But they expressed their satisfaction with both course content and teaching style at the university. Therefore it shows that mode of instruction has a significant role to play in determining their attitudes towards learning English. This idea is also supported by previous other researches (Singaravelu, 2001) which advocated for teachers' teaching competency to be developed to assist learners' skill in English.

Mahmud (2009) has conducted a research on anxiety, in which applying adapted version of Howitz's anxiety scale (FLCAS), he tried to explore whether there is any anxiety among the junior secondary students while learning English. His study, the area being the capital city did not give him sufficient evidence to prove that anxiety exists, but the teachers of these groups of students affirmed that anxiety is often experienced by the students during some specific occasions like speaking publicly, speaking with native speakers, and of course examination anxiety is prevalent among these group of students. This happens as the students tend to learn English as an academic subject not as a language tool to be used for real life communication. Besides, they usually struggle with the grammar rules, their achievement is measured through their scores in the examination and for the purpose of their examination they rely on rote learning which is another vital point that emerged from the study.

A single study on students' difficulty in learning English was found in the context of Bangladesh. The study was conducted by Qader (1999) at the Institute of Modern Languages (IML) of Dhaka University. She tried to explore students' perception of English in general. In addition to 3 research questions she had some hypotheses relating three areas of listening, speaking and teaching material. Her methods of study

were mainly observation and students' diaries. Usually at the institute students are categorized through placement tests and placed into five different proficiency levels before they start their courses. The researcher included the group she taught in her study as samples who had three different levels of proficiency. The age ranged from 18—50 years. Accordingly their educational level also varied. But the things that were common about the groups are their motivation to learn English, minimum level of education, mixed gender groups and the components of the course. The researcher elicited data mainly from day-to-day diary writing by the participants and taking significant notes during classes. The participants did their writing for two to three months. In her findings she mentioned that worry was common to all levels. According to the participants they worried for various reasons; speaking in front of people, making mistakes, complete the course without achieving any fluency, low grades in exam etc. Besides, the participants informed of their difficulty of encountering unknown words, not understanding the meaning, pace of speaking, unfamiliar pronunciation and unfamiliar subject matter while listening. Grammar was in the second position of their difficulty list. Their difficulty list of grammar consisted of perfect tenses, linking words, prefixes and suffixes, articles etc. The respondents found speaking most difficult due to their lack of knowledge of correct tenses, lack of appropriate vocabulary and their inability to select the right words to form sentences for conversation. In case of reading and writing their difficulties were somewhat similar in the sense that they did not have sufficient knowledge of grammar, mechanics of writing, and stock of vocabulary etc. In addition to that, idiomatic use of language, phrasal verbs and colloquial use of English posed difficulty for them in reading any English texts other than their prescribed texts. The researcher suggested that to arouse the interests of the students teachers should help students to remove their inhibition by taking care of their curiosity and anxiety which may inhibit or facilitate their learning.

To add further information to this Sinha (1997) conducted a simple survey in her class at the University of Dhaka where she teaches English to undergraduate students. She distributed three sets of questionnaires among the students. The first set contained questions that required respondents to fill in the gaps with different grammatical items, such as articles, preposition, and making sentences with idioms and phrases,

matching verbs with their subjects, joining sentences with relative pronouns, changing sentences from one form to another etc. The second set was based on writing essays and answering comprehension questions and composing dialogues. In the last set she investigated students' speaking problems, and pronunciation. But due to some limitations of implementing oral tests she had to put more emphasis on the writing part. Following the suggestion of Duskova (1969 cited in Sinha, 1997) regarding observation of error analysis she categorized the errors into 10 types according to their seriousness and frequency of occurrence. She calculated the results in terms of percentage of errors. In her calculation the highest percentage of errors occurred in subject verb agreement (85%). Next highest was articles and preposition, 80%, 75% respectively, next category was sentence structure and tense and pronunciation, the percentage being 70. Whereas vocabulary and word order were ranked at 65%. The lowest percentage of errors occurred in spelling and relative words. After analysis Sinha (1997) revealed 7 sources of these errors: a) interference of Bangla, b) transfer of L1 knowledge. c) incomplete application of rules, d) ignorance of rule restrictions, e) overgeneralizations, f) inadequate teaching techniques, g) lack of enough exposure etc. Findings of Sinha regarding grammatical difficulty are consistent with other studies conducted in Bangladesh.

In the same way Rahman (1996) conducted a survey among the first year university students to investigate some of the problems in ELT in Bangladesh, like why and how the prevailing English language teaching methods failed to satisfy students' need in learning to speak English accurately and fluently. Using two separate sets of questionnaires (one for students and another for teachers) she tried to verify opinions of the groups about ELT. Her findings revealed some interesting facts about the present method of ELT which is supposed to be CLT, as CLT was introduced in 1990. So, at the time of her study the students were supposed to be taught in this new method. Students commented on their learning of English that they studied English not only as a compulsory subject but they also wanted to develop English for its practical value in the modern world. But in most cases they felt lack of confidence in using English in real life situation. This finding shows that the objective set in the curriculum that students should be able to use English in their daily life is far from the achievement of the students. Students expressed their dissatisfaction about the

method. It is noteworthy to comprehend that there is a big gap between their actual needs and their classroom practices. Regarding English language learning difficulty, a vast majority of them complained that form based grammar study and memorization were most difficult aspects of learning English. Vocabulary learning by memorization was the least difficult aspect of learning English. Contrary to the usual practice, it is interesting to know that memorization of quite a good number of long essays and paragraphs seemed to be the most difficult but learning vocabulary through memorization was the easiest one. In the study Rahman (1996) also discovered that students felt very frustrated, and often got bored to go through repetitious lessons and they did not understand anything about their study of English like why, what, how they are reading, saying and hearing in English. In a nut shell it can be summarized that their experience of learning English was very disgusting, which they dread to memorize at the time of the study. In every field there was mismatch between students' expectations and teachers' ideas, teaching methods, and students' learning style, classroom practices etc. Only consistency was found between teachers and students opinions on the evaluation system, which is standardized and encourages competition among students rather than cooperative learning, which requires students' involvement in pair and group works. On the other hand teachers reported that activities in the classroom cannot be practised due to the lack of sufficient time so it was their claim that duration of periods should be increased. In her recommendation Rahman proposed to develop need based curriculum, delivering grammar lessons interestingly, creating opportunities for the students to practise language skills, avoiding normal tests and including both theoretical and practical evaluation. This finding is similar to Qader and Begum both of them proposed to review the evaluation system which ultimately impacts teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh.

For having a better understanding of the classroom situations in Bangladesh Roshid's (2009) study was consulted. In the study Roshid examined the gaps between the curricular perspective and the real classroom situation. He was able to prove that only two skills (Reading and Writing) are practised in the classroom. The other two skills listening and speaking are totally neglected.

There is mismatch between the opinions of the teachers and the students.

So far whatever studies have been conducted in the field of ELT, was not sufficient to provide updated data. In this respect English in Action (EIA, 2009) conducted baseline surveys are reliable as well as vital to supplement the understanding of the present status of ELT in Bangladesh. English in Action (EIA) a nine year project is designed to change the way of learning English in Bangladesh. Most importantly, research is at the core of its all other activities. A jointly funded project by the Government of Bangladesh and the UK Government started operation in 2009. In order to assess the overall environment of English language learning and teaching (ELT) in Bangladesh, EIA has conducted 7 baseline studies. The surveys provide indispensable insights and evidence relating to different aspects of ELT in Bangladesh. Brief description of the surveys is presented here. Base line 1 identified that teachers are teaching students at higher levels than their own ability in the language. Base line 2 investigated the “Socio-Linguistic Factors” and examined motivations and barriers for learning English. It also identified the demand for English language in the job market. Besides, teachers’ ‘pedagogical practices” were investigated through base line 3. In the same way base line 4 and 5 explored the areas of “Existing materials for primary and secondary education system” and “Teachers’ training for primary and secondary schools in Bangladesh” respectively. The rest two studies were regarding exploring current media and technology provision to be used for school students, teachers and adults in the community. After completion of the baseline surveys of EIA studies have become significant additions in the field of ELT to provide better understanding of the in depth insights into the actual situations of ELT in Bangladesh.

Most recent study conducted by Rashed(2011) analysed students’ errors committed in their composition. Rashed categorized the errors in to four categories and found that students’ errors were mainly morphological which includes articles, pronoun, wrong choice of tense , wrong construction of verbs, gerunds, infinitives etc. the percentage was 26.57. Highest number of errors was in the area of lexis, the percentage being 28.02%. Next highest number of errors was identified as syntactic errors, the percentage was 22.23%. Spelling errors occurred 14.48%. Very insignificant number of errors happened in the area of mechanical errors. In identifying the reasons for committing the errors Rashed found that interference of the students’ native language

was on the most part for the categorized errors. Besides, the researcher identified some other errors which he categorized as careless errors. In examining the reasons of their errors Rashed found out that this happens due to the structural difference between the students' native and language and the target language.

In relation to difficulty in learning English similar opinion expressed by Hamid (2000). Hamid contends that word-formation in Bangla and English is quite different, so it may create difficulty for the Bangla speaking students. Specially the students may feel that the basics of English word formation are insufficient. Because the real identity of a word can be seen only in its use or context, so he suggests that word formation should be studied along with semantics, syntax, word-class, pragmatics and usages. Otherwise it would be difficult for the students to identify that the sweetbread is no bread and sweetmeat is no meat. He also posits that these difficulties may vary from learner to learner and so their overall impact on learning English can be largely unpredictable. However, Hamid terms it unpredictable though it is evidenced from several studies that the difficulties students face in learning a foreign language like English is considerably consistent.

So on the basis of the reviewed literature and previously conducted significant studies, the current study will be conducted. From the above discussions it has become apparent that there are some difficulties which seem to be universal i.e. almost all foreign language learners experience some kind of difficulty at some point of their learning a second or foreign language. Among the common perceptions lack of vocabulary, some grammar items along with psycholinguistic factors contribute to the difficulties of the students (Jing 2005, Castro and Peck 2005, DiFino and Lombardino 2004, Ellis 2006, Esma 2004, Adams 1993, Quader 1999, and Rahman 1996). Again mismatch between learning style and teaching style has been explored previously by Ehrman 1996 and Allwright 1984. Developing conceptual frame work from the previous findings the researcher intends to explore the areas which have not yet been investigated in the context of Bangladeshi learners. She intends to include not only linguistic factors but also psycholinguistic factors. Besides, it has been proved in earlier studies that students' socio economic backgrounds have significant influence on their learning of English (James 2002 cited in Hamid 2009).



So, the present study will be conducted considering all the possible factors which may influence secondary level students' learning of English as a foreign language. Further, the differences in their difficulties on the basis of gender will also be examined. The findings of the study will definitely contribute to future planning of ELT programmes in Bangladesh. In this respect the researcher thinks that it will be a pertinent area to conduct research combining all those factors and to see their inter relationship. The next chapter outlines the methodology and the design of the research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

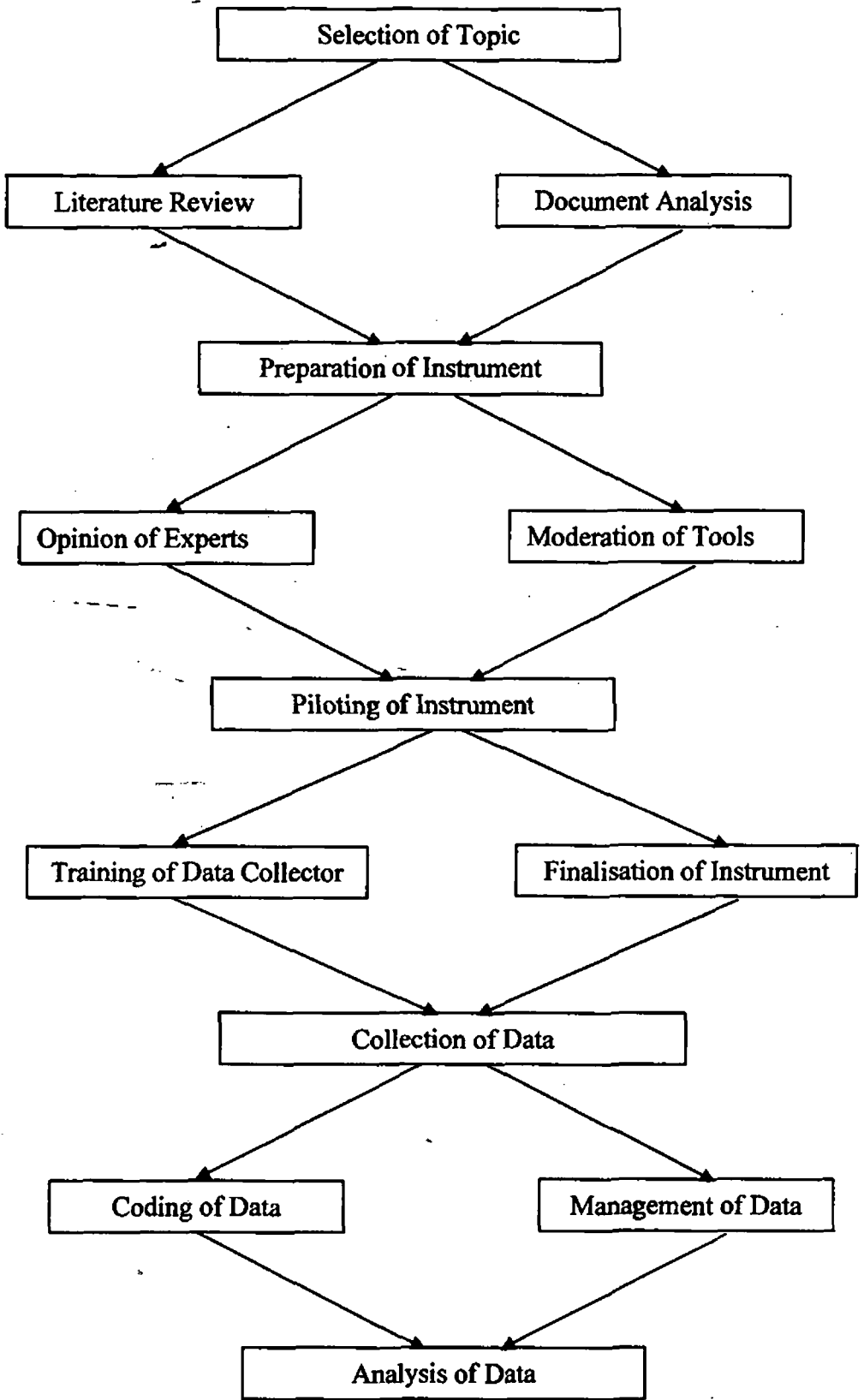
### METHODOLOGY

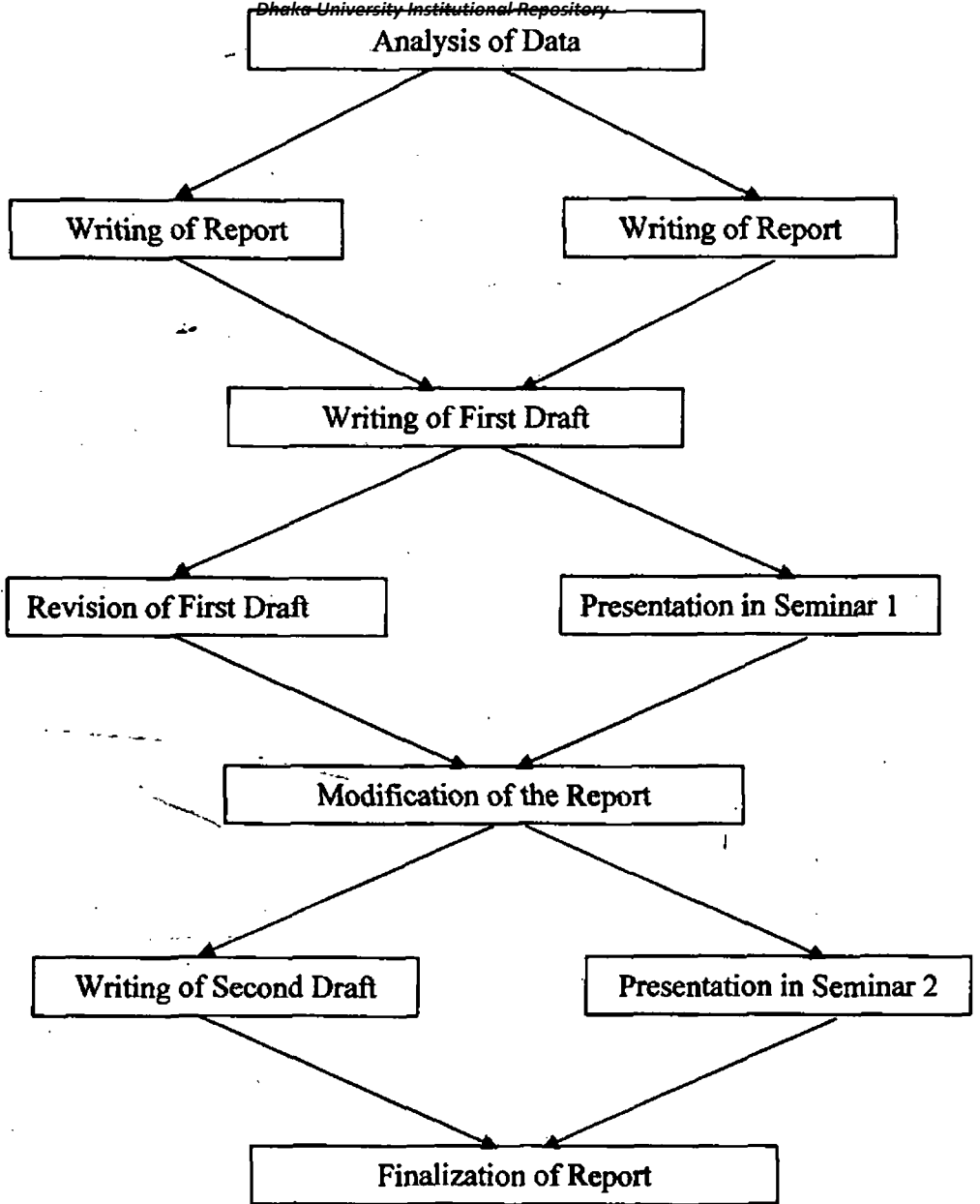
#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the design of the study and describes the methods of the research. In addition to giving the description of the research methods applied for the study, it presents the selection of sample, selection of site and the procedures of selection. Besides, it also presents the use and justification of tools and the process of their preparation, adaptation, piloting, revision, finalization, and translation.

#### 4.1 Research Design

A survey method was employed in order to obtain data from the subjects. In order to gather information depending on the research questions, the researcher used mixed method as it is important to understand both the subjective and objective realities. Together with Johnson and Christensen's (cited in Ghonaim, 2005) opinion, although it is important not to influence or bias what the researcher is observing, it is also important to get the insider's viewpoint, researcher opted for a mixed method. For the quantitative part two sets of questionnaires, one for students and another for teachers were used. For the qualitative part classroom observation, focus group discussion and expert's interview were conducted. Another reason for selecting mixed method was to add useful and complementary information to the study. So, the study was conducted following an organization plan. The figure of the plan is presented in the next page. Figure 4.1 shows step by step activity of the study. It can be seen that there were some activities done simultaneously and other tasks were done keeping relation with other tasks in the continuum.





## **4.2 Methods of the study**

This study employed multiple research methods for the purpose of triangulating quantitative and qualitative data sources. By employing a mixed method design (Creswell, 2003), the data from quantitative methods (using Howitz's scale) and qualitative methods (using students' open questions, FGDs, specialists' interview, classroom observation) was complementary and generated a more comprehensive picture of the difficulties of Bangladeshi secondary students' learning English. Multiple research methods of quantitative and qualitative research design including interviews and observation have been employed in the study. Specifically, the study used questionnaires, unstructured interview and observation. The questionnaires were used to find out both teachers' and students' opinions on the difficulties that students usually experience during the course when dealing with four basic language skills, their perception of their communicative abilities in English, their feelings about classroom activities, their opinions on the texts etc.

### **4.2.1 Quantitative method**

As the sample size of the study was relatively large, main strategy of this study was survey as a result it required to use quantitative method. Quantitative method was used to calculate data acquired from some sections of both students and teachers questionnaires. For analyzing quantitative data simple statistics as mean and percentage were calculated. Some descriptive statistics as correlation and chi square test were done to analyze and comprehend some of the research questions.

### **4.2.2 Qualitative method**

Qualitative method has also been used for the study as it sought to gain in depth insights into the research questions which eventually entailed that the use of qualitative method was the best for this type of study. Patton (1990, 2002) considers thick description in qualitative research as an advantage because the emphasis is on people, events and texts. Similarly Gay (1996) states that qualitative methods go beyond just mere descriptions of events and provide in depth understanding of the situation being studied. Gay posits that qualitative researchers are not just concerned with describing the way things are, but also with gaining insights into how things got

to be the way they are, how people feel about the way things are, what they believe, what meanings they attach to various activities, and so forth (p:13). A part of the study is related to the psycholinguistic variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy. So, some of the opinions were considered relevant to comprehend the suitability of the method. Investigations of language anxiety have been for the most part, quantitative studies primarily co relational studies (Price, 1991, p.101). But these studies failed to establish a reasonable relationship between anxiety and overall language acquisition, performance and proficiency (see Horwitz, et al, 1986; Scovel, 1987,1991; Ellis, 1994; Little, 1997; Horwitz, 2001). A different approach to studying the construct of language anxiety is needed in order to gain deeper insight into the issues of students' difficulties in learning a foreign language. One such approach is the qualitative research that was used in this research, as it allowed the researcher to obtain descriptive information on variables not easily assessed through empirical research and can provide a way to view phenomena from the point of view of the subject (Price 1991, p.101).

#### **4.2.3 Document analysis**

A considerable part of the study required to analyze the document to look for the past history of ELT in this part of the region as well as the objectives of teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh, present curriculum, its evaluation system etc. As Best and Kahn (1993) consider document to be significant sources of data collection that yield insightful information practices. Although questionnaire survey, interview, and classroom observation were used as major sources of information, document analysis, too, represented an insightful source of data for this study. This study partially, but crucially relied on the participants' self reported data. Erlandson et al. (1993) claim that documents include anything in existence before and during the investigation.

#### **4.2.4 Questionnaire survey**

The main aim of the study was to comprehend Students' own perceptions and teachers' opinions about the difficulties of English language learning at the secondary level. Data were collected through questionnaire survey. The study put emphasis on

self reported data, so questionnaire survey was a very important part of the present study.

#### **4.2.5 Observation**

The study included observation as Bryman(1988,p.77 cited in Ghonaim, 2005) notes that the typical observational study , field notes or extended transcripts are rarely available; these would be very helpful in order to allow the reader to formulate his or her own hunches about the perspective of the people who have been studied. In this regard it is also important to value Mason's (1996, p.25, cited in Ghonaim,2005) view: "Many qualitative case studies combine observation with interviewing. This may be because you have several research questions or because you want to use different methods or sources to corroborate each other so that you are using some form of methodological triangulation." In addition to that Schwandt (1997) defines observation as "directed first hand eye witness accounts of everyday social action" (p.106). Due to the nature of the present study, observation was a powerful way to collect data relevant to the research questions. In line with this Lincoln and Guba(1996) expressed that observation allows the enquirer to see the world as his/her subjects see it, to live in their time frames to capture the phenomenon in and on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its own natural ongoing environment.(p.273). Besides, Parkinson (1992, cited in Ghonaim,2005) suggests that observation should be a fruitful method of study.

#### **4.2.6 Students Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

Focus group discussion was included in the study as FGD is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out, asking people directly about what is going on is an obvious short cut in seeking answers to the research questions. Face to face discussion offers the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaire cannot (Robson, 1993).

#### **4.2.7 Selection of Site**

Among the 7 divisional cities in Bangladesh, six cities Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, and Sylhet were selected as the area of research. These divisions

have 64 districts and these districts are again divided into 493 upazillas. The study intended to cover the whole representation of Bangladesh, so the sites were carefully selected from 6 divisions. In all 24 upazillas were selected purposively depending on the communication facility of the researcher.

#### 4.2.7.1 Selection of Schools

The study tried to include as much as possible all categories of general education providing secondary schools; government, non government, boys', girls', co-education, rural, and urban schools.

#### 4.2.7.2 Selection of sample

The total number of the students was 360. They were selected from both classes IX and X. Distribution of the students according to the classes is shown in the Figure -5.1 (Appendix-A).

Among 360 students 94 were from class IX and 266 students were from class X.

Distribution of sex can be seen from a pie chart (see figure-5.2 in Appendix—A).

They were selected randomly from both classes IX and X. Teachers' selection was purposive in the sense that only the teachers who were engaged in teaching English in classes IX and X were picked up for responding to the questionnaire. The following table shows the selection of site and sample.

**4.1 Table: Distribution of samples in each upazilla**

Division	District	Upazilla	No. of schools	No. of teachers	No. of students
Dhaka	Dhaka	Sadar, Dhamrai	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Chittagong	Cox's bazaar	Sadar, Teknaf	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Barisal	Barguna	Sadar Patharghata	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Khulna	Jessore	Sadar Nawapara	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Rajshahi	Rangpur	Sadar Badarganj	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Sylhet	Sylhet	Sadar Sreemangol	2X2=4	4X2=8	4X15=60
Total= 6	6X1=6	6X2=12	12X2=24	24X2=48	24X15=360



#### **4.2.7.3 Selection of samples for FGD**

As suggested by Moxley (1986) students who seemed to be free and willing to share information were selected for FGD. The intention was to select participants whose responses to the questionnaire might represent drastically different opinions, in order to promote group interaction. However, it was evident from the participants' responses that they reported somewhat similar experiences. Yet, the focus group rendered significant findings. As mentioned above, the purpose of focus group interview was to gain overall responses to the research questions. Therefore the study followed Mishler (1986)'s advice that used the same prompts from the questionnaire. However the focus was not on how the individual student answered the assigned question because at that time data had already been collected through their responses regarding the issues of their difficulty. Rather the focus was on how students might respond to each other. Questions took the form of, "Do you agree with what s/he is saying? "Did you have the same experience?" Or Does anyone want to add something?" FGD was conducted after the questionnaire survey. Each school authority was contacted to select 8-10 students who were willing to participate in the focus group discussion ahead of time so that the researcher could be sure who would and who participate. Also this early contact helped researcher to arrange a time that matched with their schedules so that they may feel comfortable when conducting the FGD.

#### **4.2.7.4 Selection of experts**

The researcher selected 3 experts depending on various areas of ELT in Bangladesh. Among the 3 experts, one was a classroom teacher having experience of working as a question setter and board examiner, one of them was a teacher trainer working in a reputed government run teachers training college, and in a private tertiary level organization, and the other one was a curriculum specialist who has experience of developing curriculum, and worked as a project director of a government run ELT project, and was also involved in some policy level, editing the textbooks etc.

#### **4.2.7.5 Selection of Schools for class observation**

Twenty classes of English teachers from 12 upazillas were selected for observation. These classes were selected following the class routine of selected schools of the specific upazillas. No other criteria were considered.

### **4.3 Instruments**

#### **4.3.1 Questionnaire for students**

Three instruments were used in this study. One of them was students' questionnaire consisting of 3 sections; the first section was about students' backgrounds like their gender, the class in which they study, parents' education and occupation etc. The 2<sup>nd</sup> part had 6 multiple choice questions, one Likert type scale containing three parts, Part-I was an adaptation of motivation scale of Gardner and Smythe (1987) consisting of 5 items. Part-II was the adaptation of anxiety scale by Horwitz (1987) consisting of 10 items and Part-III was elements of self efficacy consisting of 5 items. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to elicit information about students' demographic characteristics and their socioeconomic condition. Moreover, the questionnaire included 8 open ended questions which aimed to explore students' own perceptions about their difficulties in English language skills and their prescribed text. (see appendix--B)

#### **4.3.2 Questionnaire for teachers**

There was another questionnaire developed for the teachers. The questionnaire contained 5 parts; part one was related to teachers' personal information, like educational and professional qualification, professional training, teaching experience etc. The second part was multiple choice questions regarding their opinions about their students' difficulties in various skills and classroom activities. The third part of the questionnaire was designed to find out their opinions about the psychological barriers of their students in learning English. The next part had only two questions regarding the text and the teachers' guide. The last part contained 5 questions through which the researcher tried to explore and reconfirm their perceptions about students' difficulties from different perspectives. (see appendix--B)

### 4.3.3 Observation checklist

The observation scheme has become quite sophisticated since they were first introduced (Nunan, 1992). One example of such a well developed and complex scheme is COLT (Allwright, Frohlich and Spada, 1984; Spada and Frohlich, 1995) an instrument intended to rate classroom activities on their communicative potential. Despite the growing sophistication of observation instruments, their respective degree of objectivity and reliability is still at issue. Allwright and Bailey state that the value of an observational schedule depends directly and exclusively on the reliability and validity of its categories (1991, p.13). Chaudron (1988) claims the reliability of most instruments has not been sufficiently proved (see also Allwright and Bailey, 1991). Genese and Upshur (1996, cited in Ghonaim, 2005) provide guidelines for the design of original observation schemes. Similar to Moskowitz (1971, cited in Ghonaim, 2005), they envision teachers observing themselves and making use of their observation for those everyday decision making processes required of them in the classroom. The design guidelines they suggest address the following issues: a) identify the what, i.e. those aspects of the teaching and learning process intended for observation b) identify the whom i.e. whether to focus on individual students or on group/whole class interaction; c) decide how often and when exactly to observe; and d) decide on the how, i.e. the form of record keeping (anecdotal records, checklists or rating scales). Since checklists consist of predetermined categories, Genesse and Upshur (1996) advise beginning teachers/teacher researchers to use anecdotal records to develop appropriate categories. Accordingly following the advice of Genesse and Upshur the checklist was developed and for extra observational record field notes were included to have the real picture of the teaching learning environment.

The checklist was used to observe the English classroom practices of the secondary schools. The checklist had three parts, the first one titled class structure / content which covered the behavioural pattern / efficiency of the teacher in class room in relation to guiding students' activities. The second part was regarding the teachers' use of methods/interaction in teaching of English. The last part was about students' activities/pattern of interaction the checklist had 5 point scale of both degree and frequency. Besides, Parkinson (1992, cited in Ghonaim, 2005) suggests that observation should be broken into phases, that notes on the lessons observed should

focus on the amount of involvement of individual learners and that observation categories should be related to 'specific modern ideas of language teaching' (by which he means CLT): the principles of authenticity; the information gap; error treatment and learner centredness. On the similar ground, Rivers (1987) argue that we need to observe and understand what is meant by non-interactive classroom where language learning is a tedious, dry –as-dusk process, devoid of any contact with the real world in which language use is-as natural as breathing. To maintain conformity with this there was provision for field notes in the form of comments to cover any missing point at the time of observation.

#### **4.3.4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline**

Four group discussions were conducted to supplement the data that were collected through questionnaires to reconfirm the issues related to their difficulties in English. The focus group discussions with the participants were conducted according to Dexter (1970)'s definition of the interviews as "a conversation with a purpose" (cited in Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 1996, p.268). The purpose of the focus group was to gather information from human sources. Maxwell (1996) asserts the value of discussions as they allow the data collectors and the participants to work back and forth, reconstruct the past, analyze the present and predict the future. Since this study was to investigate the learning difficulties of the students, discussion can be one of the best ways to know the participants' feeling and thoughts, as Patton (1990, 2002) puts it: we conduct discussion with people to find out from them the things which we cannot directly observe. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviour that took place at some previous point in time...we have to ask questions about these things. The purpose of letting them to talk is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective (p.195). The purpose of group discussion was to explore the participants' general experience and feelings regarding the issues at hand, and to gather information and to stimulate discussion in ways that supplemented the data collected through observation. Pappamihel explained that the main benefit of focus group data is their ability to uncover information that would not normally come out in a one-to-one interview or would be difficult to see through observation because such groups are often helpful in aiding participants in articulating their feelings and

reactions (p.335). Bers (1987) defines this type of discussion as a qualitative research technique in which a small number of respondents-generally 8-10 and a moderator participate in an unstructured group discussion about selected subjects(P:19). The FGD added weight to the other methods, helping to triangulate the data. The researcher speculated that the students' responses taken from FGDs would verify and expand on data elicited from questionnaires. FGDs are specially valuable in combination with other techniques (Morgan, 1988, p.39). The researcher believes that the use of group discussion has provided her opportunities to cross check data collected through other instruments and thus it is likely to strengthen the validity of the study.

#### **4.3.5 Interview schedule for experts**

Face to face interview was used to collect opinions of English language experts who have got long experience of working in various fields of ELT in Bangladesh. Interview was included in the methodology to comply with the view of Robson (1993); the interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out, asking people directly about what is going on is an obvious short cut in seeking answers to our research questions. Besides, the researcher approached interview with 5 language experts according to Dexter's (1970,cited in Ghonaim,2005) definition of the interviews or "as conversation with a purpose" (p.268). The purpose of the interview was to gather information from human sources. Maxwell asserts the value of interviews as they allow the interviewer and the interviewees to work back and forth, reconstruct the past, analyze the present and predict the future.

#### **4.3.6 Adaptation of the scale**

The questionnaire was distributed to the faculties of Institute of Education and Research, Dhaka University to seek their suggestions to check its validity and appropriateness. After having received their comments the questionnaire was finalized. To ensure greater validity, all the questionnaires were translated into Bangla by the researcher to minimize any possible errors from misunderstanding English.

#### **4.3.7 Piloting of the questionnaire**

The Bangla version of both teachers' and students' questionnaires were administered to 2 groups of students and four teachers of two rural and urban schools. The researcher herself was present to see whether they face any difficulty or if any of the items created any misunderstanding for them. It was also noticed whether it consumed much time or created any boredom for the participants. The researcher collected the questionnaires and analysed to find out if any question was left out by the participants without responding or any of the items was misunderstood. On the basis of the findings of the piloting the items which seemed difficult or confusing were revised.

Some items were rewritten and some of the items were rephrased to make them more easily comprehensible to the participants.

#### **4.3.8 Employment and training of Data Collectors**

Most of the data were collected by the researcher herself though there were some unavoidable consequences for which she had to employ some data collectors. She selected the collectors from her institute, as they are the students of a research institute and have experiences of collecting data. Besides, prior to their collection of data, the collectors were provided training on the procedure of data collection so that they can maintain the neutrality of the data collection process. They were also oriented in the process of how to create a rapport with the sample group of students and teachers so as to make them initiate the process of filling up the questionnaires and let them realize that this is an academic research so they can feel free to be honest in giving their opinions and this will cause no harm to them.

#### **4.3.9 Permission and accessibility**

For the collection of data first of all the researcher had to take prior permission from the ministry of education (see appendix-H-) to visit the selected area schools to avoid any kind of hassle with the school authority. She had copies of the permission letter and gave the letter to all the data collectors to submit it to the head teachers of each school for making their access easy in the selected school. For focus group interview

she had a meeting with the head teacher and asked his/her permission to conduct FGD with the students. She requested the head teacher to arrange for a time when the students are free to spare some time to fill out the questionnaire and on another date to sit for group discussion. To avoid any misconceptions she asked the head teacher to confirm the appointment time after consultation with the parents of the participants. It was also made clear to them that there was no compelling atmosphere and that at any moment of the procedure they were free to withdraw. For classroom observation she availed permission of the concerned teacher and also she had to ensure him/her that the observation might not pose a threat for them.

#### **4.3.10 Administering the study**

Administering the research tools is a very important stage of conducting any study. The present study used both qualitative and quantitative approach, the researcher had to go to the field by two phases to administer different tools. In most cases the researcher herself was present during the collection of data. In other places she sent trained data collectors and always kept contact with the data collectors to ensure the reliability of the study. In some cases she contacted the upazilla education office to have easy access to the schools and to get introduced to respective head teachers and English teachers.

#### **4.3.11 Process of Quantitative Data Collection**

The survey questionnaires were administered to the students in the selected schools listed in table-4.1. The researcher and the data collectors first visited each of the schools, met the head teacher and discussed the research and obtained permission to work with the students of classes 9 and 10. Then a time was fixed after discussion with the students. On the appointed time which was agreed according to their convenience, the researcher/data collectors went to work with the students. In one of the classrooms they met and the researcher described the study to them and asked them to fill up the questionnaire. For avoiding any misunderstanding the researcher explained some items and demonstrated some examples. All the students cooperated the researcher/data collectors very eagerly. In the same way the researcher met two English teachers in the selected schools and provided them the questionnaire and

requested them to fill up in their free time. In some schools the teachers returned the questionnaire immediately but in some schools teachers returned the questionnaire next day.

#### **4.3.12 Process of Qualitative Data Collection**

The qualitative data of the study were collected after the questionnaire survey. For FGDs students were contacted through their teachers. Permission also was sought from their parents so that on the appointed date they can stay longer time after school hour. On request head teachers of respective schools arranged for a classroom where the researcher met the students, explained them the study and generated discussion among the students.

In case of expert's interview, the experts were first requested for their consent to interviews. The researcher explained the study to them. They agreed to cooperate with the researcher, and then appointments were organized. Most of these experts were interviewed at their homes or work places. Only the teacher was interviewed in his school.

#### **4.3.13 Data Analysis Procedure**

After collection of all data, questionnaire data were coded. Computer entry was done. Quantitative data were analyzed applying simple statistics. For exploring the influence of socioeconomic factors on students' difficulty in learning English chi square tests were done.

#### **4.3.14 Ethical issues**

At present in any research area ethical issues are great concerns about which a researcher is required to be careful. Accordingly, before collecting data all the participants were made sure that they were not bound in any way, so they were free to give their opinion and in any way they will not be held responsible for their opinion. Whatever they will say will be kept secret. Similarly, it was ensured that teachers will never face any problem in service for giving their opinions. Data collected from them will be used only for the purpose of the research. This is an academic research so the results of the research will benefit them. The opinions given in this research have no



connection with their employing authority. <sup>Pharos University Institutional Repository</sup> So there is no threatening element for them.

The next chapter presents the data and analysis of the data. Then findings of the study according to the research questions have been discussed.

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **5.0 Introduction**

In this chapter the findings of the research and discussion on the findings have been presented. At first the collected data have been displayed and interpreted. Then the discussions have been done on the basis of the interpreted data. Data have been arranged according to the factors of enquiry of the research and have been regrouped into the category of respondents. First of all the background information of the respondents has been presented and discussed. At the end of this chapter the researcher tries to answer the research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative interpretations have been presented simultaneously. In quantitative analysis different statistical devices like mean, percentage, and chi square have been used. As the questionnaire was mainly self reported survey so in qualitative interpretation both students' and teachers' opinions have been presented as it is i.e. special care has been paid not to miss-present their views. Some of their views have been quoted in original.

### **5.1 Background information of the respondents**

The first part of the survey was about general information of the students. They were asked to respond to eight questions. Specifically, this information included their socioeconomic (family) background. Out of eight questions five were open ended and three were closed. The open ended questions sought information regarding their class in which they read, their school area, i.e. whether urban or rural, father's occupation, number of primary graduates in the family, etc. On the other hand the closed ended questions were framed to know about their gender, and parents' education. Following sections present the findings collected through the first part of the questionnaire.

#### **5.1.1 Students**

Out of total 360 students 144(40%) were male and 216 (60%) were female.

Rural urban frequency of the students can be observed from the figure 5.3(Appendix-A)

It shows that the distribution is almost equal in terms of the number and rural urban area. Out of total 360, 181 students were from rural area and 179 students were from urban area.

Both gender and class wise distribution have been presented in the figure-5.4 (Appendix-A bar graph). Again, nearly equal distribution is observed, i.e. 26.40% female and 25.70% boys from class IX and 73.60 boys, and 74.30% girls from class X took part in the study.

Area and grade wise cross comparison is shown through the figure 5.5 (Appendix-A). The tabulated data shows that more or less nearly an equal number of students of classes IX and X were selected from rural and urban area but class wise number of students was unequal i.e. 94 and 266 students respectively from class IX and X took part in the study. Similarly male female distribution was also uneven. Sex wise comparison is displayed through the above mentioned figure. When examining the above figure it is evident that female participants were more in number than the male participants. The figure provides some insightful information that male participation from rural area was more than the urban area on the other hand the number of girls from urban area was a little more than the rural area. The distribution is uneven here due to the area, as there are fewer opportunities for the girls in rural area. Less number of schools, distance from home, lack of transport, family attitude, lack of social security etc, are some of the reasons cited for this situation. Karim (2005) contends that in case of Bangladesh, the urban rural gap in income and wealth is reflected in educational performance in the national school leaving examinations.

### 5.1.2 Primary graduates in the family

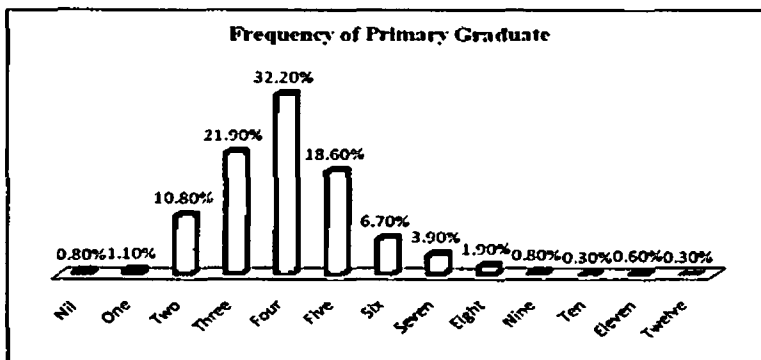


Figure 5.6. Primary graduates in the family

Figure 5.6 presents the information about the number of primary graduates in the family of sampled students who took part in the study. It is observed from the figure that highest percentage (32.20%) of response was in favour of only 4 primary graduates in the family. Careful scrutiny of the data presented in the figure shows that as the number of graduates increased the percentage of responses gradually decreased. The highest number being 12 was supported by only 0.30%. It is clear from the data that a good number of students belong to families, where a large number of their parents' education level is primary only. So, it indicates that the learners are mostly first generation learners. This has been proved in some studies that parental education level impacts their children's educational performance (Sirin, 2005 in Hamid, 2009). Also (DeYoung, 1987 in Hamid, 2009) found that differences between metropolitan and rural area in terms of poverty and other socio-economic indicators have implications for education, educational performance and research.

### 5.1.3 Fathers' educational qualification

Father's educational qualification can be seen from the figure 5.7a. A large number of them 151(42%) are primary graduates, next highest number of them 96(26.7%) is SSC passed. Sixty (17%) and 38(10%) of them are graduate and master degree holder respectively. Only a negligible number 15(4%) of them is illiterate. This is in one sense encouraging that in a country like Bangladesh where illiteracy is a great problem even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, can expect a illiteracy free country very soon. As students' fathers are mostly literate and this will definitely impact their future generations.

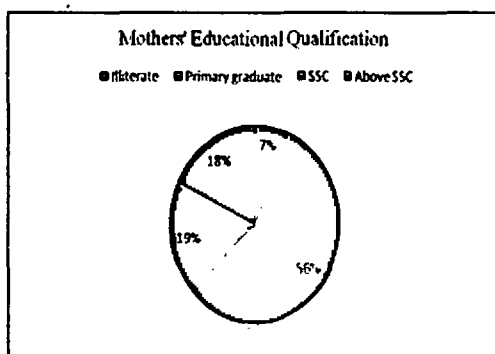
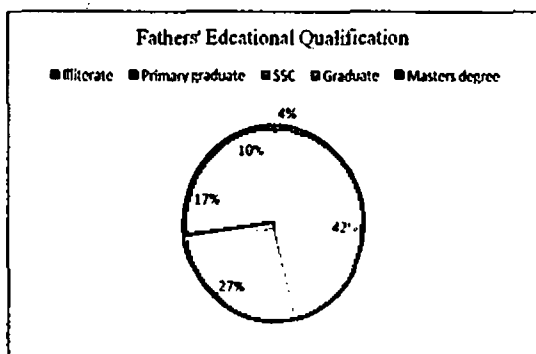


Figure 5.7a Father's educational qualification      Figure 5.7b Mother's educational qualification

#### 5.1.4 Mothers' educational qualification University Institutional Repository

The figure 5.7b shows the respondents' mothers' educational qualification. As shown in the pie chart an overwhelming number 203(56.4%) of them are primary graduates. On the other hand nearly an equal number 69(19%) and 65(18.1%) of them are SSC and above SSC respectively. The rest 23(6.4%) of them are illiterate. It is observed that in comparison to illiteracy of the students' parents, the number of mothers' illiteracy is higher than their fathers. This is probably due to socio-cultural impact of the society. This is the only variation otherwise the picture is almost similar. It has been proved through studies done elsewhere that students' parents' education impact students' education. The probable explanation might be that if the parents are educated they become aware of their children's education and feel concerned about their children's learning.

#### 5.1.5 Socioeconomic background of the students

The socioeconomic group was decided on the basis of the students' fathers' occupation. According to the service and profession they were categorized into four groups. The codes used in the table signify:

Service-1      Business-2      Day labourer-3      Farmer-4      Other-5

The frequency distribution can be observed from the following table.

**Table 5.1**

*Frequency Distribution of the Respondents' Fathers' Occupation*

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
1	121	33.6
2	121	33.6
3	13	3.6
4	61	16.9
5	13	3.6
Total	329	91.4
Missing	31	8.6
Total	360	100

While examining the table it shows that an equal number of them 121 (33.6%) are service holders and businessman. Next highest number of them 61(16.9%) are farmers and among the rests an equal number 13 (4.0%) was categorized as day labourers and others. The table shows that a considerable portion of the students' fathers' occupation is farming which indicates that they are illiterate and belong to low income group. Family low income greatly impact students' educational achievement has been proved by Hamid (2009). Further screening process of statistical analysis examined whether and to what extent is the fathers' occupation related to the students' learning of English in the present study. Socioeconomic backgrounds and English achievement intersects with social, pedagogical and language policy concerns (Hamid: 2009). Thus the relationship will be further examined later in this chapter.

#### **5.1.6 Background information of the teachers**

Table 5.2 (Appendix-A) shows that nearly an equal number of teachers from urban and rural area took part in the study. Gender wise distribution is presented in table 5.3 (see Appendix-A)

It is observed from the table that among total 46 teachers 80.4% (37) of them were male and only 9 (19.6%) were female. In terms of gender the distribution was uneven. It was so because the number of female teachers at the secondary level is less than the male teachers.

#### **5.1.7 Teachers' educational qualification**

Teachers' educational qualification can be seen from table 5.4. Out of total 48 teachers, educational information of 45 was received, out of them 59.9% is graduate and 37.5% of them have master degree, only a single teacher was HSC pass. This gives a positive picture of secondary education that teachers are well qualified in terms of their academic background.

**Table 5.4****Teachers Educational Qualification**

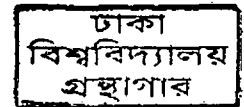
Degree	Frequency	Percentage
IA	1	2.2
BA	6	13.3
BA, BSc, BSS, BEd	21	46.6
MA, MM, MSS	12	26.5
MA, BEd	2	4.4
MA, MSS, MEd	3	6.6
Total	45	100

**5.1.8 Professional Qualification of teachers**

Table 5.5 presents teachers' professional qualification. Out of total 46 teachers half of them (51.11%) possess B.Ed degree, on the other hand 6.6% of them have M.Ed degree, 19(42.22%) of them have no professional degree. This is very disheartening to see that a considerable portion of the teachers do not possess a professional qualification, whereas it is considered essential for any teaching position.

**Table 5.5**

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**Professional Qualification of the Teachers**

Name of degree	Frequency	Percentage
No degree	19	42.22
BEd	23	51.11
MEd	3	6.6
Total	45	100

**5.1.9 Training on CLT**

Figure 5.8 shows that a small number of them 15(33%) received training in CLT. A big number 30(67%) of them did not receive any training in CLT. This indicates that half of the teachers have professional qualification though they have not received any training in CLT. Teachers' background is very much important in students' learning, as they are the persons who facilitate students' learning. In a country like Bangladesh

where a large number of students come from families where parents' education level is very low, teachers' roles become very significant.

If the teachers are not properly oriented with significant curricular changes like introduction of CLT, it won't be possible for the students to develop their English skills. This is astonishing to see that teachers are supposed to use CLT approach in teaching English though they did not have any idea of the approach. It will be seen later in the study that this has a great influence in students' learning of English.

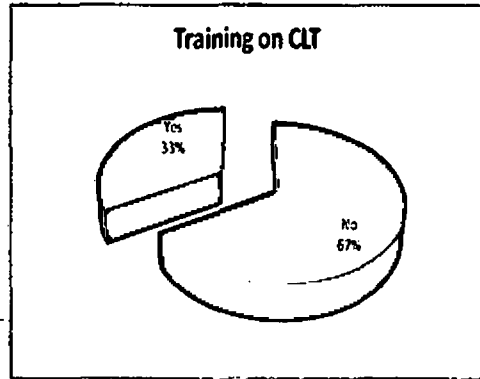


Figure 5.8. Percentage of teachers having training in CLT

If teachers are not well acquainted with the modern methods of teaching and learning, students become deprived of learning or achieving the skills which they are supposed to do. In this relation figure 5.8 fails to give an encouraging picture. Most of the teachers are untrained in CLT which is supposed to be a suitable method for helping students to acquire the skills of language. This is consistent with the findings of Roshid (2009) who found out in his study that teachers do not practise the language skill activities with the students. They do not know the techniques of conducting this type of activities in the classroom as they were not trained in CLT. In relation to this the experts' opinions can be also examined. One of the experts was an experienced classroom teacher, a question setter and also an examiner. He described the present status of CLT that teachers sometimes try to apply communicative approach in the class but the situation doesnot allow. According to him students level of English varies from rural to urban. A gap exists between the students of these areas. In some urban schools mixed ability students are found. Regarding the classroom situation, he told that some pair and group works are done but in this respect class duration is often



a barrier (35-40 minutes). In his view the overall performance of the students is satisfactory. Similar opinion was received from the curriculum specialist, according to her CLT is not practised in most of the classrooms. She also supported the fact that students' level varies from school to school. (students are not taught properly. If they were , they could perform well.) Overcrowded classroom is an obstacle. Class environment is not students friendly; management is not good. Regarding the situation of ELT in Bangladesh the teacher trainer told that practically CLT cannot be practised specially in rural areas. Teaching is mostly teacher centred, GTM is commonly followed. Students' level depend on the area, urban students are more proficient and are able to write a relatively error free paragraph than the students from rural areas. Generally, in rural areas probably nearly 70% students can not produce an error free sentence. Teachers donot know how to apply CLT. She further posited that language class should be of longer duration other wise activities can not be practised. Overall performance depends on the availability of above factors. All of them were in the opinion that if CLT is practised properly and if the students have proper training in developing their skills they can have a bright future. There are some teachers who can implement different principles of CLT in the class. They can conduct pair and group work in the class. There are even some students who are very innovative. Even in rural areas there are some students very few though they are very much capable of acquiring language skills.

Teachers usually teach in a traditional way. Teachers write grammatical rules on the board, or let some students to write on the board and instructs others to copy. Teacher starts reading the text aloud, then asks some questions on the text to comparatively better students and ignores the weaker students. Sometimes the teacher carries a stick (cane) to controll the class. Students' overall performance is on an average but gradually improving. To further check the present status of CLT, studies conducted by EIA can be a reliable source. They found out the basic changes that have been achieved through their interventions were widely represented in the ir qualitative observations made by them. Most of their observed lessons showed evidence of teachers who are able use some aspects of ELT pedagogy (e.g. eliciting, expansion, checking student understanding), and some are able to use several, and do so in a purposeful way. This was observed in some EIA schools only in a low number though

this is definitely a positive change which is happening gradually though in slow motion, one day this will bring about a bigger impact in the field of ELT.

## 5.2 Students' linguistic difficulties

### 5.2.1 Listening skill

This is an established fact that in learning any language acquiring four basic skills is important. Among the skills, listening is the first and foremost skill in learning a language. This has also been proved that if anyone is short of hearing, s/he cannot speak properly because productive skills are always followed by receptive skills. But it is generally considered that listening cannot be developed, on the basis of this common belief people usually do not try to develop this skill. But it has been seen that regular practice can enhance listening skill also. On the basis of this misconception held by most of the practicing secondary teachers that there is no scope for listening practice in the curriculum, listening exercises of the text are often neglected in secondary schools classroom activities. Probably for this reason listening occupied the second place in students' difficulty list in English. It was revealed through the study that next to speaking, listening posed great difficulty for them. Figure 5.9 displays students' opinions on listening. The majority of the students (58.20%) confessed about their ignorance of not knowing the meaning of the words during listening.

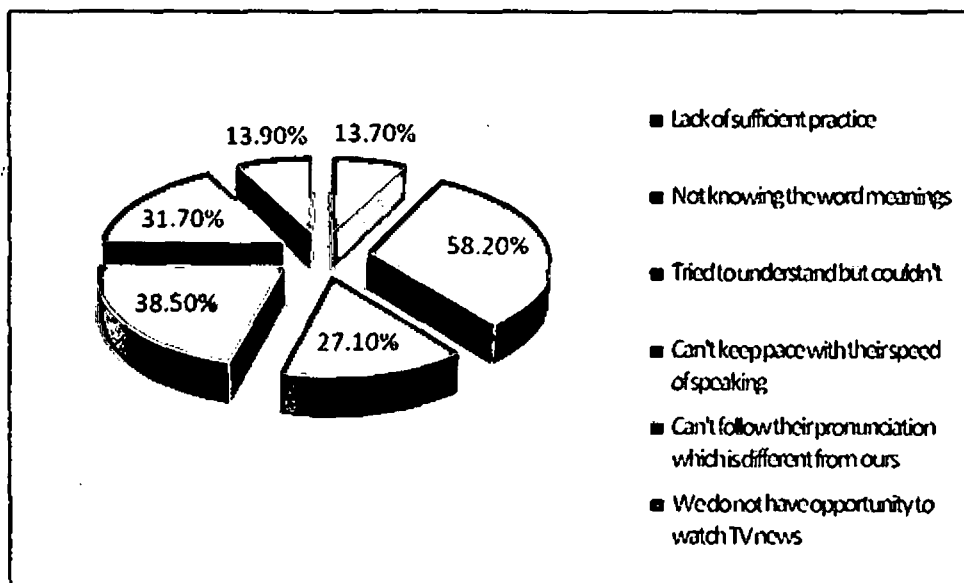


Figure 5.9. Students' opinions on listening

Thirty eight (38.50%) of them mentioned about their inability to keep pace with the speed of speaking. On the other hand, 58.20% of them told about their problem of not knowing the meaning of vocabulary. Twenty seven (27.10%) percent of them told that they could not understand others' spoken English. Again, 31.70% of them confessed that they could not follow others' pronunciation. Among others nearly an equal number of percent 13.90% and 13.70% reported of their lack of sufficient practice in listening and not having any opportunity to watch television respectively. Teachers' opinions are also important evidence to support this. For 11 (23.90%) teachers listening is difficult task. In this regard teachers' report of classroom activities is important to see whether they practice listening in the class or not. The following table gives a picture provided by teachers of their classroom activities of language skills. This was done to check the opinions provided by the students. The following table presents data regarding classroom practices.

**Table 5.6**

*Teachers' Opinions on Students' Practice of Language Skills in Class*

Skills	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always	Total
Speaking	1	4	12	18	10	N= 44
Reading	2	9	17	16	44	
Listening	--	2	17	10	16	
writing	--	11	16	17	44	

The table shows that an equal number of teachers (44) reported that students always practise reading and writing. On the other hand only a small number of them 10 and 16 supported speaking and listening respectively. In the category of very often nearly an equal number of them 16, 17, and 18 supported reading, writing, and speaking respectively. Only a small fraction of them (10) supported listening under the same category. Under the title often, an equal number 17 voted for reading and listening, whereas 16 and 12 of them reported of practice of writing and speaking respectively.

Under the heading sometimes, there were very little number supporting all the skills except writing which was supported by 11 teachers.

### **5.2.1a Classroom observation**

Classroom observation data also provides sufficient support to prove that very little activities are done to develop students' listening skill. However, there are some matches and some mismatches observed between the opinions provided by both students and teachers, and the data collected from class observation. During class observation it was seen that reading and writing dominated the major portion of class time. The observation was done using a checklist containing five point Likert scale. While examining the scale (see appendix-E) it is seen that only 2 (4.8%) teachers performed excellent in achieving the objectives of the lesson. Similar outcome was observed in case of helping weaker students in classroom activities. Collected field notes also provide strong evidence to the above mentioned data. Under the section of class structure/ content teachers' activities were recorded. In the category of practice of language skills a major portion of them 15 (35.7%) were rated as average and 11 (26.2%) of the teachers were rated as below average. It is apparent from this data that practice of language skills is often neglected. There are evidences from other studies to strengthen the finding of the present study that listening is difficult for the students as they do not have enough practice of listening in class activities. One prominent mismatch of this finding can be seen with the findings of the study conducted by English in Action (EIA) which indicates that for only 0.4% students listening is important. This seems contradictory to the findings of the present study as students reported of their difficulty in listening; they valued the importance of developing this skill and they considered that if they could develop this skill it would help them better perform in other skills also. Since their classroom practice lacked the practice of listening, they were unable to use the language properly in their daily life. This was also supported by the study by Maleque, Begum, and Hussain (2005). Their study provides authentic evidence of classroom performance of secondary school teachers. They found that in English a remarkable portion 62.5% of the teachers' classroom performance is below average. A very negligible number of them 5 (12.5%) was

ranked as excellent. This is the real picture of most of the English classes in Bangladesh. To further evidence some students' opinions are quoted below.

A student said,

*"If I listen to English news on radio or television I don't understand every thing but I like to listen to the news very much and my main problem is I can't express whatever I understand from my listening."*

Another student said,

*"While I listen English speech I get depressed because I do not know the meaning of English words".*

One interesting comment on listening,

*"We do not understand any thing, just stay looking at them"*

Another student said,

*"I feel very glad when I understand the news but I feel very bad if I do not understand."*

Yet another comment on listening,

*"I am very much eager to listen to English news and speech but because of my lack of improved education I don't understand them."*

One male student said,

*"While I listen to English speech and news; I repent if I knew grammar well, I could speak in English!"*

From further comments, a student from a rural area said,

*"While listening the English news I face the problem that I enjoy the news when I understand and if I do not understand, I get much pain, and I speak to myself, I will try to learn English."*

The last comment is negative though it has a positive tone also as the student takes vow of learning English. Critical examination of these comments give the impression that students are extremely eager to learn the language and their failure to do this is very painful experience for them. Observing this type of positive attitude among the students gives encouragement to all involved in improving the quality of English language learning and teaching. But if the classroom practices do not improve then

probably it will become a far reaching goal. This is also evidenced from Roshid (2009)'s study which proved that practice of listening in the class was totally absent. In terms of difficulty both students and teachers rated listening as the second most difficult. It was mentioned earlier in this section that present study also found similar situation during the class observation that practice of listening is totally absent. This is contradictory with the curriculum instruction of CLT approach. Equal emphasis is put on all the skills in CLT approach.

### **5.2.1b FGD report**

Information accumulated from students FGD also uncovered similar picture of classroom activities. They informed that there was hardly any practice of listening in their class. Whatever fact came out from their discussion was that teachers only read the text and give them the Bangla meaning and sometimes they ask some questions. It was also gathered from their discussion that generally they do not follow the text. They only practise the comprehension passage in the guide books. So there is very little or no opportunity for practising any skill other than memorizing the answers to the questions of the passages. As a result students heavily depend on guide books full of plethora of mistakes. The students further informed that they do not get any practice in any skills. All through their school life they had been used to this type of passive teaching which helped very little to increase their proficiency in English.

### **5.2.1c Expert's opinion**

Further to verify the data provided by students and teachers experts opinions were also examined. Details of experts have been mentioned earlier (See chapter IV). They also admitted the fact that generally the skill practices are not done in the classroom. In most cases teachers try to prepare their students to pass the examination. So this is quite natural that students will face difficulty in listening. To sum up all the opinions it can be said that students' listening difficulty needs to be addressed during their classroom activities. Otherwise they do not get any other opportunity to do so. Listening being the first base for learning a language, teachers should initiate activities where there is ample scope for practice of listening and follow the textbook

prescribed activities of listening practice. Only then it can be made sure that students are receiving fruitful input by getting involved in tasks which encourage the practice of skill.

### **5.2.2 Speaking skill**

It has been mentioned earlier that productive skills always follow the receptive skills. If the receptive skills work properly then the production of language becomes easier. The data collected from both students and teachers show that among all the skills speaking is the most difficult skill for the students. This is a general fact about learning a foreign language that speaking is the most difficult task for every learner. Once again it has been proved true in the present study. This is quite obvious that secondary students in Bangladesh would not feel different about speaking a foreign language, i.e. English. The study attempted to explore the reasons responsible for this mass failure. Students' responses can be examined from the figure presented in the next page. The figure shows that in giving reasons for speaking being the most difficult, a large percentage 71% of the students replied that they did not have enough vocabulary. The next number (46%) reported of their fear in speaking English. Thirty two percent (32%) feel blank in mind and can't speak. A reasonable percent 25.60% complained about their nervousness but also told that they could manage at last, on the other hand nearly an equal percent of them (25.40%) told that they cannot speak in fear of their students' teasing. Among the rest, 16.70% of them informed that while they speak they use fragments and complete speaking quickly. A very low percent (2.30%) did not feel any tension regarding speaking. It is noticeable here that in case of both listening and speaking students considered that their limited vocabulary posed difficulty for these two skills. A considerable portion of them were frightened to speak English.

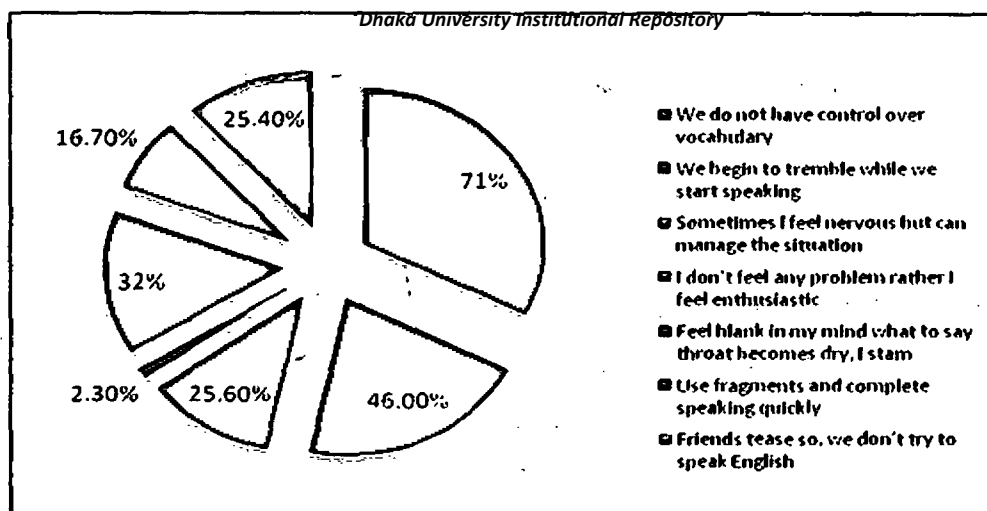


Figure 5.10. Students' opinions on speaking

Teachers' opinions were also examined to see how far the perceptions of the students are similar to that of teachers. While scrutinizing the teachers' opinions it also confirms the opinions of the students. Regarding most difficult task in English similar opinions as students emerged from the teachers. According to a large number 31(67.40%) of teachers speaking is most difficult. Nearly an equal number of teachers 33(71.70%) and 32(69.60%) supported reasons as lack of knowledge of vocabulary and being shy of speaking English respectively. Lack of sufficient vocabulary is the common reason cited by all the sampled participants in the study. It can also be mentioned here that 29(63%) and 24(52.2%) of the teachers also reported that lack of comprehension of the text and lack of opportunity to practise were the reasons for English being hard. The following table depicts teachers' opinions on reasons of students not speaking English in the class.

Table 5.7 Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on Students not Speaking English in Class

Statement	Frequency	Percentage	Total
They feel very shy	15	32.6	N= 46
They are afraid of making mistakes	32	69.6	
Fellow classmates will laugh at them	45	97.8	
They can't speak English	22	47.8	
They don't have practice of speaking English	37	80.4	



It can be seen from the table that an overwhelming majority (97.8%) reported that students do not speak English in class in fear of being laughed at by their fellow classmates. Next highest number of them 37 (80.4%) informed that students do not have practice of speaking in English. Afraid of making mistakes was mentioned by a considerable number 32 (69.6%) of them. This was further strengthened by the students giving their own perceptions. What the students said are quoted below. While examining it can be seen that almost similar type of opinions are held by both teachers and students.

A student from Dhaka said,

*"I can't speak in fear of doing mistakes and I'm also afraid that if I do any mistakes others will laugh at me. Besides, I do not know much vocabulary in English."*

Another student said,

*"While speaking English I face the problem of not being able to arrange words in sentences and also don't know the techniques of speaking."*

Yet another boy said,

*"I'm telling again and again that I do not understand a single word in English."*

One interesting quotation about speaking is

*"I would love to speak in English, but I don't understand in which speech what type of English I'd use. So I face problem."*

A female <sup>student</sup> from the same area expressed her idea about speaking English:

*"While speaking in English I get disheartened and no words come out of my mouth."*

### 5.2.2a Classroom observation

Data collected through classroom observation was an authentic source to prove that practice of speaking is hardly experienced by the students. It was observed that under the section students' activities in most cases (16/38.1%) students' eagerness and energy were rated as good (See appendix-A). This implies that students want to learn

but they do not get proper environment in the class. In the category of following teachers' instruction a majority of the cases (20/47.6%) were recorded as good. On the other hand in the criteria of students communicating well, students' well preparation, and students can correct their own mistakes were all rated in the scale of average. It is also remarkable here that in the above mentioned criteria not a single case was observed as excellent. Overall this is very disappointing to note that unless or until the classroom practices can be improved students' developments can not be improved.

### 5.2.2b Students' FGD

Quite similar information was received during the students FGD. They admitted ~~of~~ <sup>1d</sup> their inability to respond to the simplest question asked in English. It was very interesting to know that English was not hard for them but the only thing <sup>that</sup> matters is that they have limited exposure to the language's use. It was also their common belief that if they had received opportunities, they would learn the language properly. This is quite natural that in most of the cases any learner of a foreign language suffers this type of psychological blockage of mind. This was proved to be true through <sup>1d</sup> the discussion during the FGDs. While the researcher asked them to speak about their problems related to their English studies, for the first few minutes they seemed afraid that if they speak anything wrong it may create problem for them. After receiving assurance from the researcher they started to speak though they failed to express their opinions even in Bangla. However, they tried to speak in English but could not express their views properly. Whatever they said, the researcher understood through their course of discussion with their friends. Data revealed some matches and mismatches between the opinions of teachers and students. Both teachers and students cited some psycholinguistic reasons for their difficulty in English. In this regard it seems to match perfectly with students' opinions. This type of psychological state of mind is commonly felt by the foreign language learners. Feeling nervous and being afraid of speaking in front of an audience is also a common feeling widely experienced by most of the language learners.

The key points made <sup>in</sup> found from the FGD should be listed as data in bullet point form ~

### 5.2.2c Experts' opinion

However some different opinions were expressed by the experts. As it has been mentioned earlier (chapter-4) that experts were carefully selected from various areas to check and further confirm the data collected from other sources. One of them was an experienced classroom teacher, a question setter and also an examiner. He described the present status of CLT that teachers sometimes try to apply communicative approach in the class but the situation doesnot allow. According to him students level varies from rural to urban. A gap exists between the students of these areas. In some urban schools mixed ability students are found. Regarding the classroom situation, he told that some pair and group works are done but in this respect class duration is often a barrier (35—40 minutes). In his view the overall performance of the students is satisfactory. Similar opinion was received from the curriculum specialist, according to her CLT is not practised in most of the classrooms. Students' level varies from school to school. (students are not taught properly. If they were , they could perform well.) Overcrowded classroom is an obstacle. Class environment is not students' friendly, management is not good. Regarding the situation of ELT in Bangladesh the teacher trainer told that practically ~~the~~ CLT cannot be practised specially in rural areas. Teaching is mostly teacher centred, follow GTM. Students' level depend<sup>s</sup> on the area, urban students are proficient and are able to write a paragraph relatively error free. But in rural area probably 60—70% students can not produce a single sentence. Teachers donot know how to apply CLT. Language classes should be of longer duration, other wise activities can not be practised. Overall performance depends on the availability of above factors. All of them were ~~of~~ the opinion that if CLT is practised properly and if the students have proper training in developing their skills they can have a bright future. There are some teachers who can implement different aspects of CLT in the class. They can conduct pair and group work in the class. There are even some students who are very innovative. Even in rural areas there are some students, very few though, who are very much capable of acquiring language skills. Teachers usually teach in traditional way. Teachers write grammatical rules on the board, or let some students ~~to~~ write on the board and let others copy. Teacher starts reading the text aloud, then asks some questions on the text to comparatively better students and ignores the weaker students. Sometimes the

teacher carries a stick (cane) to control the class. Students' overall performance is average but gradually improving.

This has been evidenced from other studies done in this field. EIA baseline survey is an authentic source to prove this. It was found out in their study that they were never used to use English in the classroom before they joined EIA, they are now trying to use it more regularly. This proves that if the teachers and students get proper input they can change themselves to improve their practices. Here another observation needs to be explained that students mentioned about lack of enough vocabulary for both listening and speaking difficulty but teachers did not suppose vocabulary as reasons for students' speaking difficulty. Teachers emphasized on psycholinguistic factors which also received support from the students' opinions. Psycholinguistic factors will be discussed later in this chapter.

Regarding speaking skill EIA baseline survey provides some potential information to add to present study. Baseline survey of English in Action(EIA) found in all of its categories of respondents, speaking is the most frequently considered weakest skill. Among the respondents, 42.4% of students, 46.9% of teachers and 53.1% of community people expressed this opinion. One important point to be noted here is that in all categories of respondents a substantial majority (74.2% of students, 89.5% of teachers and 82.8% of community people) considered 'speaking' to be the most necessary for their future life. But the concern here is that only 1.5% students felt 'speaking' necessary for their examination. This is the real gap between the real life requirement and the system of practices in the classroom of Bangladesh.

Some other studies provides similar results in case of speaking difficulties. Roshid (2009), Esma (2004), Qader (1999), Rahman (1996) all in their studies revealed the fact that speaking is the most difficult skill for the students (See chapter-3). It is essentially remarkable here that secondary students in Bangladesh are always guided by the system of evaluation. They are more aware of the assessment than their real life need of English, as a result they struggle to overcome the examination related problems. Consequence of which is that listening and speaking seem to be most difficult skills for the students to acquire.

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### 5.2.3 Reading skill

Reading is the only skill which is widely and regularly practised in the secondary classroom. This has been proved true from all the sources of data. The strongest support is received from the direct observation of class. They can read a text in English but in terms of comprehension they do not understand everything ~~what~~ they read though there is sufficient practice of reading in class. In fact this is the only skill which occupies 70% of the classroom activities and is widely done irrespective of both urban and rural areas. Difficulty arises while reading any unfamiliar text. The figure below shows students' opinions on their difficulty in reading.

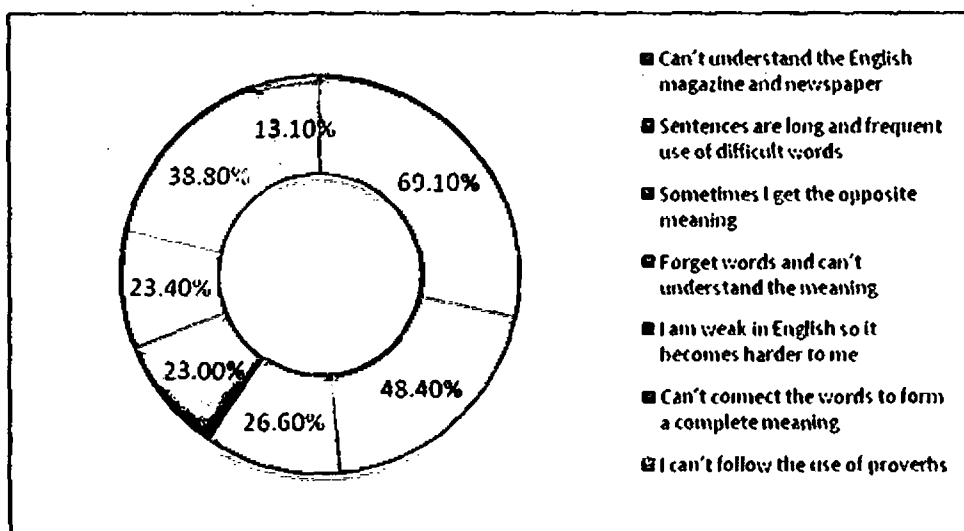


Figure 5.11. Students' opinions on reading difficulty

Scrutiny of the figure depicts that reading simple text did not pose any difficulty for them. It can be seen from the figure that the main difficulty they faced while reading any magazines, English books etc supported by a reasonable percentage (69.10%).

The next high percent of them (48.40%) cannot understand long sentences and frequent use of difficult words, then 38.80% of them cannot connect the words to form a complete meaning. Among the rests, 26.60% cannot understand and get opposite meaning. Then nearly an equal percent of them 23.40% and 23% reported their weakness in English and forgetting words to get the exact meaning of any text.

Yet a small portion 13.10% of them complained about not understanding the use of proverbs. This is clear from their opinions that they are not accustomed to read any other materials written in English other than their text. So while they read any

unknown texts they face difficulty. They further confessed that they do not have any access to English books, magazines, and journals which could have been a great help for them in developing their language skills. As they mentioned in the figure above that if the sentences are long they face difficulty for the frequent use of difficult words. It is remarkable to note that in case of reading also their source of difficulty is vocabulary. On the other hand while examining teachers' opinions it presents that only 5 (10.90%) teachers reported reading difficulty of their students. Even a lower percentage of teachers 2.42% reported students' difficulty in reading their prescribed text. This seems slightly inconsistent with the students' own opinions. To majority of the students who expressed their opinions here, the text is not that much difficult as the words used in the text are explained to them during the class lecture. It is clear from both teachers' and students' opinions that word recognition and their function within the sentences create sheer problem for the students to comprehend any texts. In this regard the students' own commented :

*" The main difficulty about reading the text is its difficult words meaning which we do not understand. Even when the teacher asks us to give summary of any lesson or ask us to fill in the blank, we suffer problem because we do not understand what the text had told, as a result we do not have any other option but to become blind."*

It is evident from the above discussion that students' main difficulty in reading lies with their failure to comprehend the meaning of the words. This will be further discussed later in this chapter.

### 5.2.3a Classroom observation

During classroom observation it was found that reading is (this is) the single skill which was witnessed to be practised by both teachers and students on a regular basis. Almost all the classtime (70%) was spent on reading practice either by the teacher or by the students. It was observed that in most of the classes 15 (35.7%) and 8 (19%) students facing difficulty in reading were rated as average and below average respectively (See appendix-A). But the concern here is that in case of teachers reading a low number 2 (4.8%) and 12 (28.6%) of teachers' pronunciation was rated as excellent and good respectively. Similarly, in error correction a low number 3 (7.1%) and 10 (23.8%) of teachers were

ranked as excellent and good respectively. This is considered a matter of concern as teachers are the model for students. If teachers are unable to pronounce the words properly and fail to correct students' mistakes, it will become difficult for the students to produce a good model of reading though this is the most commonly practised skill.

### 5.2.3b Students FGD

This has got strong support from the students' FGD also. They expressed their view that teachers' incapability of handling the textual content efficiently increases their difficulty in reading and comprehending <sup>the</sup> content. Teachers generally practise question answer with the students and they ask students to follow guide book answers. This creates controversy among them as they frequently find errors in the guide and they often require explanation to some confusing answers given in the guide. From the FGD it was also revealed that coming across a large number of unknown words increases their difficulty in reading. Besides, they don't get proper support of guideline from the teachers. As a result students cannot properly acquire the requisite skills of the target language.

### 3.2.3c Experts' view

Experts <sup>gave</sup> provided their opinions regarding how help can be provided to students to develop their skills in English. The teacher opined that teachers should be committed first.

*"We have a tendency to blame others/ criticise others. Actually our students are eager to learn, they are very enthusiastic but due to shortage of time we cannot help."*

It is perceived from the teacher's opinion that problem lies with the teachers <sup>also</sup> as they usually do not follow a plan. It was also proved in the earlier portion of this chapter. On the other hand the trainer thought that proper use of CLT with appropriate teaching aid is required. Curriculum specialist suggested to use situational English together with functional and authentic English to remove the shyness or fear of the students. Ofcourse all of them agreed on the point that students need a lot of practice. But how they will practise needs to be speculated by someone. If students are motivated and have access to all facilities, they are able to develop their skills.

Sometimes some social factors may hinder their progress. Large class size and the environment do not allow students opportunity to develop their skill. Special care should be taken for the students. Besides, slow learners should be given special attention. Proper motivation is required for the students. In relation to the family factors which were proved a barrier in their learning of English, the curriculum specialist told:

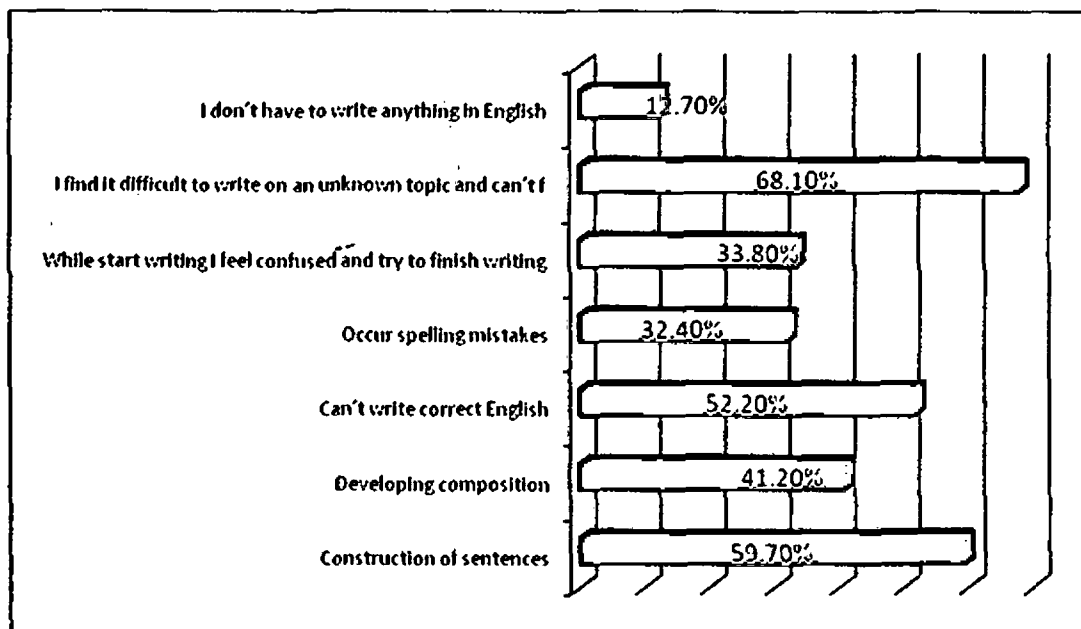
*“Teachers should be more aware and make the parents and the members of the managing committee also aware of learning English.”*

These findings seem to be similar as that of English in Action survey report. The survey found out overall 53.8% students, 41.8% teachers, and 33.3% community people consider reading to be their strongest skill. Reading appears to be very easy though in a real sense reading should be considered in relation to comprehension which the students lack very much. This has been expressed by themselves that they can read their prescribed text but difficulty arises in reading unfamiliar texts. So this is the concern about students' reading skill. Because a huge number of students (93.9%) identified reading English very important for university or college education. A slightly bigger number (98.1%) of students expected to go on for further studies (higher education).

#### **5.2.4 Writing skill**

Among the four skills, writing is considered as the last skill to be achieved by the learners of a foreign language. People generally do not require writing anything in a foreign language. Only students have to write since their learning is assessed through written tests. For this reason writing is considered to be the most required skill for the students of Bangladesh. But in classroom practice it is not that much visible. Students only practise writing answers to questions on the given lesson. They generally memorise the answers from the guide book and produce during the examination which essentially does not assess their writing skill. In a true sense practice of writing which gives students opportunity to develop their skill of writing of their own is rarely done in the classroom. So they have little scope for practice in reality. Students' opinions on writing difficulty can be examined from the following figure.





*Figure 5.12. Students' opinions on writing difficulty*

Figure 5.12 displays that a big percentage of them (68.10%) held the view that it was very difficult for them to write on an unknown topic. The next highest number of them (59.70%) reported of their incapability to construct correct sentences. Fifty two (52.20%) percent of them told that they could not write correct English. Among the rests 41.20% informed of their difficulties in developing composition, on the other hand 33.80% told that while they start writing, they feel confused and quickly try to finish writing. Thirty two percent (32.40%) of them were afraid of spelling mistakes. Besides, there were a few of them 12.70% hailing from rural area, said that they usually did not have to write any thing in English. This is to be noted here that some teachers do not practice writing with them but the students have to write in the examination.

In relation to above mentioned data teachers also provided similar type of opinions. Teachers' opinions are presented in the following table.

**Table 5.8***Frequency Distribution of Teachers Describing Types of Writing Difficulty Students Encounter*

Statements	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Lack of appropriate ideas	15	32.6	N= 46
Absence of logical reasoning	18	39.1	
Vocabulary, meaning, spelling, punctuation, capitalization	25	54.3	
Argumentation, exemplification, reference, overall structure	21	45.7	
Grammar	25	54.3	
Others	3	6.5	

Careful scrutiny of the table shows that an equal number of the total sampled teachers 25(54.30%) reported that use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation etc. and grammatical items pose difficulty for students in writing. Argumentation, exemplification, reference, overall structure and lack of logical sequencing of ideas were supported by 21(45.70%) and 18(39.10%) teachers respectively. Fifteen teachers(32.60%) mentioned that lack of appropriate ideas in writing is a great problem for the students. A negligible number 3(6.5%) of them opted for others. In this connection some quotations of the students seem relevant to be mentioned here.

One student said,

*"Whenever I start writing English I become embarrassed. I start feeling that I should complete writing soon."*

Another comment was:

*"When I start writing any thing in English I can not arrange sentences. As I do not know all the meanings of words, I can not write many things accurately and completely."*

Another student contended

*"I can write sentences with known words but if it is very hard I can't write and sentence construction does not happen so easily."*

Another comment,

*"when I am asked to write some story or an essay of my own I feel problem very much. I don't understand how to arrange words in making sentences."*

On the same topic another student from the same area said,

*"I face much problem in writing as whatever idea comes to my mind in Bangla, doesnot come in English clearly."*

#### **5.2.4a Classroom observation**

Classroom observation and field notes are powerful evidence to support both teachers' and students' opinions described above. During observation no practice of free writing was seen. In very few occasions teachers gave writing tasks to the students but that was answering questions on the lesson they had read few minutes earlier in the class. No composition writing practice was done in any of the classes observed. In some of the classes the teacher carried guide book and asked students to write answers to questions from selected passage in the guide book. The teacher informed that students will be evaluated on the basis of their answers to the questions of comprehension passage. In another class students were asked to write a paragraph which they were supposed to memorise. Nevertheless it was observed that very few students were able to produce some sentences on the topic, but most of them failed to do that. One important thing was observed that all the students wanted their teacher to correct their writings, but the teacher did not check a single paper, so the students lost their interest to write any thing.

#### **5.2.4b Students FGD**

To check further the data received from the questionnaires of students and teachers students FGD was done. The findings above are strengthened from the students' FGD also. They said that while writing they faced problem in translating the words and

mistakes in spelling occur frequently. Besides, they faced grammatical difficulty in writing. It was also revealed from the students that they do not have any practice of writing any thing of their own because they find it difficult to organize ideas and construct sentences properly. They often lack confidence in producing any composition without having any preparation on that specific topic. They also claimed that they do not have any clarity of thoughts so it becomes more difficult to write on any unfamiliar topic. In addition to that shortage of vocabulary and use of correct grammar were problem for them. At the same time they thought that if they were given practice of free writing earlier they could improve their free writing skill. Another vital point emerged from the FGD that generally in their examination they do not require to write any thing which was not taught earlier. They are assessed through written test though all the items are their common or practised topic. It was also unveiled from the discussion that occasionally there were some topics which were uncommon to them but there were always some other choices from which they were able to select topics and write on those. This is the common practice of assessing students' writing skill.

#### 5.2.4c Experts interview

More or less similar views were received from the experts. <sup>in the interviews.</sup> Experts emphasised on the regular practice of the skills. They thought that limited exposure to English is the main reason of students facing difficulty. They told that most of the students do not get any support from the family so they are entirely dependent on the teachers. They further said that if teachers are not well trained to facilitate students' learning, the situation will never change. They also opined that classroom practice is important for developing students' language skills. On the other hand, teachers need to be capable of organising skill development activities within the set time frame of a class period.

The teacher trainer held the view that there must be coordination among the various training programmes to reduce the possibility of repeating the same topics only to create boredom among the teachers. They contend that this type of trainings are a huge wastage of national resources. After providing training, teachers are expected to apply their training, but what happens in reality is that due to some physical

constrains teachers frequently ~~find themselves unable~~ to teach the students efficiently. In relation to this the trainer and the language expert said,

*"We have to totally depend on the teachers' whim."*

After receiving training, they persistently complain that the knowledge received during the training is helpful though they can't apply those due to some practical reasons. Among them, large class size, poor ventilation, unfavourable seating arrangement, duration of class, low level of students' proficiency were main. So they claimed that creating a favourable environment is vital for practising the language skills. They offered their opinions that students are capable of learning the skills but they require appropriate exposure to the language. Once they get it they will be able to use the skills in their real life. It was also mentioned by the teachers that exposure to the target language is greatly valuable. This has been further proved in other studies.

English in Action (EIA) found a substantial proportion in each category. Thirty two percent (32.1%) students, 20.5% teachers, and 23.7% community people felt that 'writing' was their weakest skill in English. On the other hand three quarters (75.4%) of students opined that writing is the skill necessary for them to pass the examinations. In the same way overall 93.9% students consider writing in English very important for their future jobs. One alarming matter is to be noted here that classroom writing practices generally do not develop students' writing skill as they do not usually practise free writing. The types of writing they often do are confined to some items that are important for examination (Roshid: 2007). These findings are consistent with some other findings (See Jing, 2005; Esma, 2004; and Quader, 1999). *Not in bibl.*

Esma's (2004) study identified similar problem with her students as the difficulty stemmed from lack of knowledge of vocabulary and meaning. Which consolidates again that students' main source of difficulties in English lies in their shortage of vocabulary. It seems consistent with the classroom observation that in classroom teaching students have little scope to learn new vocabulary. They only learn the meaning of isolated words which does not help them to use the word later in their real life. This has been expressed by many of the students again and again:

*"I can write sentences with known words but if it is very hard I can't write and sentence construction does not happen so easily."*

In classroom observation the practice of writing was seen hardly to occur. Whatever little practices they do is only for the purpose of preparation for examination, which were confined only in paragraph, essay and letter writing based on their rote learning. Writing for the sake of developing their writing skill in particular was totally ignored. For this reason students after completing their 12 years study of English experience difficulty in free writing in English in their higher study and job.

### **5.2.5 Students' difficulty in vocabulary**

In several occasions both students and teachers reported their lack in vocabulary. They were of the opinion that due to shortage of appropriate vocabulary they failed to communicate their ideas in English. All the participants in the study repeatedly mentioned lack of sufficient vocabulary as a major obstacle in acquiring all the skills. Similarly in case of writing they admitted that if they had known sufficient vocabulary they would have been able to write something of their own. In case of reading, when they read any material in English they come across many unknown words which creates barrier in their comprehension of the material. They also mentioned their pronunciation difficulty of the words due to the mismatch of the spelling and pronunciation. This is quite natural that speakers of Bangla will face this type of difficulty as the structure of Bangla and English is quite different so students face difficulty in pronouncing the target language.

#### **5.2.5a Classroom observation**

During class observation it was also seen that teachers generally give the Bangla translation of some difficult words of the lesson but this is not a regular practice. In classroom observation in case of explaining vocabulary, teachers performance was rated as 16 (38.1%) and 12 (28.6%) as average and below average respectively. Very few 2 (4.8%) and 8 (19%) were ranked as fair and good respectively. Besides, in the category of helping students pronouncing the words properly 21 (50%) and 8 (19%) were found to be performing on a scale of average and below average respectively. A small portion of them 2 (4.8%) and 6 (14.3%) were rated excellent and good respectively. This is obvious from the classroom observation that vocabulary teaching is not getting proper attention. Students usually do not ask teachers to explain the

meaning of unknown or difficult words. Whereas vocabulary is considered to be most influential factor to facilitate the use of language, teaching learning of vocabulary is mostly disregarded.

### 5.2.5b Students FGD

It was further confirmed that teaching vocabulary is essential though classroom practices put little emphasis on learning of new vocabulary. It was also disclosed during their discussion that their personal interest frequently guides them to learn new words.

It is pertinent here to mention some of the students' own speech:

*"While I hear speech and news I feel very ashamed! If I knew the meanings of all English words!"*

Teachers also noted that during writing students encounter difficulty in the correct use of words and spelling. So it is observed from the discussion, that vocabulary is no less important to be counted for their difficulty in English. It is also an accepted fact that without having a good storage of vocabulary, it is utterly difficult to achieve language appropriacy. This finding matches with Jing (2005), as Jing found out that in China secondary students' difficulties in English for the first place lay in limited vocabulary in all the four skills. Esma (2004)'s study also revealed similar difficulties like, lack of knowledge of vocabulary and meaning are the major difficulties of the secondary students in Tunis.

Besides, Quader's (1999) and Roshid's (2007) study also reported of participants' difficulty of unknown words and limited vocabulary. Roshid found striking differences in the opinions of teachers and students regarding teaching vocabulary. Teachers claimed that they teach new vocabulary on a regular basis but students defied this opinion, they said that practice of teaching new vocabulary is a rare activity. So it can be said that in a situation like this it is not surprising that students face difficulty with vocabulary.

### 5.2.6 Grammatical difficulty

Grammar is the only area next to speaking, which received huge responses from the students. All the students and teachers together think that this is the only area they

should mostly pay attention to. They contend that without the sound knowledge of grammar they are incapable of using any language appropriately. It is very disappointing to see that nearly more than a decade after the introduction of CLT in this region, to most of the teachers and students grammar still occupies a significant position in learning of the language. CLT has been in use for more than 12 years,

The features of CLT are unfamiliar to most of them. Students gave their opinions on the difficulty of grammar. Students' opinions can be seen from the figure below.

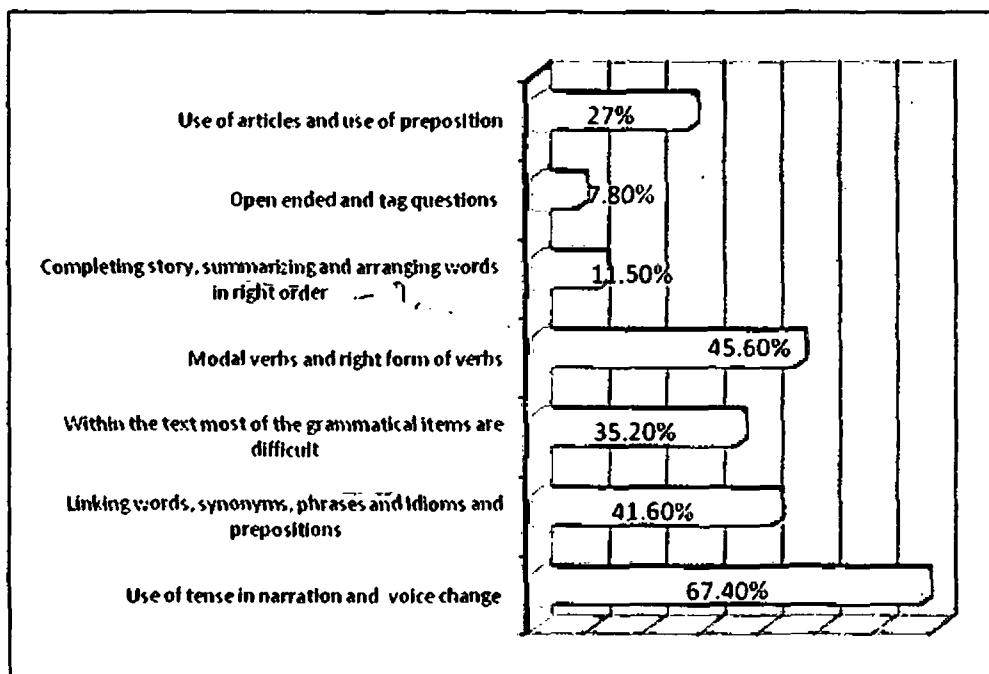


Figure 5.13. Students' grammatical difficulty

The figure depicts the situation of students' grammatical difficulty. Careful examination of the figure gives the idea that in most of the cases (67.40%) they complained about their difficulties in the use of tense in narration, and voice change. Various forms of verbs seemed difficult for a considerable percent (45.60%) of them. Linking words, synonyms, phrases and idioms posed difficulty for 41.60% of them. Besides, for 35.20% of them it was the grammatical item within the text. Among the rest, for 27%, 11.50% and 7.80% have difficulty with use of articles, completing story, summarizing, arranging words in right order and open and tag questions.



Teachers' opinions on grammatical difficulty are displayed in the following figure.

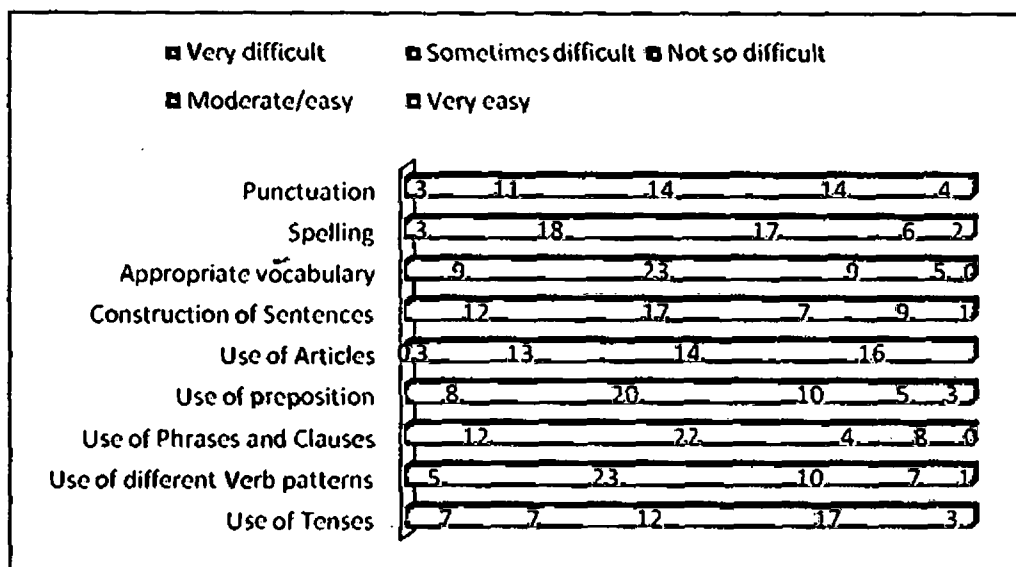


Figure 5.14. Teachers' opinions on students' grammatical difficulty

The figure displays results of responses of the teachers. In terms of very difficult item 12 (26%) teachers mentioned use of phrase and clause and construction of sentences. On the other hand, 23 (50%) teachers reported that use of different verb patterns and appropriate vocabulary sometimes appeared difficult for the students. 20 (43%) and 18 (39%) teachers respectively said that use of preposition and spelling also sometimes seemed difficult for the students. Besides, according to 11 (24%) and 7 (15%) teachers, punctuation and use of tenses respectively seemed difficult sometimes. Not so difficult items included spelling, punctuation, use of articles, use of tenses, use of preposition, and use of different types of verbs according to 17 (37%), 14 (30%), 13 (28%), 12 (26%), and 10 (22%) teachers respectively. Again, moderately easy items included use of tenses 17 (37%), punctuation 14 (30%), use of articles 14 (30%), construction of sentences 9 (20%), use of phrases and clauses 8 (17%), use of different types of verbs 7 (15%), spelling 6 (13%), use of preposition 5 (11%), use of appropriate vocabulary 5 (11%). Category of the easiest items included use of articles (reported by 16 (35%) teachers). For a very negligible number of teachers 4 (9%) and 3 (7%) use of punctuation and use of preposition respectively were the easiest.

While comparing analytically both teachers' and students opinions on difficult grammatical items there are some matches and mismatches. The points on which both the groups agreed were on the use of tenses, different types of verbs. Further, most of the matches can be found on the use of article, spelling, use of preposition etc. But some of the items (completing story, arranging words, and tag questions) mentioned as difficult by some of the students do not match with teachers' opinions.

Regarding grammatical difficulty to quote one student:

*"Firstly, I can not form sentences following correct grammatical rules. As I do not know most of the meanings of difficult words, I can not express my feeling properly."*

### 5.2.6a Classroom observation

Classroom observation provides a strong support to the findings of the questionnaires. It was observed that 13 (31%) and 8 (19%) teachers informed that students' difficulty in grammar is average and below average respectively. This is inconsistent with the CLT approach as in CLT there is no place for explicit teaching of grammar. But this is commonly felt by both teachers and students that without knowing grammar they can not learn any language. So during observation it was found that a good number of teachers 14 (33.3%) and 12 (28.6%) were rated in the scale of average and good in explaining grammar points. While comparing with other activities done in the classroom, it is seen that a considerable number of teachers explain grammar points seriously though it should not be emphasised so. This is absolutely an example of teachers traditional mind set of teaching English. They think that if grammar is not taught students will not be able to learn the language. For this reason there is separate time slot for teaching grammatical items in every school. As far as the class time is fixed for teaching some grammar items, it is ok but the problem lies in teaching methodology.

### **5.2.6b Students' FGD**

It was further proved through students discussion. They believe that learning grammar rules will help them to learn the language properly, otherwise they will tend to commit errors in productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing. They told that CLT ignores grammar teaching so this creates difficulty for them to use the language properly. In a real sense CLT does not ignore grammar point but avoids explicit teaching of grammar rules. CLT aims to develop students language skills first then it goes for developing students' accuracy of language.

### **5.2.6c Expert's view**

In this regard experts also provided similar opinion that teachers often avoid grammatical items in the text, so there is no grammar teaching in the first paper. Grammar is only taught in the second paper with memorising grammatical rules which does not ensure students' grammatical competency. These findings perfectly match with the findings of Quader's (2006) study which explored the difficulties of the freshers at Dhaka university and revealed that grammar is the most difficult area for the Bangladeshi students learning English.

Even some of the grammatical items reported by Quader's study was found to be a perfect match with the present study findings. Esma's (2004) finding is also similar in case of grammatical difficulty. Her study rated grammar as the second major obstacle in learning English. There are further proofs available in grammatical difficulty (see Khatun & Begum, 1997; Singaravelu, 2001; Roshid, 2009). These studies also confirmed that grammatical items were on top of students' difficulty list. Recently conducted study reveals that lexical difficulty is the highest rated difficulty in grammar. (See Rashed, 2011).

In relation to teaching of grammar EIA also found similar belief among the teachers. They found some kind of acceptance of the teachers of one of the key principles of CLT: that teaching English is more than grammar teaching with 86% of the teachers disagreeing that 'learning English means to learn grammar rules'. Further they found that a considerable number of teachers 26% and 33% agreed that grammar rules should be explicitly explained in the class and students' English improves quickly if

they study and practise grammar respectively. In relation to this it was perceived from the students' opinions that grammar occupies a major portion of their study of English. Nevertheless communicative skill does not put that much emphasis on grammar, students in this region are habituated to do so as they are evaluated on grammatical skill rather than communicative skill, this seems to be a substantial gap between the curricular objectives and general practices. As long as this gap can not be minimised, the problem continues to remain.

### 5.2.7 Two most difficult items in learning English

Further to cross check data regarding students' learning difficulties in English, both students and teachers provided their opinions regarding two most difficult items in learning English. Students' responses can be observed from the figure below.

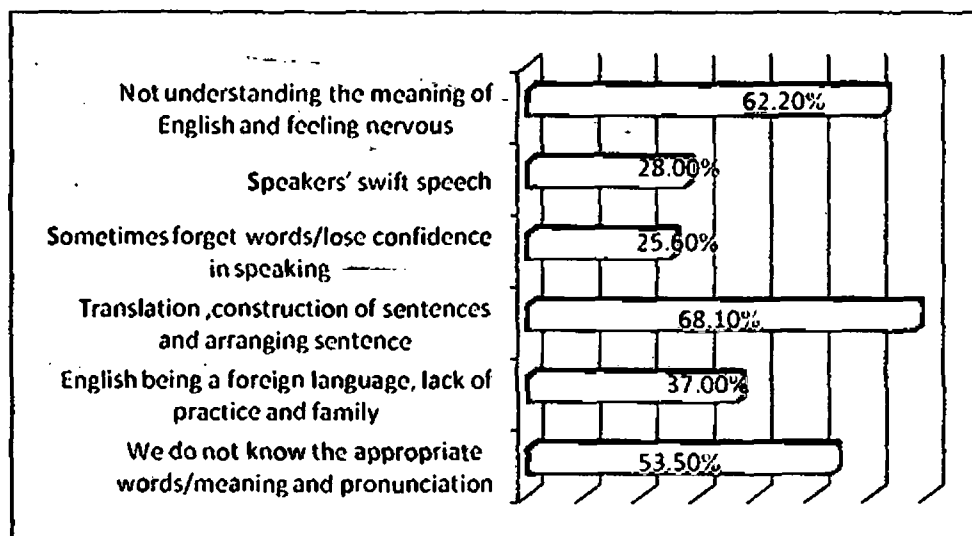


Figure 5.15. Students' opinions on two most difficult items

The figure shows that a high percentage 68.10% reported their difficulty in the areas of construction of sentences, arranging sentences and translation. The next higher percent of them 62.20% mentioned some psycholinguistic factors like for not understanding English they feel nervous. On the other hand 53.50% of them mentioned word meaning and pronunciation. Besides, a reasonable percent 37% informed that English being a foreign language, they do not get any family support. Among the rest, 28% mentioned their listening problem and 25.60% percent

sometimes forget words and feel nervous. Again, the previous finding gets stronger with this similar finding from the open questions. In relation to this teachers opinions provide substantial support

**Table 5.9**

*Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on Two Most Difficult Items*

Statements	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Poor vocabulary	32	69.6	N= 46
Unable to form sentences	2	4.3	
Unable to speak English	4	8.7	
Lack of interest in foreign language	26	56.5	
Not knowing grammar	8	17.4	

Slightly different though, teachers also provided opinions regarding their students' most difficult items in English. Poor vocabulary was mentioned by a large percent 69.60% of teachers and lack of interest in a foreign language was mentioned by 56.50% of the teachers. Among the rest not knowing grammar and unable to speak English were mentioned by 17.40% and 8.70% of the teachers respectively. While comparing students' opinions with teachers' opinions regarding difficulty, vocabulary emerged their common item and grammar was also mentioned by both teachers and students. It is noteworthy here that teachers identified vocabulary as difficult for students. But the striking difference is that while giving opinions on speaking, teachers did put much emphasis on the vocabulary. Difficulty in vocabulary was further detected and supported by most of the students and a portion of the teachers. It can be seen from the above table that teachers put more emphasis on psycholinguistic factors. So they mentioned about the students' lack of interest in learning a foreign language. But it was disclosed from the students' questionnaire that grammar poses great difficulty for them in learning English. This is further evidenced through the students' FGD and experts' view. During FGD students told that CLT puts less emphasis on grammar so they lack grammatical efficiency and it prevents them from

using correct English structure. <sup>Dhaka University Institutional Repository</sup> In this regard expert's opinions provide a substantial support to the students.

### 5.2.7a Expert's view

The experts expressed their opinions on students' main difficulties in learning English.

*“Our students cannot speak English. Only in some urban schools oral practice is done, so, some of the students who have opportunity to go to private coaching centers they can speak English well.”*

This was the opinion of the teacher. He also added that students are normally shy. They do not take part in classroom activities. The trainer thought that continuous help provided by the teacher to overcome students' difficulties may work well. Teachers should motivate and encourage them properly. The trainer further said,

*“In a real sense a teacher is the person who can play an important role in activating students to take part in classroom language activities.”*

On the other hand the curriculum specialist thought that generally students do not get good teachers. There is always a lack of proficient teachers who can teach properly. According to her,

*“Students need to practise with authentic materials. Teachers should make them realize that they have to increase their skills in English.”*

The other issues that came out during the interview include; Some of the students are not properly motivated and often think that English is an additional burden for them, also they think English is not required for them, students do not get any opportunity to listen, speak, and use English. As they are not properly motivated they are afraid of English and they cannot construct grammatically correct sentences. They also thought that students' level of anxiety is responsible to some extent. But this does not match with the findings of scale used in this study to measure their level of anxiety. But it was proved true through qualitative findings that students suffer from some kind of deficiency in English language from their early age. So, the experts thought that their fear of foreign language should be removed because they thought that in rural areas, for most of the students there is no extra help from the teachers. Similar opinions

were received from the experts regarding the special areas of students' difficulties; lack of vocabulary, no opportunity to practice, inavailability of an appropriate environment for students to practice and lack of speaking practice outside classroom. This opinion is quite consistent with other findings presented in the previous discussion of this chapter.

### 5.2.8 Difficulty Regarding the Text and the Teachers' Guide (TG)

Teaching learning activities are usually conducted based on the prescribed textbook. Besides, textbook is the only printed material all students have an equal access to for developing their language skills. Sometimes teachers complain about the use of infrequent words in the text which eventually contribute to the difficulty not only for the students but also for the teachers. So opinions of both teachers and students on the text were elicited. Teachers identified their difficulty in using the textbook and teachers' guide (TG) by putting tick marks on a scale. Students' opinions can be seen from the figure below.

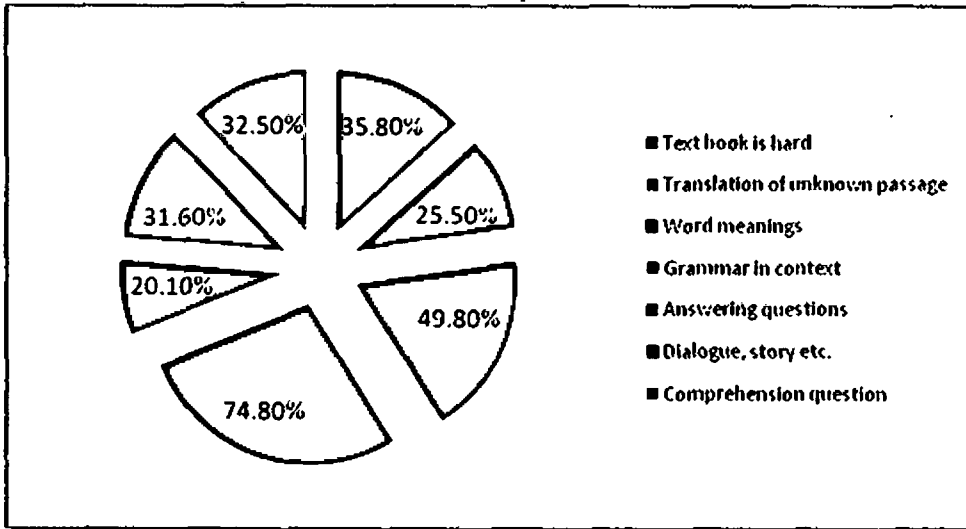


Figure 5.16. Students' opinions on the contents text

Figure:5.16 displays that for a large number (74.80%) of students grammar in context is hard and a reasonable number of them (49.80%) mentioned the word meanings. Among the rest 31.60% and 32.50% claimed that answering questions from the text and stories and dialogues were difficult respectively. For 35.80% of them the

text book is hard. For 25.50% translation and for 20.10% answering comprehension questions was difficult. Students' views can be compared with the teachers' views.

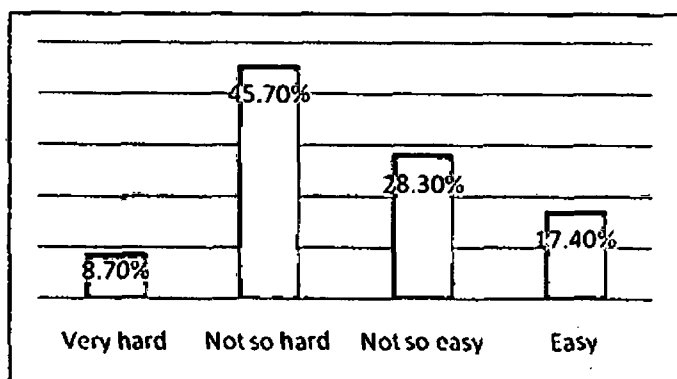


Figure 5.17. Teachers' opinions on the contents of Text

The figure presents teachers' opinions on the text. According to 45.70% teachers the text is not hard, but for 28.30% of them it is not so easy. On the other hand for 17.40% and 8.70% of them it is easy and very hard respectively. Again 3.08% teachers supported speaking as difficult activity in the text and the rest supported reading as difficult and the textbook itself were supported by nearly an equal number 2.42% and 2.35% of the teachers respectively. Again it is interesting to note that a very negligible number, 2 of them consider the content of the text difficult.

One student's comment on English for Today (EfT)

*"The difficult item is reading, writing, pronouncing the tooth broken vocabulary of the text."*

This is again related to students' vocabulary problem. Moreover, some of the teachers considered the topics of the textbook not interesting at all. They thought that the book did not include any literary items, and this was considered a problem by 47% of the teachers (Roshid, 2009, p.156).

Regarding teachers' guide, Roshid found 32% of the teachers consider it difficult to follow, so it is a problem for them. Whereas Shahzadi (2004, cited in Roshid, 2009) one of the authors of the text contends that the present text is developed on the basis of communicative approach which advocates students' involvement in various types of classroom activities. Again, classroom observation failed to provide sufficient evidence to this finding as teachers were found to occasionally use the text, they



mainly depended on the guides. Besides, unavailability of the teachers' guide was another reason behind not using TG. During students FGD it was also unveiled that English text English for Today (EfT) sometimes appeared difficult to them. Detailed discussion on the text was done by the experts.

### 5.2.8a Expert's interview

According to the experts some of the lessons in the text are appropriate for learning English language, but others are not. The teacher said,

*"Text prescribed for classe IX and X is a big volume, we can't complete within the total number of classes. Teachers can not cover all the lesson's activities but they only practice the sample questions to help students score good grades."*

He also commented that illustrations are not clear as well as not functional, there are too many lessons, it should be reviewed. The trainer opined that in general the text is good but some of the topics are not suitable for the students, more interesting topics should be incorporated. Main problem is that teachers are not properly acquainted with how to deal with the text, so the activities designed in the text are not done in the class.

According to the curriculum specialist,

*"Teachers are even not motivated to do the activities as they are skeptical about CLT. They need to change their attitude first, otherwise it is very difficult to follow modern approaches."*

She shared her own experiences of being a teacher herself 20 years back. Textbooks once developed, usually never get reviewed. Topics should be rewritten. Some interesting literary pieces should be included as there is not that much language input in the texts. It was revealed from their discussion that without proper language input it becomes difficult for classroom teachers to engage students in activities. Present volume should be reduced and low frequency words that have been used in the text should be explained in TG. It is apparent from their opinions that teachers' guide (TG) does not provide sufficient support to the teachers. Mixed opinions are seen relating the text. This discussion will get support from the data presented in the next section.

Not related to students' difficulty in English.

### 5.2.9 Classroom activities for skill practices

In the context of Bangladesh in learning English students get less opportunity to practise the skills outside classroom, so classroom activities are crucial for their learning of the language. This is the only place that can create opportunity for their practice. In this regard it is relevant to check the present situation. Types of classroom activities regarding the four skills can be observed from the following table. Practice of language skills is only possible when the teacher can organize classroom activities by involving students in pair, group work. The table displays that a majority of teachers 36 (78.3%) responded in favour of asking questions on lesson which is an indication of traditional classroom practices. This was also observed during the observation of the class. On the other hand 29 (63%) opined for group work but the irony here is that classroom observation does not support that and also the physical structure of classroom seating arrangement does not allow to conduct group work. An equal number of them 22 (47.8%) reported of pair work and individual task. The following table depicts data on this.

**Table 5.10**

*Classroom Activities Students Do*

Activities	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Give them pair work	22	47.8	N=46
Give them group work	29	63	
Individual task	22	47.8	
Ask them questions on the lesson	36	78.3	

This indicates that most of the class activities generally tend to be traditional. So it is clear from the data that the reason behind the language skills, speaking and listening in particular, are most difficult for the students is due to their lack of appropriate practice in the classroom. What is surprising from the tabulated data is that more than 50% of them claimed that they do group work in the class. But this is in sharp contrast to the other sources of data. This is also consistent with Roshid (2009) who found that only in 5% class listening is practiced and 90% students reported of no practice of speaking in class. The findings of the present study actually do not get support from

students' opinions and classroom observation. Koshid particularly explored the classroom practices of both teachers and students. So his study provides strong evidence to support the idea that there is mismatch between the opinion of teachers, students, and actual classroom situation. A students' comment regarding classroom activities,

*"Teacher should be friendly with the students. He should create an English environment and should alleviate the problems of students and help us practise the skills."*

In classroom practice it was seen during the observation that teachers mainly focus on memorising answers to questions from the guide, explanation of grammar rules which ultimately do not impact their development of language skills. In this regard the findings of EIA(2009) survey gives an encouraging picture in a small scale though. EIA found evidences that secondary teachers have moved away from the idea that grammar and rote learning is at the heart of CLT. However, in spite of existence of this type of positive changes among the teachers, still some of them posited,

*"I believe grammar is really essential for learning English. So I also emphasise grammar. I explained a topic in English first, if my students can not understand then I try to help them to understand using Bangla."*

This was also proved during the observation. Students' FGD report is also consistent in line with this finding. From the above discussion it is clear that as long as the attitudes of both teachers and students can not be changed the pattern of classroom activities may not experience any improvement.

#### 5.2.10 Teachers prepare lesson plan

In relation to the above discussion now it seems quite rational to see the teachers' preparation. This is a well known fact that effective classroom teaching requires teachers' good preparation. So, preparation of an organized plan cannot be ignored. But in reality there is little scope for teachers to prepare an organized plan. Data regarding teachers' plan is presented in table 5.11. Types of plan can be seen in table 5.12 (See appendix-A).

Not on the topic.

**Table 5.11***Teachers' Responses on Making Lesson Plan*

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Total
No	3	6.5	N=46
Yes	43	93.5	
Total	46	100	

The table shows that an overwhelming majority (93.5%) of them admitted of preparing a plan though 45.5% of them prepare just an outline. Whereas 25% of them told that they prepare a full written plan which is contradictory to real situation. During the class observation it was found that most of the practising teachers did not have any plan to teach their lesson on that specific date. This finding matches with Roshid (2009) who found out from discussion with the teachers that teachers prepare it mentally. This is in fact very disappointing to know that teachers generally did not go through or teach all the-sections of any lesson. They only go through the sections which are important for examination. This is the real picture of all the schools both in urban and rural areas. Roshid (2009) also indicated that teachers reported that they skipped some sections due to lack of time (See chapter-3).

In relation to this it seems relevant to explain the opinions of the experts about English language teachers. They told that very few of them received any kind of training in teaching English. As a result no professional commitment grew among the teachers. They hanker after private tuition for extra money., specially in urban areas.

One interesting comment from the teacher,

*“ Teachers try to attract the attention of the students as well as to please the parents so that they get appointed for their children’s private tuition.”*

This is definitely a matter of grave concern, because not all the students are capable of affording private tuition. They also informed that teachers teaching English at the secondary level usually do not have any English background. They teach using

traditional method, some of them use a kind of mixture method. The trainer said that many of the teachers are not trained, so in their class most of the time students remain passive. He then added that this is not their fault because they did not get a chance to be acquainted with the modern approaches. In this regard the curriculum specialist complained that they are less committed and less caring. Teachers' academic qualification is also important. They usually tend to depend on traditional teaching. They do so because they have hardly received any training. Their classroom activities are teacher centred. The curriculum specialist commented that teachers lack professional commitment and responsibilities. There should be one special language centre which will be responsible for providing accreditation to the teachers after conducting a level wise evaluation. In relation to dealing with students' language problem some teachers are good, some are not up to the mark.

This is noteworthy here that without preparation and proper planning it is very difficult to accomplish any task, particularly in case of classroom teaching but this is often ignored by the teachers. Probably the reason behind teachers' lack of proper planning is due to their unfamiliarity of making a useful plan of the lessons to be taught. They need support, if the support can be provided the situation may change.

### 5.2.11 Teachers' use of teaching/visual aids — ?

In modern classroom use of varieties of resources has become a norm. Among all other resources visual aids are easy to prepare and use. Visual aids add interest and variety to lesson. Visuals make learning permanent and increase students' involvement in classroom activities. So, it appeared relevant to know whether the teachers used visuals in their class or not. Data regarding this are presented in the following table.

**Table 5.13**

*Frequency Distribution of Responses on the Use of Teaching Aid*

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Yes	42	97.70	N=46
No	01	2.3	
Frequently	09	27.3	
Sometimes	24	73.3	

The table displays that a vast majority 42 (97.70%) of teachers responded positively that they use teaching aid. On the other hand a considerable portion of them 24 (72.70%) reported that they sometimes use TA and the rest of them (27.30%) use often. This opinion is contradictory with the number of positive responses. It is noticeable here that almost all of them responded positively though only a portion of them informed that they used it sometimes. In a real sense during the classroom observation use of teaching aid was totally absent. Interestingly, not a single teacher was found to be using any teaching aid during the observation. Even the use of prescribed text created some controversy. As Bashir (2003, cited in Roshid,2009) posited that the texts are not properly used within the classroom situations. There is mention in the curriculum of using authentic materials in CLT though in reality the practice is absent. This has got substantial support from students' FGD. Students reported that even the pictures of the text are no utilized properly let alone other teaching aids. In real sense the idea of incorporating the pictures in the text is to functionally use them for the benefit of the students. It is expected that teachers should know how to use them to involve students in pair and group work. Once again, training of the teachers becomes vital to assist the teachers conducting classroom activities using different teaching aids to bring variety in the classroom.

### **5.3 Psycholinguistic/Affective difficulties of the students**

#### **5.3.1 Motivation and attitude**

Motivation is a psychological process to decide on to do something. Without proper motivation people can't do any work. In other sense it can be said that without having positive attitudes learners do not feel inspired to get involved in any learning process. In this regard Ellis (2006) contends that actually the criteria for measuring difficulties are a mixed bag full of input frequency (linguistic environment), linguistic factors (nature of grammatical features), and psychological difficulty (learn ability). In the present study both motivation and attitudes have been used synonymously. So in investigating learners' difficulty, the pattern or types of motivation/attitudes of the learners were examined. Students' motivational pattern and attitudes can be seen from table: 5.14. The scrutiny of the table clarifies that in most of the cases 284 (78.89%)

the students seemed highly motivated to learn English for getting a good job, (i.e. for instrumental purpose) and the next highest number 260 (72.22%) was for reading books, magazines and newspapers (i.e. for integrative purpose) and for 207 (57.5%) of them it was for higher studies abroad. On the other hand for 157 (43.61%) of the students the reason for learning English was to appreciate other culture. This indicates their integrative motivation. The following table displays the pattern of motivation.

**Table: 5.14**

*Frequency Distribution of Students' Opinions on Motivation/ Attitude*

Statements (N=360)	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
English is important because it will help me get a good job	8	14	54	284
English is important because it will help me go overseas for higher studies or jobs	16	71	66	207
English will enable me to read English books, magazines, and newspapers	4	47	49	260
English will allow me to meet and talk with many people in the world	2	87	67	204
English will enable me to understand and appreciate Anglo American cultures and literature	46	72	85	157

One pattern noticeable here is that in case of all the five statements which were in favour of high motivation include both instrumental and integrative (4 instrumental) reasons only, the responses show students' positive attitude towards English. This finding is consistent with the findings of Rahman (2006).

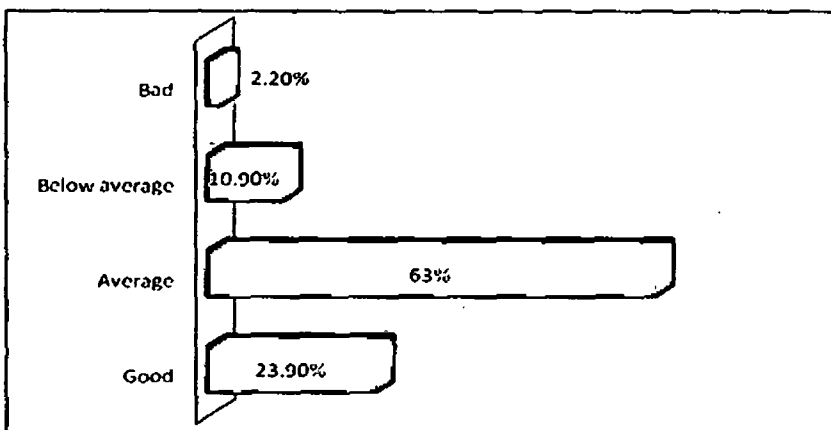
In Rahman's(2006) study students' motivation was found as mostly instrumental but at the same time the presence of integrativeness was not totally absent. In this regard it appears relevant to see the level of students' motivation and attitude, which is presented in the following table.

**Table: 5.15***Students' Level of motivation*

Calculated value	Frequency	Percentage
1	1	.3
2	69	19.2
3	224	62.2
4	66	18.3
Total	360	100

Students' level of motivation was statistically calculated, the maximum value being 20 and the minimum value 5 with 5 intervals, so the number being higher, level is high and in the same way, number being low, the level becomes low. It can be seen from the table that a large majority 224 (62.2%) of the students was averagely motivated, among the rest 69 (19.2%) and were in the category of below average and 66 (18.3%) were highly motivated, whereas, only one was the least motivated. Thus it shows that students' motivation is at an average level.

Hence teachers' attitudes towards students' background of English and style of learning English appeared important to cross check the data. Teachers' opinions have been presented and discussed in the following figure.

*Figure 5.18. Students' level in English*



The figure depicts that according to 29 (63%) teachers, their students' level of English is at an average level. Eleven (23.90%) of them told that their students' level in English is good. Five of them (10.90%) reported that their students' level is below average. Only one teacher said that his students are bad in English. This is consistent with the motivational level of the students. This finding is also supported by the class observation data that in the criterion of students are energetic and eager to learn, in 8 cases (19%) it was excellent and in 16 cases (38%) it was found good which is an indication of reasonably motivated students. This was also strengthened by students' FGD. Students said that they can't respond to even the simplest question in English, that does not mean that they don't want to learn; they were eager to learn but they only get less opportunity. It was again perceived by the experts that sometimes some factors, such as large class size may hinder their progress. So, special care should be taken to encourage the students.

EIA survey also found to somewhat similar situation regarding the strengths of the students in English. A majority of both students (61.2%) and teachers (74.7%) perceive the level average and 21.7% students and 9.3% teachers consider the level weak. It has been proved through research that both integrative and instrumental motivations are required for achieving success in learning a foreign language. Nevertheless, for sustainable success integrative motivation was found to be more active (Taylor, Meynard and Rheault 1997; Ellis 1997; Crookes et al 1991). In studies of Gardner and Lambert more emphasis was put on integrative than instrumental motivation (Ellis: 1997). However, in recent studies both integrative and instrumental motivation have got equal importance in learning a FL/SL though students were found to be motivated instrumentally and serve their immediate purpose. Citing example of the situation of English in India Braj Kachru (1977, in Brown: 2000) expressed his view that several instances are there that students who are oriented instrumentally achieved academic success in learning a SL. Kachru's opinion matches with the situation of the present study in that the findings of the study supports students' instrumental motivation though, there are events of individual successes of scoring high in the proficiency tests conducted by international organizations for pursuing higher studies abroad. Generally learning of English happens in the formal setting of classroom teaching and teachers are considered the main facilitators; at this stage it

appears logical to see how teachers can motivate their students in learning. Teachers' suggestions are presented in the following table.

**Table: 5.16**

*Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Suggestions to Motivate Students*

Statements (N= 46)	Frequency	Percentage
Give students opportunity to practice	22	71.0
Let students read story books and magazines	2	6.6
Let students understand the importance of English	5	16.0
Teachers should be friendly	2	6.5
Total	31	100

The table shows that a large number of them 22(71%) suggested to give students opportunity to practise English. Five (16.10%) of them suggested that teachers should let their students understand the importance of English. On the other hand an equal number of them 2 (6.50%) suggested that students should read story books and magazines and teachers should be friendly to the students. This is very surprising to see that teachers are aware of their role as a guide to the students but in real classroom they do not behave accordingly. Teachers' friendly behaviour can play a meaningful role in increasing students' motivation to learning has been confirmed by other studies also (see Wilson: 2004). In this respect teachers' behavior becomes crucial to effectively motivate the students. It was apparent from the students' FGD also that students tend to completely rely on the teachers' decisions about their learning. Students also confessed that they do not have access to English books, magazines, and journals which could have been a great help for them in developing their language skills. In this regard experts also opined that creating favourable environment is an essential requirement. The problem here is to find out the relevant persons who will be rested with the responsibility. In relation to this the experts' view becomes significant as they said that everyone should be sincere and committed to his or her duties, only then a positive outcome is possible.

### 5.3.2 Teachers' opinions on students' reason for learning English

In this context it would be informative to examine the teachers' opinions on their students' reasons for learning English and compare with the students' opinions. The following table shows teachers' opinions.

**Table: 5.17**

*Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on Reasons of Students' Studying English*

Statements (N=46)	Frequency	Percentage
To get a good job	17	37
For overseas higher studies	12	26.1
Because it is international language	28	60.9
To meet and talk with many people in the world	11	23.9
To understand and appreciate different cultures and literatures	16	34.8
Because students like to learn a foreign language	2	4.3
To take part in activities of other culture more freely	8	17.4
Because it is compulsory	26	56.6
For getting good grades	12	26.1
To pass the examination	21	45.7

While examining the table it is clear that nearly an equal number of teachers 28 (60.9%) and 26 (56.6%) told that their students learn English as a foreign or international language and as it is compulsory subject respectively. Next highest number 21 (45.70%) and 17 (37%) opined that they want a good job and they want to pass the exam respectively. To appreciate other culture was provided by 16 (34.8%). Overseas higher studies and getting good grades were supported by an equal number 12(26.10%). To take part in activities of other cultures more freely was voted by 8 (17.40%) and only a negligible number 2 (4.30%) told that their students liked to learn a foreign language. Eleven (23.9%) of them voted for, students wanted to talk to other people of the world. It is interesting to note that teachers' opinions are completely contradictory to students' opinions. None of the students mentioned that they studied English as it was their compulsory subject, rather they studied English

for utilitarian purpose. Very few teachers contend that their students study English for integrative purpose. So, at this specific point it can be seen that both teachers and students have similar opinions in learning English. Students' attitudes towards learning English emerges through the following comment of a student,

*"There is no favourable environment for speaking English. One or two people become interested to speak English, others do not take it favourably. If someone speaks in English, others take it as oversmart because some people try to show smartness by speaking English."*

This is an important proof of socio-cultural aspects of learning English in Bangladesh. This consolidates the finding of Zaman and Haque(2000) who proved through their study that students' motivations are integrative.

While discussing students' studying English, teachers gave their opinions on the reasons of students' limited access to English which might be a contributing factor in students' development of skills. Following table presents data on this.

**Table : 5.18**

*Teachers' Opinions on Reasons for Students' Limited Access to English*

Statements (N= 46)	Frequency	Percentage
Students do not have opportunities to read any additional material in English	23	50
Students do not have access to TV / radio programmes broadcasted in English	20	43.5
Students do not read newspapers/ magazines in English	26	56.5
Students do not spend enough time in practicing English	30	65.2

Other than the psycholinguistic factors, there are some other related contextual factors responsible for supplementing students' learning of English. In this regard teachers expressed their opinions on the possible reasons for students' lack of access to English. Data show that a big majority of the teachers 30 (65.2%) informed that students do not spend much time in practising English, 26 (56.50%) of them reported

that students do not read newspapers and magazines in English. On the other hand 50% (23) and 43.5% (20) of the teachers told that students do not have opportunities to read any additional materials and students do not have access to TV/radio programs respectively. This is a common belief about learning of English in all categories of people in Bangladesh that English is very hard to learn. So, the present study attempted to explore the reasons from both teachers and students' point of view. Teachers' opinions have been recorded in table 5.19.

**Table: 5.19**

*Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on Reasons of English being Hard*

Statements (N= 46)	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of comprehension of grammar rules	29	63.0
Lack of knowledge of vocabulary	33	71.7
Lack of comprehension of the content of the text	8	17.4
Lack of knowledge of English / American culture	7	16.2
Lack of correct pronunciation	16	34.8
Thinking in Bangla not in English	14	30.4
Being shy and scared of speaking English in class and making mistakes	32	69.6
Lack of motivation for the subject	10	21.7
Lack of opportunity to practise	24	52.2
Lack of preparation/ study for the English course	18	39.9

It can be seen from the table that teachers provided various reasons of English being hard for the students. Among the given reasons, 33 (71.70%) and 32 (69.60%) teachers supported lack of knowledge of vocabulary and being shy of speaking English respectively. The table also shows that 29 (63%) and 24 (52.2%) of the teachers said that lack of comprehension of the text and lack of opportunity for

practice were the reasons for English being hard. Among other reasons lack of study, lack of correct pronunciation, lack of comprehension of the text, and lack of knowledge of the American culture were mentioned by 18 (39.1%), 16 (34.8%), 8 (17.4%), and 7 (16.2%) of the teachers respectively. Again 50% of the teachers conceive that students do not have enough opportunities to read any additional materials in English. Yet more than 50% of them consider that the students do not spend enough time in reading newspaper, magazines etc. in English. Less than 50% of them think that their students do not have access to TV, Radio and other media which are very helpful for learning a foreign language. These are actually mentioned by teachers as some possible reasons in addition to their linguistic difficulties for not knowing English properly. The findings of linguistic difficulties conform with teachers report in Ghrib Maamouri 2002 (mentioned in Esma 2004). They contended that most of their students had difficulties with grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, themes and topics. These students' difficulties were also due to lack of motivation and shyness. This is got supported by Roshid (2009), who contends that students are shy to speak in front of people, they feel that their mistakes will turn them into a laughing object in the class. Lack of motivation is also an important reason (Roshid, 2009; Begum, 1999). But this finding is contradictory to students' own opinions and EIA research findings which show that both students and teachers possess the same opinions of having positive motivation to learn English.

### 5.3.3 Anxiety

Anxiety is a psychological construct, commonly described by the psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971 in Scovel, 1991, p.18). Research has confirmed the existence of anxiety and its effect on second language learning (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991b). Anxiety is a common feeling among the students of any foreign language. In line with this present study also investigated students' level of anxiety in learning English. Students' level of anxiety and fear was measured through a five point rating scale of a questionnaire containing 10 statements. Following table gives clear picture of students' level of anxiety.

**Table:5.20**  
*Students' Responses on Anxiety*

Statements (N=360)	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation	44	208	66	42
In English class I feel very nervous when I forget known things	23	180	91	66
I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher corrects	57	163	75	65
I become afraid when teacher identifies my small errors	101	173	54	32
If I am asked to say something in English class I get nervous	109	118	84	49
I feel more nervous and worried in English class than any other class	83	132	73	72
I get panicked if I am asked to write English essay without information	39	66	255	100
I tremble in fear of the idea that I will be asked question in English class	36	73	116	135
I become nervous in English class despite poor preparation	27	67	141	125
I get very upset at the thought of being laughed at for my speaking English	60	46	70	184

Careful examination of the table gives the impression that out of 360 students more than 50% (208) sometimes start to panic in case of speaking English without any preparation. Fifty percent of them (180) feel nervous when they forget all known things. More than 50% of them (163, 173) get upset when they do not understand teacher's correction and when the teacher identifies their small errors respectively. A

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considerable number of students 118 and 132 (less than 50%) feel shy to say something in English and feel more worried in English than any other class respectively. On the other hand 255,116, 141 get panicked if asked to write something, tremble in fear when asked any questions, and get panicked often despite being prior preparation respectively. In addition to that a reasonable number of supports (100 and 135) can be observed from the table that they get panicked if asked to write something, tremble in fear in answering questions always respectively. Whereas slightly over than 50% of them(184 and 125) get upset in the fear that everyone will laugh at them while speaking English and become nervous respectively. Hence, it is important to check students' level of anxiety through statistical calculation. Students' level of anxiety is shown in table 5.21.

**Table: 5.21**

*Students' level of anxiety*

Calculated value	Frequency	Percentage
1	122	33.9
2	202	56.1
3	35	9.5
4	1	.3
Total	360	100

The table shows that from the highest to the lowest calculated value a considerable number of the students 122 (33.9%) and 202 (56.1%) were least and below average anxious, on the other hand a small portion 35 (9.7%)'s level of anxiety was at an average scale. Only one was measured as highly anxious. This finding is calculated from the rating scale but some mismatches with the questionnaire data are also observed. So, it is now relevant that the reasons should be explored. It was found out from the questionnaire that students frequently suffer from examination anxiety and speaking anxiety is a common feature for most of the students. The next section presents the common reasons of anxiety felt by the students at different times of their learning of English.

### 5.3.4 Reasons of anxiety and fear

Identification of the reasons behind students' feeling of anxiety in a foreign language class is important as this will guide the concerned authority and the classroom teachers to think and plan for their future language development interventions. Data are all self reported. Students' own reasons of their anxiety and fear in class can be observed from table 5.22.

**Table 5.22**

*Students' Responses on Situation that Creates Anxiety and Fear*

Statements	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking English in front of people	168	46.7
Short tempered teacher in classroom	70	19.4
Written examination	9	2.5
Verbal examination	50	13.9
No anxiety and fear	63	17.5
Total	360	100

The table shows that for a vast majority of them 168 (46.7%) speaking in front of people on the other hand for 50 (13.9%) of them oral examination is the cause of anxiety and fear, but in case of written examination the number is very low 9 (2.5%). For a moderate no. 63 (17.5%) there is no anxiety. Examining the data it is clear that speaking is on the top of their anxiety and fear list. It is also encouraging to see that 63(17.5%) students who do not feel any anxiety in using English. It is again proved that speaking is on top of their list of anxiety.

This finding is to some extent similar to the finding of the study report of EIA. According to the report, 41.8% of the students and 33.0% teachers consider English a moderately difficult subject to learn. This finding gets support from Esma (2004) and Hu (2005). Both of them found in their studies that speaking is the most anxiety

arousing classroom activities. Hu (2005) found examination related anxiety most prevalent among the Chinese students. In this relation Na's (2007) study is mentionable, according to Na (2007) the high frequency of tests in English class also plays a significant role in creating anxiety among the students. This report is consistent with the present study in the sense that next to speaking on the anxiety list there is the mention of students always suffering from examination anxiety. Adam's (1993) study also proved that Hong Kong secondary school students encountered similar situation in learning English. This is contradictory to the usual classroom practices in the sense that students place speaking on top of their priority list though there is very little or no existence of classroom practice. This picture is noticeable all over Bangladesh. The reason behind this picture is probably the absence of inclusion of speaking test in the examination. Interesting fact is that in curriculum there is mention of practice of speaking skill with equal emphasis on other skills as well. But for some unknown reasons speaking skill is not tested. Other studies (Roshid, 2009) have proved earlier that any language item that is not included in students' examination, students usually lose interest to practise that item.

### **5.3.5 Results of anxiety and fear**

Research conducted previously in the area of language anxiety was able to prove that in some case anxiety may play debilitating role which is harmful for any language learner but it is not always the same. Sometimes it may play facilitative role also, so in the present study it was necessary to see the results of anxiety among the language learning students. The ultimate result of anxiety and fear in English classroom can be observed from table 5.21. The overall findings here do not show any positive picture though it indicates normal human characteristics which every human being experiences at some period of life.

**Table: 5.23***Frequency Distribution of Students' Responses on Result of Anxiety and Fear*

Statements	Frequency	Percentage
I feel nervous	144	40.0
I lose my confidence	79	21.9
Feel fast rate of heart beat	75	20.8
I start sweating	7	1.9
Not applicable	55	15.3
Total	360	100

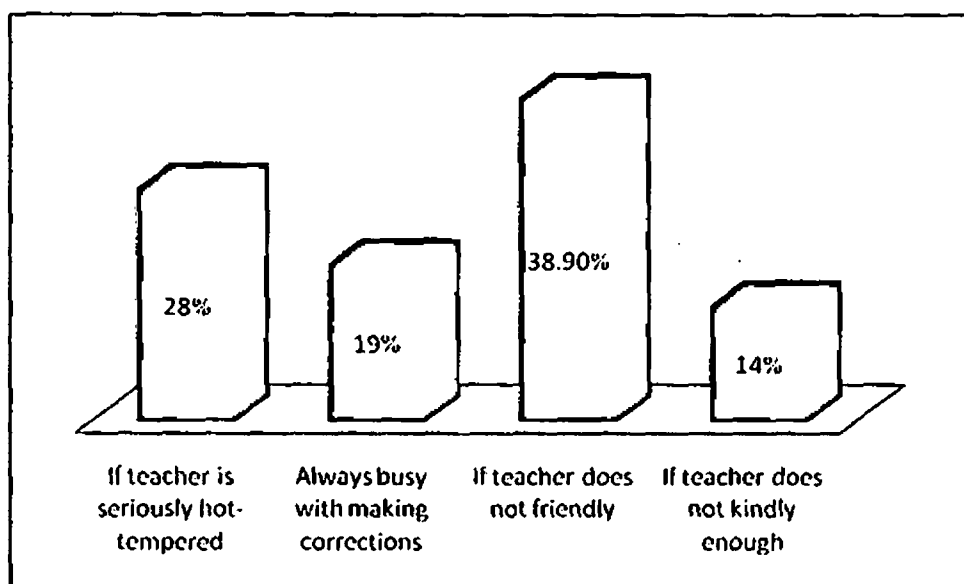
The table depicts that a large number of them 144 (40%) feel nervous, whereas 79 (21.9%) lose their confidence and 75 (20.8%) of them feel fast rate of heart beat. A negligible number of them 7 (1.9%) starts sweating. For a moderate no. 55 (15.3%) there is no anxiety. It is interesting to see that a considerable number of them do not feel any anxiety in English class. This is really very commendable to observe. It has been proved in some researches that sometimes anxiety creates facilitating awareness which in turn increases students' confidence level. As DiFino and Lombardino (2004) contend that academic anxiety keeps students "on the ball" and motivates students positively. This has got support from the study of Castro and Peck (2005) also. They found that students who are extremely anxious, perfectionist, highly analytical or not analytical enough all crowded for foreign language modification program (See chapter-3).

### **5.3.6 Role of English teacher in creating anxiety for the students**

As it has been mentioned earlier that teaching learning occur in a congenial atmosphere, where both teachers' and students' combined effort is essential. Successful learning only can happen through each others' cooperation. For this reason it was necessary to examine the teachers' activity from students' point of view. Data displayed in the figure: 5.19 shows whether the teacher in the classroom is responsible for creating anxiety for the students. It shows that more than 50% positive responses

(239) were against teachers' being not friendly and seriously hot tempered. Next highest number of responses 68 (19%) were for teachers always busy with making corrections. Fifty (14%) of them responded that teachers' non-cooperation in the classroom increases their anxiety. Careful scrutiny of the figure gives idea that teachers' being friendly is most important for a language class. For this reason it is supported by a big number of students. Lei's study found similar evidence regarding teachers' role in creating anxiety among students. She found that teachers impact students' affection. All the participants in her study claimed that teachers influenced their English language learning including their interest, motivation and attitudes, towards the language. In a similar tone Elkhafafi recommended, "supportive and friendly teachers would be beneficial (2001, p.17 in Wilson: 2004, p.314). So, it indicates that teachers' positive influence in students' affect may enhance students' language proficiency (See chapter-3). To quote a student,

*"If the English teacher makes us understand the lesson in a cool and good mind and help us to read and if we fail to read again the teacher helps us in the same way , this type of co operation from the teacher will make my lesson easier."*



*Figure 5.19. Role of teacher in creating anxiety in the class*

### 5.3.7 Overcoming fear in English

In this context it seemed reasonable to see how the students react in this situation. Analysis of the situation will support the types of anxiety of the students and their use of strategy. Various responses were recorded on students' strategy of overcoming fear in English class can be observed from table: 5.24.

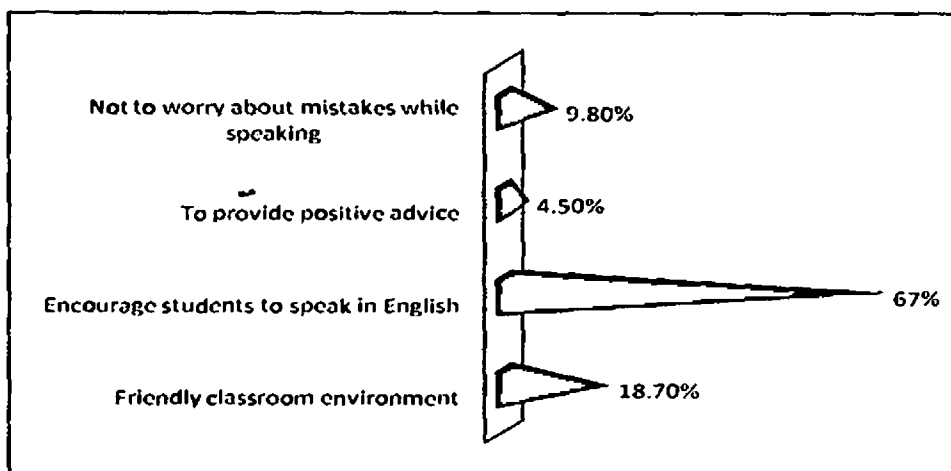
**Table: 5.24**

*Frequency Distribution of Students' Responses on Overcoming Fear in English*

Statements	Frequency	Percentage
Use broken sentences	67	18.7
Finish speaking quickly	15	4.2
Try to come out from stressful situation	83	23.1
Try to get back confidence	163	45.4
Not applicable	31	8.6
Total	359	100

The table shows that highest number of support 163 (45.4%) was in favour of the statement, they try to get back their confidence, whereas 83 (23.1%) of them try to get out of the stressed situation, 67 (18.7%) of them use broken sentences and a small number of them 15 (4.2%) finish speaking very quickly. For 31 (8.6%) of them there is no anxiety. Again it is very encouraging to observe that though the students get frightened though they immediately try to get back their confidence, i.e. the students apply their own strategy to face any adverse situation. This can be explained by Dinklage's (1971) opinion that anxiety was not the cause but the result of failure in learning a foreign language. This opinion is consistent with findings of the present study. Here anxiety does not cause students' failure but students get anxious for their examination or performance. In the same way Sparks and Ganschow (1993, 1995) argue that anxiety is the byproduct of language learning deficit (See chapter-3). In relation to this, students expressed their opinions about teachers, specially about how teachers sometimes can cause their anxiety in class. Besides the above responses,

students provided suggestion to overcome English language related anxiety in the classroom. Data can be seen from the following figure.



*Figure 5.20* Suggestions to overcome English language related anxiety

The figure shows that an overwhelming majority 240 (67%) replied that teachers' encouragement in speaking English can help them to overcome anxiety. Sixty seven (18.7%) of them expected friendly classroom environment, on the other hand 35 (9.8%) and 16 (4.4%) of them suggested not to worry about mistakes while speaking and teachers' positive advice respectively. These responses indicate students' strategies of overcoming anxiety in classroom. One interesting thing is evident here that students possess positive attitudes towards learning English, whatever difficulties they encounter. It seems relevant to see how teachers provide help to their students to get motivated and to overcome their fear or anxiety. Data regarding this are presented in table 5.21. It shows that more than 57.5% (23) of the teachers help their students to get rid of English fear. An equal number of the teachers 8 (20%) let their students to practise again and again and engage them in dialogue practice and teach them grammar.



**Table: 5.25***Frequency Distribution of Teachers' Opinions on Helping Students to Remove Fear*

Statements (N= 46)	Frequency	Percentage
Practise again and again	8	20.0
Let them practice dialogue and teach grammar	8	20.0
Being friendly, sharing everything we can remove shyness	1	2.5
Helping them to remove fear and motivating them	23	57.5
Total	40	100

Only a single (2.5%) teacher thought that being friendly, and sharing everything they can remove their students' shyness. This finding is contradictory to the students' opinions. Nearly 20% of the students opined that hot tempered teachers in classroom were their source of fear. Besides, nearly an equal percentage of students 25.40% and 26.80% expected friendly behavior and full cooperation from their teachers respectively, whereas only a single teacher opined to be friendly. It is very interesting to see that teachers here avoided their humanitarian role which is supported by only a single teacher. Whereas, an overwhelming majority 240 (67%) of students expect encouragement from their teachers and a reasonable number of students 67 (18.7%) wish the teachers to be friendly.

### 5.3.8 Self efficacy

Self efficacy is one's own belief about what s/he can do and succeed. In the present study it has been used to mean the confidence level of the students. This is also related to human psychology; it gives people mental strength to complete some activity and helps to reach the ultimate goal.

Students' level of self confidence is displayed through the following table:

**Table :5.26***Students' Responses on Their Pattern of Self efficacy*

Statements (N= 360)	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I do not worry if I do not understand teachers' every word	72	109	132	47
If teacher asks me any unknown questions I do not get upset	86	89	138	47
I do not worry about people's comment on my essay	82	46	65	167
I do not care about the result of English	146	59	105	50
I do not have any anxiety about the preparation of English	57	49	79	183

It shows that most of the students' responses are positive. The highest number (183) which is more than 50% of the total responses is in favour of the statement, "*I do not have any anxiety about the preparation of English.*" Under the scale always, which indicates the students' high level of self-efficacy and it is very encouraging to observe that they have this kind of feeling always. The next high number of response (167) is in favour of the statement, "*I do not worry about people's comment on my essay.*" which indicates that students' level of confidence is at a moderate level. Students' level of self-efficacy was further checked through statistical calculation and displayed in table 5.27.

**Table: 5.27***Students' Level of Self efficacy*

Calculated value	Frequency	Percentage
1	61	19.6
2	229	63.6
3	67	18.6
4	3	0.8
Total	360	100

The table depicts that a great majority of their 229 (63.6%) level is below average, 61 (19.6%) of them are at the level of least and 67 (18.6%) of them are at average level and only 3 (.8%) were highly confident. This finding is slightly inconsistent with the students' opinions. Yet, this is really very encouraging to see the positive comment of the students. Similar type of positive attitudes of the students was found in EIA research also. In EIA study 89.7% of the students and 85.2% of the teachers admitted of their gradual improvement in English language skills. The report also revealed that an overwhelming majority 99.1% of students and 97.8% of teachers expressed their opinion that they were motivated to learn English.

**Table 5.28**

*Teachers' Opinions on Students' Ability*

Statements (N= 46)	Frequency	Percentage
They are able to learn English	19	41.3
They have the capability of communicating in English	6	13
Girls are better than the boys in learning English	6	13
It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language	20	43.5
It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it	31	67.4
People in Bangladesh feel that it is important to speak English	16	34.8

Teachers were given six options to select one as appropriate for their students. Teachers' selections are displayed in the table above. According to 31 (67.4%) of them reading and writing are easier than speaking for their students. Nearly an equal number of them 20 (43.5%) and 19 (41.3%) reported that it is easier for children to learn a foreign language than an adult and students are able to learn English respectively. Then an equal number of teachers told that they have the capability to communicate in English and girls are better than the boys in learning English. Again, 16 (34.8%) of them think that people in Bangladesh feel it is important to speak English.

The data indicate teachers' positive attitudes towards students' capability of learning English. It also proves students' high confidence level. Here the picture is very encouraging to observe that both teachers' and students' opinions match with each other in the sense that both the groups believe that students are confident enough to study English.

### 5.3.9 Students' opinions on teachers' behaviour

From above data and discussion it has become clear that students' psycholinguistic difficulties are mostly classroom activity and examination related. In particular, while they are required to perform any language related activity, they encounter these difficulties. So, in a language class teachers' attitudes towards students is very much important. Teachers facilitate students' learning, so good rapport between the teacher and student is essential to make learning happen. In the context of Bangladesh a good relationship between the two is a rare scene to be observed. Hence, students provided their opinions about their expectations in this respect. Teachers' behaviour expected by the students is shown on the figure 5.21.

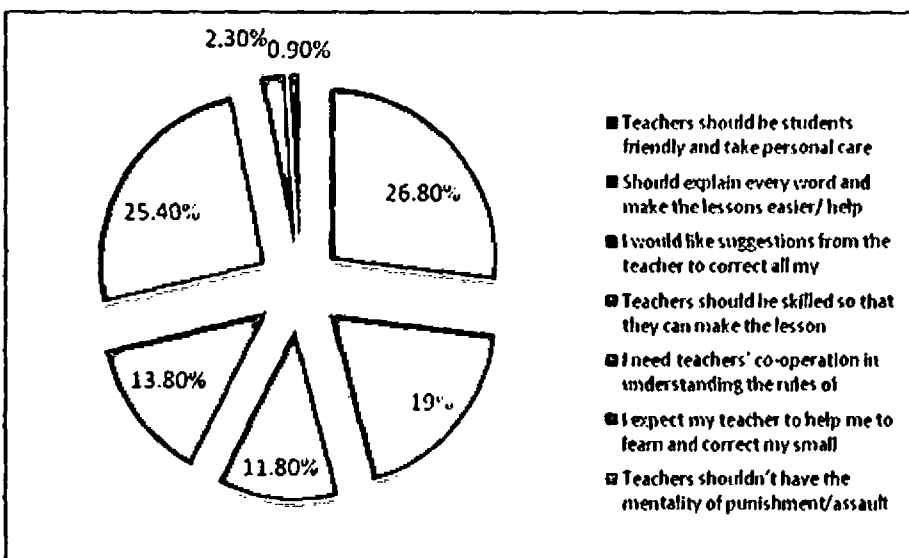


Figure 5.21 Students' opinions on teachers' behaviour

The figure shows that nearly an equal percentage of students 26.80% and 25.40% told that they expected friendly behaviour and full cooperation from their English teachers respectively.

Among the rests 19% expected that teachers should explain each and every word , 13.80% expected skilled teachers, and 11.80% expected corrections from the teachers. A very negligible percent 2.30% and 0.9% expected from their teachers that teachers should correct their small errors and teachers should not punish students for any reasons. In this regard some students' comments are as follows:

A male student expressed his view regarding their expectations from the teacher:

*“Teacher should help the students understand the difficult things with examples in an enjoyable situation and try to explore and solve the problems of students.”*

Another student commented about the expectation from the teacher:

*“ Teachers should not only teach the selected items whatever he had prepared at home, rather he should discuss all the chapters in details. It will help me to learn my lessons easily.”*

On the same topic another student's comment:

*“Teacher should be friendly with the students. He should create an English environment and should alleviate the problems of students.”*

This was also strengthened by the students' FGD. During FGD they discussed that they could learn English if the teachers made the lesson easier for them. Again in another FGD they expressed that they expected whole hearted cooperation from the teacher.

These findings are further evidenced through some other researches conducted elsewhere. Na (2007) suggested improving teachers' personality, having positive vocational affect and moral, teachers' positive attitudes (See chapter-3). In modern time the changing roles of teachers and students are widely acknowledged all over the world. According to Garcia Laborda (2003, cited in Na, 2007) the change of tasks in textbook is for teachers to control their classrooms better and many teachers have decided to increase group work activities assuming that weaker students progress more in cooperative language groups (Gillies, 2006, cited in Na, 2007), decrease the degree of anxiety that affects the atmosphere of both formal school instruction and examination classes (Chen & Goretti Chang, 2004). In order to make the language learning process more motivating experienced instructors need to put a great deal of

thought into delivering programs which maintain students' interest and have obtainable short term goals. Successful communication using the target language should result in students feeling some sense of accomplishment. Research in the area suggests L2 achievement strongly affects learner motivation (Strong1983 in Ellis, 1997).

#### **5.4 Association of psycholinguistic variables and students' language learning difficulty**

As it has been previously discussed that the present study tries to find out the perceptions of students about their difficulties in learning English. Areas of their difficulty in English have been identified in the previous sections by cross checking the data collected data from different sources and from various angles. Now it is time to find out the association among the psycholinguistic variables and students' difficulties in English. Whether the affective factors investigated in this research have any negative relationship with their English learning or not is presented bellow.

While examining the association of the affective variables with their learning difficulty in English it was found through statistical analysis that there exists no negative relationship among the variables and their learning difficulty. The only negative relationship available was with their socioeconomic background and their parental education. It was proved through chi square test that their difficulty is significantly linked with their parents' education as well as occupation.

Chi Square tests were carried out to examine the link between students's fathers' education(see figure 5.7a, 5.7b) and their learning of English. Students'difficulty in English was found statistically significantly associated.

(Pearson Chi-Square value = 35.873, df = 8,  $p < 0.000$ ).

Not only their parental education but also their fathers' occupation was found to be significantly associated with their learning difficulties. (Pearson Chi-Square value= 28.637, df= 6,  $p < 0.000$ ).

Similar significant association was revealed in case of their mothers' education also.

(Pearson Chi-Square value= 25.072, df=6,  $p < 0.000$ ).

A further screening process examined whether and to what extent the independent variables were interrelated. Statistical tests were carried out to understand the

interrelations of the variables. The analysis through Chi-Square tests did not prove any significant relationship with the affective variables and their learning of English. Further there was no difference of their difficulties found on the basis of their gender and rural urban setting. It is comparable to Ehrman and Oxford (1995, p.81)'s finding; "gender had no relationship with learning success by any measure." This finding is surprising in the sense that students' psycholinguistic factors did not seem to be significant in creating difficulties in their learning though while speaking about their causes of anxiety and fear they talked about presence of anxious feeling which seems to be in contrast with the statistical calculation. A possible explanation of this might be that students responded on the scale without being aware of what they were asked to do. Here it is noteworthy, that both teachers and students reported of their anxiety while speaking English as well as during the examination. This result is in line with Wilson(2004, p.311) to whom anxiety seemed to be unfavourably linked to several performance criteria pertaining to test. Next, the findings according to the research questions are discussed below.

#### **5.5 Answers to the research questions**

The study was conducted with some research questions. Now, after the presentation, interpretation, and discussion of data, answers to the research questions are found.

##### *1. Which linguistic items appear to be difficult for secondary level students?*

From every possible source of data both phonological and grammatical items emerged as difficult for the students. Phonological problems include word identification, spelling, appropriate use, pronunciation, and limited stock of words. This finding is evidenced from some other studies (Carson and Leki, 1993, Shahana, 1988 in Wilson, 2006). Apart from that there were recurrent mentions of grammatical difficulty. All categories of participants consistently reported of serious grammatical mistakes in their productive skills i.e. speaking and writing. Grammatical difficulty covered a wide range of items; construction of sentences, appropriate use of various forms of verbs, tenses, articles, prepositions, phrases and idioms, transformation of sentences etc. This is in contrast with the theme of CLT; there is no mention of explicit grammar teaching in CLT. On the other hand students feel the necessity of grammar as they face difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language. CLT approach

advocates implicit grammar teaching which makes teaching of English more difficult for the teachers. Another reason seems important for the students that there are separate tests on grammar. In this context teachers need to get oriented so that they can train students to solve grammatical problems within the context. In addition to that in terms of communicating in English, listening and speaking were on top of the list. Next, writing seemed equally difficult for them. Only reading did not seem to be that much difficult (see chapter-5). Pedagogical implication for this finding is that classroom situations are not favourable for practices of these skills. The principal objective of learning English in Bangladesh is to make the learners socially functional and effective in terms of communication. So all the 4 skills are equally important but generally emphasis is given on reading and writing only. This is because; in the formal education system students are evaluated on the basis of these 2 skills. In addition, seldom opportunity is there to speak in English to communicate with others in the society. Fluency in the spoken language is required for those who aspire for higher studies abroad. Thus, for a great majority of students and literate people, spoken English is not vital in terms of every day needs. This seems to be the major reason that students do not pay attention to this skill resulting in inefficiency. Moreover, the usual tradition of written examination system determines the notion that reading and writing aspect of language are to be emphasized in classroom practices. To address the linguistic difficulties of the students, teachers need to be careful about their classroom practices and establish a link between the curriculum and the practice. There are so many ways in which students can be involved in the process of learning, so teachers need to be acquainted with these modern techniques and be able to implement in their classrooms to achieve the goals of learning English at this level.

## *2. What are the common perceptions of the teachers and students about the causes of their learning difficulties?*

Various reasons cited by both teachers and students include not only contextual but also some psycholinguistic factors. Among the psycholinguistic factors, attitude toward English, lack of confidence, test anxiety, got importance. On the other hand contextual factors covered limited access, lack of classroom practice, proper



environment, students' low level, untrained teachers etc. Implication of this finding can be understood from the fact that the medium of instruction in Bangladesh is Bangla though English is extensively used in the offices, private banks, and corporate world and in foreign organizations. In addition to that inability of most of the rural teachers to communicate in English has a considerable share in developing this type of attitude among the students. This trend is justifiable in the sense that both teachers and students are aware of the undeniable fact that speaking and listening are not included in the test. This is very much significant that the society being a monolingual one, there is very little scope to use the target language in their daily life. This is the underlying philosophical assumptions against the difficulties students face in learning English. The scenario of classroom teaching learning process in Bangladesh still exercises, reading aloud by both teacher and students, answering questions with the help of guide books. In most of the classroom practices adherence to this type of traditional activities have been found. Similar problem has been mentioned by Singaravelu (2001) in India that English is taught only from the examination point of view. Proper environment and circumstances are not available to spread its use (p.23). In fact there is no exception to this in the context of Bangladesh. It has been proved in some other studies that students' psychological difficulties spring from teachers' attitude toward the students and this can be developed through creating awareness among the teachers to maintain congenial atmosphere in the classroom. Even lack of motivation can pose great barrier to students' learning, surprisingly enough present study found students' level of motivation at an average scale, but students' performances very occasionally reflect that. Hence, students' family background appears to be significantly linked with their learning of English; most of the parents being only primary graduates may not feel the necessity of learning English that much important. This idea gets strengthened with Wilson (2004) who found that students' oral performance was significantly linked with father's educational qualification. In a society like Bangladesh it is not surprising that students' family background will impact students' performance. Educational policies should be able to consider all these unpredictable as well as unavoidable factors which are essentially linked with students' learning of a foreign language.

*3. What types of motivation in English prevail among secondary level students in Bangladesh?*

Perfect match was found between the opinions of teachers and students regarding the types of motivation or attitude in learning English. Students' reason for studying English is mainly instrumental. Mentions of integrative reasons are there also but the ratio is less than the instrumental purpose. This finding is consistent with other findings; both Korean and Korean-Chinese university students both appear to have strong instrumental motivation for learning English, as reported in other studies on EFL students' motivation (Diab, 2000; Kim-Yoon, 2000; Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995; Dornyei, 2001). Additionally the data supported high motivations of the students which is in reality contradictory to the actual performance of the students. Pedagogical implication of the finding is that teachers are required to be aware of the fact that every student has individual need and requirement but while they are in the classroom, they are all in a uniformed formal education system, so they all should try to achieve nationally set standard equally. Hence, the professional training of the teachers is very much significant. If the classroom activities cannot be conducted efficiently, the high motivation of the students won't do anything good to lessen their difficulties.

It can be apprehended from the present study that students' motivations were found to be on an average level though, the statistical analysis of the data failed to show any association between their difficulties and motivation. The ultimate national standard does not match with this.

*4. To what extent are the psycholinguistic factors related to their foreign language learning difficulty?*

Previous researches conducted in the field of learning a foreign language have proved that the affective factors (motivation, anxiety, and self efficacy) are very much important in learning a foreign language. In a real sense the conceptual frame work of the present study has been developed on the basis of the frame work provided by

Ehrman (1995) (see chapter 3). But the present study findings did not support that. Both the groups of participants perceive the importance of the psycholinguistic factors nevertheless the findings of the study was unable to uncover any statistically significant relationship among the factors. However, the present study finding about the level of anxiety in learning English is different from several authors (e.g. Noels, Clement & Pelletier, 1999; Yan, 1998) who have suggested a possible negative relationship between anxiety and motivation in view of the opposing effects of these two constructs. The findings of the study also reveal that students felt a considerable amount of anxiety about their spoken form of language and pronunciation. They were also afraid of speaking in front of people or even in their English class in fear of being laughed at by their fellow classmates (See chapter 5). Existence of examination anxiety was admitted by a considerable number of students. An unexpected finding of the current study was the contradiction between the quantitative and the qualitative findings. Statistical association was insignificant though students expressed their perceptions about these psycholinguistic factors that these factors create frequent obstacles in their way of learning English. Concerning this both students and teachers provided suggestions to remove students' fear and anxiety. Apart from that, existence of extreme level of anxiety was absent among the participants of the study though there is no indication of students' better achievement. These are some substantial gaps which have been revealed in this study. The classroom teachers should be made aware of this to minimize the gap. Otherwise it would be very difficult to bring about any possible changes in the scenario of ELT in Bangladesh.

*5. Are there any significant differences in their perceptions of difficulties in learning English on the basis of gender?*

The study included 40% (144) male and 60% (216) female students. This distribution was completely unintentional. But one thing is very commendable to observe that girls are getting opportunities more than the boys. But unlike the students, among total 46 teachers a vast majority of them 37 (80.4%) were male and only 9 (19.6%) were female. In both cases the distribution was uneven. Unequal in number though, the statistical analysis of the quantitative data it was unable to establish any negative relationship between the gender and their difficulties. A similarly consistent finding

was reported by Ehrman and Oxford (1995) that “gender had no relationship with the learning success by any measure.” In the present study the number of female teachers was less than their counterparts because it was very difficult to find female teachers teaching English at this level. Another important reason which was not expressed by any teachers but it was revealed from the expert interview is that English being an important and difficult subject on which students frequently require private tuition in many cases was under the discretion of the head teachers or other influential male teachers irrespective of their qualification, experience, and professional training. So the system generally tends to ignore the capabilities of female teachers. The implication of this finding is that if this kind of malpractice cannot be lessened from the education system prevailing, the difficulties of the students will continue to persist.

*6. Is there any relationship between the socioeconomic background s of the students and their difficulties in English?*

This is the only question which received positive answer. Sociolinguistics are the factors which were proved to be very significantly associated with students' difficulties in learning of English through statistical analysis. Among the factors which seemed important to be considered for the present study: students' parents' education and occupation (see table5.1). This is consistent with other studies conducted elsewhere on learning of English. It has been established that students' family factors finally influenced their course of study in English. This is in line with the findings of Hamid (2009) who found family economic factors influenced students achievement in English. Through various types of statistical tests Hamid (2009) found out interrelationships of the variables of parental education and income. In the present study Chi-square tests showed that these factors were significantly associated. Hamid's (2009) study proved that family economic factors affected the students' academic achievement in English by restricting their access to necessary logistics (books and other supplies), learning opportunities and development of their self (confidence and motivation). Similarly the present study discovered strong influencing link between the parents' education, occupation and students' learning of English. The implication can be conceived from the fact that most of the rural

students in Bangladesh come from very low income group for whom necessity of English is conceived to be a sort of luxury. In addition to that the parents' background level of education mostly being primary graduates is unable to aspire for higher education or good jobs for their children. It was also disclosed from some of the respondents that they study English as it is compulsory in their curriculum. This comment bears significance in the sense that if there were any scope to select from varieties of options, probably they would have tried to avoid the study of English. In a situation like this, parents cannot even think of their children's better performance in the subject and it is very difficult to address the difficulties in learning of English. So, further researches need to be conducted in this field for exploring other related sociolinguistic issues.

This chapter presented both quantitative and qualitative findings simultaneously. Quantitative findings have been expressed through statistical analysis and qualitative findings have been presented through direct quotations from the participants to supplement and to provide evidences for the authenticity of data. Further, for the triangulation of data, findings from all the sources have been drawn and discussed together in relation to each other.

In the next chapter conclusion of the research together with some recommendations have been presented.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents major findings and conclusion of the research. In the present study all the possible sources of data were explored by applying mixed methods to have an extended understanding of the research phenomena. Findings from various sources and angles have been compared, contrasted, associated, and viewed from diversified perspectives (see chapter 5). This is clearly evidenced from the discussion of the difficulties according to the conceptual framework of the study (see chapter 3 and 5). Findings related to both linguistic and psycholinguistic difficulties of the students have been discussed in details and were cross checked to identify the possible reasons of their difficulties in learning and to comprehend the realities prevailing at the secondary level English education in Bangladesh.

### **6.1 Major findings**

#### **Linguistic difficulties**

- ❖ Students have syntactic difficulties and they do not have sufficient vocabulary so they face difficulty in all the language skills.
- ❖ Next grammatical items posed difficulty for them.
- ❖ In most of the cases they faced difficulties in construction of sentences, use of various forms of verbs, use of articles, preposition etc. It was confirmed through all the sources.
- ❖ There is no place of explicit teaching of grammar in CLT though majority of the participants frequently felt the necessity of grammar knowledge as an important aspect.
- ❖ Among all the skills, speaking and listening are the most cited difficult skills. They don't understand any news broadcasted through radios and TVs. They can't follow the readers' pronunciation and cannot keep pace with their reading.

- ❖ They cannot speak as they do not find exact word and they are afraid of making mistakes. They also worry that their fellow classmate will make fun of them.
- ❖ They do not have sufficient practice so they fail to orally communicate in English.
- ❖ Reading is moderately difficult for them but sometimes while reading magazines and news papers, and books in English they fail to understand.
- ❖ In writing their main problem is to organize ideas properly.
- ❖ They cannot write correct English without memorization.
- ❖ In a nut shell the students have difficulties in all the skills.

#### **Psycholinguistic factors**

- ❖ The students have both instrumental and integrative motivation, instrumental predominating.
- ❖ Level of motivation was found to be at an average scale.
- ❖ Level of self efficacy is on an average scale.
- ❖ They have speaking as well as examination anxiety.
- ❖ The students do not face any difficulties due to the affective factors

#### **Classroom activities**

- ❖ Classroom activities tend to be mostly traditional.
- ❖ Teachers usually do not practise any language skills with the students.
- ❖ Teachers frequently depend on reading aloud by the students and themselves.
- ❖ Both students and teachers often rely on guide books.
- ❖ Many students from both rural and urban areas depend on private tuition.
- ❖ Teachers only give the Bangla meaning of the words other than explaining the usage.

*difficultly*

### **Most influencing factor**

- ❖ It was found from statistical analysis that there is significant association between their difficulties and their family background.
- ❖ Most of their parents are only primary graduates.
- ❖ Fathers' occupation was found to be a strong influencing factor in their learning difficulties.

### **Students' attitudes towards the teacher**

- ❖ Students repeatedly said that they expected friendly behavior from the teacher.
- ❖ Students expected that the teachers should explain every difficult items to the students.
- ❖ Students believed that if they are given enough practice of language skills they can develop their skills

### **Difficulties on the basis of gender or area**

- ❖ There was no significant association found between gender and their difficulties.
- ❖ Students' difficulties did not occur depending on the area (rural or urban).

## **6.2 Implications of the study**

The researcher believes that students' and teachers' perceptions on the difficulties of students' learning English can be very useful contribution in the field of ELT in Bangladesh where the situation is at a stake despite several attempts from the Government, INGOs and NGOs to improve. Researches conducted elsewhere suggest that language students have definite opinions and perceptions about language learning and that their ideas about effective learning and teaching activities are sometimes different from those of their teachers (Horwitz, 1988; Nunan, 1986; and Yorio,1986; in Rahman:1996, p.132). So this study valued the opinions of both students and teachers. The first part of the survey questionnaire informed that most of the students were from middle income group family and most of their parents are only primary graduates. These two family factors ultimately have a great negative impact on their motivation and learning of English. This has been proved through the statistical



analysis of association between various factors. As Rahman (1998) in her study mentioned that the educational system of a country is an integral part of society as a whole. If it is assumed as valid for Bangladesh society also then the social, cultural, political and economic conditions prevailing in the society are reflected in all the activities of the school systems including classroom teaching (p.400). What is of direct concern to the present study is how the social and economic condition of the students influences their learning of English.

Grammatical difficulty covered a wide range of items; construction of sentences, appropriate use of verbs, tenses, article, preposition, phrases and idioms, transformation of sentences etc. This is in contrast with the theme of CLT; there is no mention of explicit grammar teaching in CLT. On the other hand students feel the necessity of grammar as they face difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language. CLT approach advocates implicit grammar teaching which makes teaching of English more difficult for the teachers. Another reason seems important for the students that there are separate tests on grammar. In this context teachers need to get oriented so to train students to solve grammatical problems through the context. In addition to that in terms of communicating in English, listening and speaking were on top of the list. The next item writing seemed equally difficult for them. Only reading did not seem to be that much difficult (see chapter 5). Pedagogical implication for this finding is that classroom situations are not favourable for practices of these skills. The principal objective of learning English in Bangladesh is to make the learners socially functional and effective in terms of communication. So all the 4 skills are equally important but generally emphasis is given on reading and writing only. This is because; in the formal education system students are evaluated on the basis of these 2 skills. In addition, seldom opportunity is there to speak in English to communicate with others in the society. Fluency in the spoken language is required for those who aspire for higher studies abroad. Thus for a great majority of students and literate people spoken English is not vital in terms of every day needs. This seems to be the major reason that students do not pay attention to this skill resulting in inefficiency. Moreover, the usual tradition of written examination system determines the notion that reading and writing aspect of language are to be emphasized in classroom practices. To address the linguistic difficulties of the students, teachers need to be

careful about their classroom practices and establish a link between the curriculum and the practice. There are so many ways in which students can be involved in the process of learning, so teachers need to be acquainted with these modern techniques and be able to implement in their classrooms to achieve the goals of learning English at this level. At present in Bangladesh English is mainly used in corporate world and in foreign organizations. In addition to that inability of most of the rural teachers to communicate in English has a considerable share in developing this type of attitude among the students. This trend is justifiable in the sense that both teachers and students are aware of the undeniable fact that speaking and listening are not included in the test. This is very much significant that the society being a monolingual one, there is very little scope to use the target language in their daily life. This is the underlying philosophical assumptions against the difficulties students face in learning English. The scenario of classroom teaching learning process in Bangladesh still exercises, reading aloud by both teacher and students, answering questions with the help of guide books. In most of the classroom practices adherence to this type of traditional activities have been found. Similar problem has been mentioned by Singaravelu (2001) in India that English is taught only from the examination point of view. Proper environment and circumstances are not available to spread its use (p.23). In fact there is no exception to this in the context of Bangladesh. It has been proved in some other studies that students' psychological difficulties spring from teachers' attitude toward the students and this can be developed through creating awareness among the teachers to maintain congenial atmosphere in the classroom. Even lack of motivation can pose great barrier to students' learning, surprisingly enough present study found students' level of motivation at an average scale, but students' performances very occasionally reflect that. Hence, students' family background appears to be significantly linked with their learning of English; most of the parents being only primary graduates may not feel the necessity of learning English that much important. This idea gets strengthened with Wilson (2004) who found that students' oral performance was significantly linked with father's educational qualification. In a society like Bangladesh it is not surprising that students' family background will impact students' performance. Educational policies should be able to consider all

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these unpredictable as well as <sup>Dhaka University Institutional Repository</sup>unavoidable variables which are essentially linked with students' learning of a foreign language.

Findings regarding motivation is consistent with other findings; both Korean and Korean- Chinese university students both appear to have strong instrumental motivation for learning English, as reported in other studies on EFL students' motivation (Diab, 2000; Kim-Yoon, 2000; Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995). Additionally the data supported high motivations of the students which is in reality contradictory to the actual performance of the students. Pedagogical implication of the finding is that teachers are required to be aware of the fact that every student has individual need and requirement but while they are in the classroom, they are all in a uniformed formal education system, so they all should try to achieve nationally set standard equally. Hence, the professional training of the teachers is very much significant. If the classroom activities cannot be conducted efficiently, the high motivation of the students won't do anything good to lessen their difficulties.

It can be apprehended from the present study that students' motivations were at a moderate level though they failed to show any positive link with their difficulties and motivation the ultimate national standard does not match with this. In a real sense the conceptual frame work of the present study has been developed on the basis of the frame work provided by Ehrman (1995) (see chapter 3). But the present study findings did not support that. Both the group of participants perceives the importance of the psycholinguistic factors nevertheless the findings of the study was unable to uncover any statistically significant relationship among the factors. However, the present study finding about the level of anxiety in learning English is different from several authors (e.g. Noels, Clement & Pelletier, 1999; Yan, 1998) who have suggested a possible negative relationship between anxiety and motivation in view of the opposing effects of these two constructs. The findings of the study also reveal that students were anxious about their spoken form of language and pronunciation. They were afraid of speaking in front of people or even in their English class in fear of being laught at by their fellow classmates (See chapter 5). An unexpected finding of the current study was the contradiction between the quantitative findings with the qualitative findings. Statistical association was insignificant though students

expressed their perceptions about these psycholinguistic factors that these factors create frequent obstacles in their way of learning English.

Concerning this both students and teachers provided suggestions to remove students' fear and anxiety. Apart from that, existence of extreme level of anxiety was absent among the participants of the study though there is no indication of students' better achievement. These are some substantial gap of which the classroom teachers should be aware of to minimize the gap. Otherwise there won't be any changes possible in the scenario of ELT in Bangladesh.

The study included 40% (144) male and 60% (216) female students. This distribution was completely unintentional. But one thing is very commendable to observe that girls are getting opportunities more than the boys. But unlike the students, among total 46 teachers a vast majority of them 37 (80.4%) were male and only 9 (19.6%) were female. In both cases the distribution was uneven. Unequal in number though, the statistical association was unable to establish any negative relationship between the gender and their difficulties. A similarly consistent finding was reported by Ehrman and Oxford (1995) that "gender had no relationship with the learning success by any measure." In the present study the number of female teachers was less than their counterparts because it was very difficult to find female teachers teaching English at this level. Another important reason not expressed by any teachers but it was revealed from the expert interview is that English being an important subject which requires private tuition in many cases was under the discretion of the head teachers or other influential male teachers irrespective of their qualification, experience, and professional training. So the system generally tends to ignore the capabilities of female teachers. The implication of this finding is that if this type of malpractices cannot be removed from the system prevailing, the difficulties of the students will continue to persist.

Students' family factors were found to be very significantly associated to students' learning of English. These factors finally influenced their course of study in English. This has been proved with similar findings by Hamid (2009) who found family economic factors influenced students achievement in English. Through various types of statistical tests Hamid (2009) found out interrelationships of the variables of parental education and income. In the present study Chi-square tests showed that

these variables were significantly associated. Hamid (2009)'s findings support that family economic factors affected the students' academic achievement in English by restricting their access to necessary logistics (books and other supplies), learning opportunities and development of their self (confidence and motivation). Similarly the present study discovered strong unfavourable link between the parents' education, occupation and students' learning of English. The implication can be conceived from the fact that most of the rural students in Bangladesh come from very low income group for whom necessity of English is conceived to be a sort of luxury. In addition to that the parents' background level of education mostly being primary graduates is unable to aspire for higher education or good jobs for their children. It was also revealed from some of the respondents that they study English as it is compulsory in their curriculum. This comment bears significance in the sense that if there were any opportunities to select from, probably they would not have opted for English. In a situation like that parent cannot even think of their children's better performance in the subject and it is very difficult to address the difficulties in learning of English. So, further researches need to be conducted in this field for exploring other related issues.

### **6.3 Suggestions for future research**

A single research conducted in the field of ELT is far from investigating all the related problems. The present study also was no exception in the sense that it attempted to assimilate the perceptions of the students about their learning difficulties in English. There are numerous difficulties faced by the students at this level. But the present study could cover only a few of them. There are so many related factors which require a careful scrutiny to minimize the gap between the practices and the real life necessity. There are some researches available in ELT relating to students' motivation/attitudes, and anxiety. But regarding students' own belief and use of strategy in learning English is important. So, further researches can be conducted to investigate students' belief and strategy use in learning of English.

Another potential area of research unattended so far might be to examine the gap between the system of evaluation and the usual classroom practices. As the present study revealed that there is no practice of listening and speaking because these two skills are not included in the final examination. Whereas there is need for spoken

fluency for better jobs and studies abroad. So, further research should examine this. In relation to this a study can be conducted to review the current evaluation system and its impact on classroom teaching.

The present study identified students' level and types of motivation, but it did not see how motivational factors can impact their study of English and reduce their difficulty. So a study can be directed to examine the impact of motivation on students' performance in English. As there were recurrent mentions of vocabulary problem by the students, another vital area of research may be phonological awareness of the students and its impact in their learning of English.

Additionally, as the current study has explored the linguistic and psycholinguistic factors only, there is scope for examining the contextual factors which are considered to be very important in any teaching learning program, so a study is essential in this regard to identify the contextual factors and suggest measures to enhance students' efficiency in English.

In the present study the socioeconomic factors emerged as very significant in students' learning of English. Nevertheless, the study mainly aimed to identify linguistic factors, parents' education and income came out as a major issue in their learning. It was also supported by Hamid (2006) (see chapter-3). So it appears that a separate study to explore the connection of socioeconomic factors with the students' learning might have a far reaching impact on ELT programs in Bangladesh.

The present study failed to establish any statistically significant link between the affective factors and the learning difficulties of the students. To identify the link separate studies may be undertaken for a longer period of time and observe students' behavioral change during examination and other productive skill related activities. Potential studies can be conducted to determine the impact of various psycholinguistic factors on students' learning.

Some other areas of research can be to explore individual learner differences in encountering difficulties while learning English as a foreign language. Besides, there are ample scope for researches to be done to find out possible solutions to students' learning difficulties.

Last but not the least, like all other developing countries, in Bangladesh all the educational policies are of top down model which in many cases fail to yield good

results. Besides, considering the fact that there is no appropriate policy regarding learning a foreign language at the secondary level, a fundamental study can be conducted to explore the current educational policies and suggest some changes which will guide the future ELT in Bangladesh.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

Current study revealed students' linguistic and psycholinguistic difficulties, which indicated that their difficulties were mainly linguistic; i.e. lexical, semantic, grammatical and phonetic. In terms of communication they faced difficulties mostly in speaking and listening. Further results showed various reasons for their difficulties among which the socioeconomic background was a major one. On the other hand the psycholinguistic factors did not seem to cause any difficulty for them. Other difficult area was found to be the classroom practice which is complete contrary to the curricular objectives.

- In this regard the present study recommends that teachers should be made aware of the facts that classroom teaching is not only for helping students to pass the tests rather to develop students' basic language skills. So there should be varieties of activities involving students in pair and group works which will create opportunity for them to develop their basic skills of English.
- According to both teachers and students speaking was on top of their list of difficulty, to reinforce their speaking and listening, technical problems should be reduced as much as possible. For example in order to create opportunities for the students, if there is no tape recorder available, teachers should read aloud for listening practice and let students to read and listen. The task can be made enjoyable by using songs, riddles, word games, jokes and stories etc.
- To make classroom activities more entertaining, teachers could make students read authentic materials like newspaper, magazine articles, poems, short stories, ask them to sum up them or paraphrase them, and speak about them to their classmates. In this case teachers can give students freedom to select their own choice of texts.

- Grammatical accuracy was found to be students' grave concern all over the study. So emphasis should be there in classroom teaching to design activities which include grammatical items not making it a rigorous one to disinterest the students i.e. the grammar study should not be the rule memorization rather an entertaining exercise for the students.
- In relation to the above mentioned recommendation, it is suggested that any form of structure or any grammatical items should be explained and studied along with their usages.
- Statistical analysis of the study has shown that students' learning difficulties in English specially are associated significantly with their parents' education and occupation. To address this problem English language policy should be revised and planned in a way that considers the students' personal constraints. Some kind of financial help can be provided to the students in the form of scholarship.
- Again it was proved from the present study that students' difficulties do not entail any affective factors like motivation/attitude, anxiety and self efficacy. But at the same time their expectations from the teacher cannot be ignored. So the study recommends teachers to be more friendly and caring to the needs of their students. Teachers should try to eliminate the test anxiety of the students, as the study revealed test anxiety a common problem across all area students.
- In the recruitment process of the teachers experts from relevant field to be involved to ensure the policy of placing the right person at the right place. In other words, for teaching classes 9 and 10 teachers should be recruited on the basis of their previous English education background.
- Training programs for teachers should not only address the pedagogical ability but also cover the area of teachers' own English language development.
- Students' motivations, attitudes, and anxiety were not significantly associated though, teachers should be made aware of the facts that they should try to sustain students' motivation and help remove fear of test anxiety.



- In relation to this teachers' reflective practice is very much important. According to Xiaoyan (2003) "When teachers can develop their reflective skills of their own activities and develop their pedagogical as well as content knowledge, they gradually become able to address students' difficulties and confusion."
- The present study also revealed students' problem of vocabulary. To address this Mankwok's opinion can be considered; "Phonological awareness allows the use of phonological processing for analyzing new words. This removes the difficulty of connecting aural and visual vocabulary." So teachers should make students aware of processing new words and their appropriate use.
- The policy level experts should redesign the evaluation system to include all the skills in the system of testing to link the classroom activities with the students' real life demand so that students find a valid reason to study English.
- It was revealed from the study that duration of language class requires to be reviewed because for conducting language activities mere 30—35 minutes are not enough. So the concerned authority should think about this and increase the class duration at least 45 minutes.
- All the participants of the study commented on the text of classes nine and ten that the volume of the text is much lengthy, so the text should be reviewed and contents should be made consistent with the duration of the total class time.

In conclusion it may be summed up with the idea that students' learning difficulties in English were mainly linguistic, and their family background contributed significantly to their difficulties. The findings of the study proved that the outcomes of English have undermined the government objectives of developing human capital (Hamid & Baldauf, 2008 in Hamid 2009). Still to date above all the circumstances English is the window of international knowledge. If the window is closed to the students of Bangladesh, they will remain in the dark of ignorance. One thing was clear from the present study that there are so many diverse reasons of their difficulty in English. Other than the linguistic and psycholinguistic factors there are factors like the length of time spent on the study was no less significant. In modern global world there is no

indication of immediate demolition of use of English so; English will continue to remain with the updated knowledge of the world. Now it is justified to say with Widdowson (1983, p.44 in Esma, 2004) that teachers should make language tasks more as 'social activities' and less as language exercises, a distinction established by Widdowson; they should try hard to enhance students' curiosity about the FL culture, foster their interest, and develop their desire to learn the FL or teachers should seriously consider the point of MacIntyre and Gardner that students taught to emphasize their own successful experiences in the second language would come to perceive themselves as more proficient language learners (cited in Wilson, 2004). Lastly, there are immense possibilities of work to be accomplished in the field of ELT in Bangladesh. It can be conceived from the fact that many foreign as well as local government aided projects are in operation now. The concerned authorities i.e. policy makers, government officials, local education authorities, and the teachers are required to be conscious that the attempts do not go in vain and efforts should be directed to address the issues raised through the current research.

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## Appendices

### Appendix—A (Figures and tables on both students' and teachers' questionnaire)

Figure: 5.1

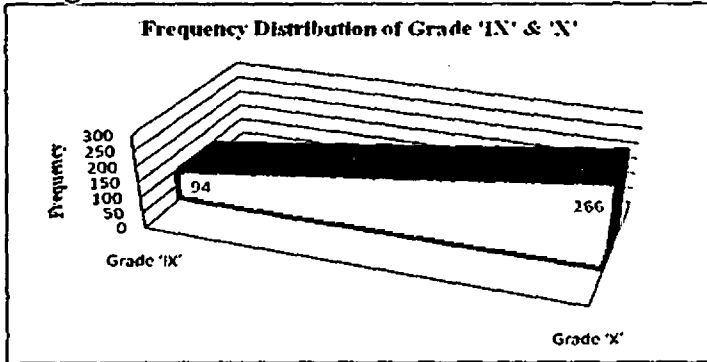


Figure: 5.2

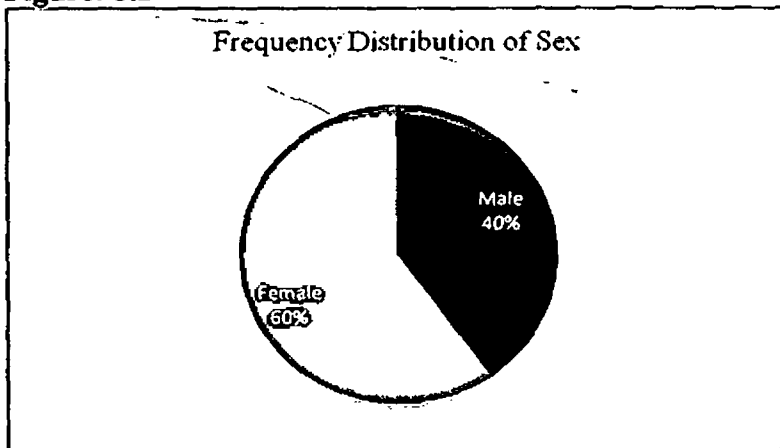


Figure- 5.3

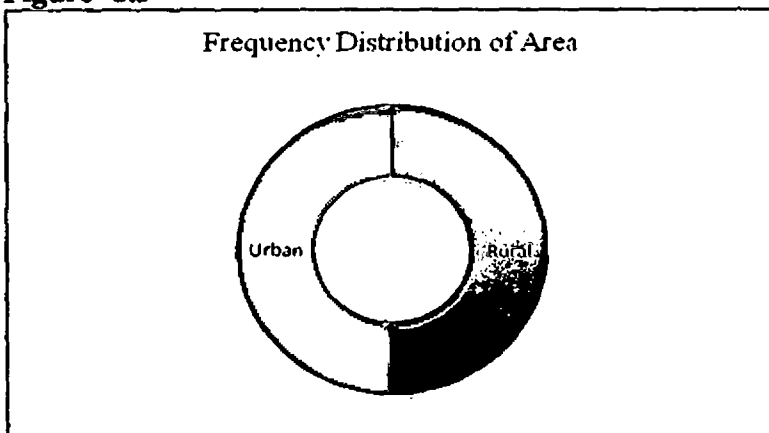


Figure: 5.4

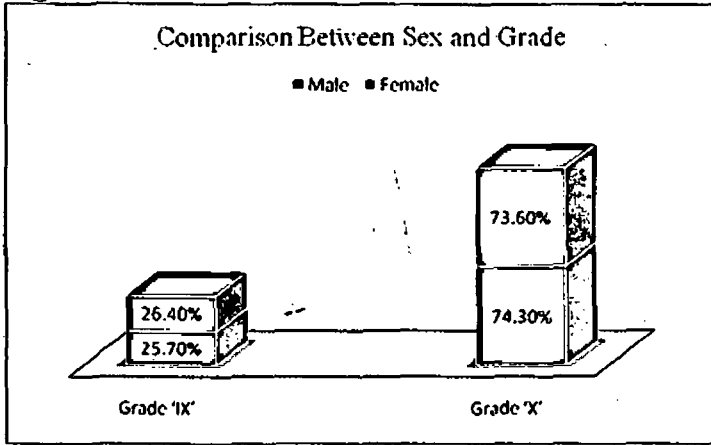


Figure: 5.5-- Sex wise distribution of the students

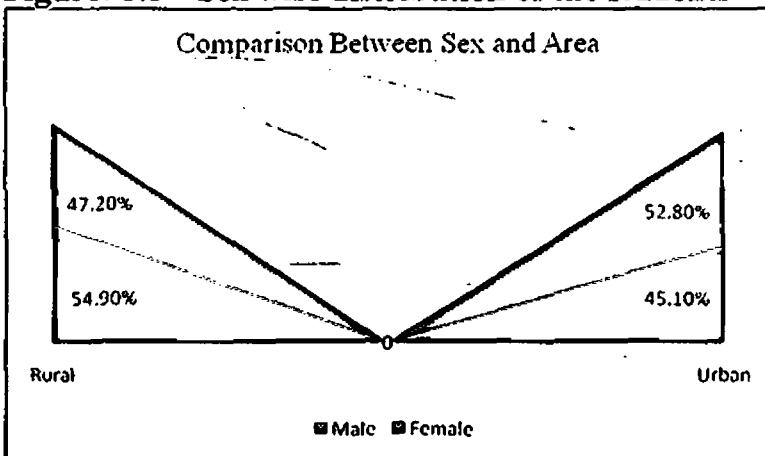


Table: 5.6

## Area wise Number of teachers participated in the study

Rural	22	47.8
Urban	24	52.2
Total	46	100.0

Table:5.7 Gender wise distribution of teachers

Male	37	80.4
Female	9	19.6
Total	46	100.0

Table 5.12 Types of lesson plan

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Full written	11	25.0
Not written	13	29.5
Just an outline	20	45.5
Total	44	100.0



**Table 5.29 Classroom observation checklist**

Upazilla..... Date.....  
 Class Observed..... Time.....  
 School..... Observer.....

<b>Class Structure/ Content</b>	<b>Below A.</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Meets course/ lesson objectives	9 21.4%	12 28.6%	9 21.4%	10 23.8%	2 4.8%
Teacher is prepared and organized	6 14.3%	20 47.6%	6 14.3%	8 19%	2 4.8%
Practise language skills	11 26.2%	15 35.7%	7 16.7%	7 16.7%	2 4.8%
Explains grammar points in context	9 21.6%	14 33.3%	4 9.5%	12 28.6%	3 7.1%
Helps students to pronounce words	8 19%	21 50%	5 11.9%	6 14.3%	2 4.8%
Shouts at students' mistakes	17 40.5%	10 23.8%	8 19%	6 14.3%	1 2.4%
Allow Ss make fun of Ss doing mistakes while speaking English	13 31%	15 37.7%	7 16.7%	5 11.9%	2 4.8%
Pay attention to weaker students	12 28.6%	12 28.6%	10 23.8%	6 14.3%	2 4.8%
Explains vocabulary	12 28.6%	16 38.1%	4 9.5%	8 19%	2 4.8%
Provides feedback that gives Ss direction for improvement	11 26.2%	15 35.7%	8 19%	6 14.3%	2 4.8%

<b>Methods / Interaction</b>	<b>Below A.</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Delivers well planned lessons	11 26.2%	12 28.6%	12 28.6%	5 11.9%	2 4.8%
Provides clear instructions for activities or exercises	11 26.2%	12 28.6%	4 9.5%	12 28.6%	3 7.1%
Employs interactive and / student led activities	13 31%	11 26.2%	4 9.5%	12 28.6%	2 4.8%
Engage students in pair and group work	4 9.5%	23 54.8%	6 14.3%	9 21.4%	
Encourages participation	11 26.2%	13 31%	9 21.4%	7 16.7%	2 4.8%
Error corrects in students' needs	12 28.6%	12 28.6%	5 11.9%	10 23.8%	3 7.1%

<b>Students' activities</b>	<b>Below A.</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Students are energetic and eager	3 7.1%	10 23.8%	3 11.9%	16 38.1%	8 19%
Students can follow teachers' instructions	3 7.1%	13 31%	1 2.4%	20 47.6%	5 11.9%
Students face difficulty in reading	8 19%	15 35.7%	8 19%	10 23.8%	1 2.4%
Students face difficulty in grammar	8 19%	16 38.1%	9 21.4%	7 16.7%	2 4.8%
Students spell words correctly	5 11.9%	16 38.1%	13 31%	7 16.7%	1 2.4%
Students can communicate well	2 4.8%	16 38.1%	14 33.3%	10 23.8%	
Students are well prepared	4 9.5%	17 40.5%	13 31%	8 19%	
Students can correct themselves	10 23.8%	13 31%	9 21.4%	10 23.8%	

## Questionnaire for students

Dear student

This questionnaire is to find out what kind of difficulties you face in learning English at your class. Please give your opinion by putting tick mark on the answers you think appropriate. You have also to put tick marks on a scale from 1 to 5, next to the questions and statements.

Please remember that there is no right or wrong answer, an honest answer from you will be appreciated very much. Your answer will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for this research only. Your answers will not affect your grades in the examination and you will not be responsible for any of the responses.

If you do not understand any of the questions, please ask your teacher. You may discuss the questions and answers with your friends if you want to.

Please answer all the questions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### Section—I : Personal Information

Name:

Class:

Upazila / Village:

Sex:

Male      Female

Name of School:

Educational qualification of father -----

mother-----

Annual income of the family:

Marks obtained in English in last final examination:

Number of primary graduates at present in your family:

**Section—II : Multiple Choice and open Questions**

**Put a tick mark on the appropriate option, You can choose more than one for each case.**

1. What kind of situations causes stress and anxiety for you? You can choose more than one for each case.

a) Speaking in front of people

b) Teachers behavior in

class

c) Written examination

d) Oral test

2. What happens to you when you are in a stressful situation?

a) Get nervous

b) Lose confidence

c) Heartbeat becomes fast

d) Start sweating

3. What do you do in stressful situation?

a) Use short broken sentences

b) Quickly finish the conversation

c) Try to overcome my anxiety

d) Restore my confidence

4. How do you think your language teacher plays a role in creating or reducing the feeling of anxiety in the classroom?

a) If teacher is so serious, not friendly

b) Correct mistakes all the time

c) If teacher instructs all the time

d) If teacher criticizes errors

e) If teacher shouts at me for doing any mistakes

5. What are the causes of your feeling nervous in the classroom?

- a. Lack of self confidence in learning English
- b. English is very hard to learn
- c. English was not taught properly
- d. It is not easy to learn English

6. What is your suggestion to overcome English related anxiety?

- a. Not to worry about mistakes while speaking
- b. Teachers should provide positive advice
- c. Teachers should encourage students to speak English
- d. Friendly classroom environment

**Scale on motivation/attitude, anxiety and self-efficacy**

Please think about the statements and choose a number and put tick marks on the relevant box.

Statements	Always 4	Often 3	Sometimes 2	Never 1
Learning English will help me to get a good job				
It is important to learn English because it will help my higher studies or job abroad				
If I know English, I'll be able to read books, magazines, and newspaper in English.				
Learning English will help me to communicate with people from other countries of the world				
English will help me to understand and appreciate other culture and literature				
I fear when I have to talk in English in classroom without any preparation				
I feel upset when I forget known things in my English class				
I feel very bad when my teacher corrects my error and I do not understand any thing				
I am afraid while my teacher corrects my small errors				
My heart pounds when I am asked to speak in English class.				

I start trembling when I understand that I'll be asked questions in English class				
I feel nervous in English class though I'm prepared				
I am worried with the thought that when I'll speak in English other students will laugh at me.				
I feel more nervous while speaking in English than other subjects				
I become very frightened when I have to write English essay unexpectedly				
I lose my confidence when English teacher speaks and I don't understand any thing				
My confidence becomes low, when teacher asks me any unknown question				
I do not care about what others will say about my essay				
Sometimes I worry about my English scores				
I do not have any anxiety about my preparation in English				

**Section III**

**Open questions**

Give brief answers

1. What are the difficulties you face in speaking English?
2. What kind of problem do you encounter during listening English news, foreigners' speech or in any other situation?
3. In writing English what are your main difficulties?
4. Which grammatical items appear difficult to you?
5. What is most difficult for you in your English text?
6. In reading English books or magazines what kind of difficulty you encounter?
7. Mention two most difficult aspects of learning English.
8. In your opinion, what type of cooperation from your English teacher will help you to make your study of English easier?

**Students' FGD sheet**

1. Tell about your experience of learning English
2. Express your opinion on English textbook
3. Amount of time spent on studying English
4. Frequency of reading English books, magazines etc.
5. Difficulty faced in reading and writing in English.
6. Help received from parents or teachers.
7. Most difficult in studying English.
8. Overcoming difficulty in English.

## Questionnaire for Teachers

### Section A : Personal Information

1. Name of School:

2. Upazilla :

4. Date of Birth:                      Age :                      Gender : Male       Female

5. Highest Academic Qualification:                      6. Average class size:

7. Professional Qualification: C-in-Ed  B.Ed.       Dip-in-Ed.  M.Ed

8. Did you have any training before/after introducing communicative approach in teaching

English?

Yes       No

If yes, what are the special techniques you have learnt from the training? Write in two sentences.

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### Section B      Questions on Difficulty

Put tick marks on the appropriate options; you can choose more than one for each case.



1. In your opinion, is the English Syllabus prescribed for classes IX and X hard or easy?

Very hard  Not so hard  Not so easy  Easy

2. According to your opinion, what is the level of your students' English?

a) Bad    b) Below average    c) Average    d) Fair    e) Good

3. Which items do you think are difficult for your students? (Put tick marks)

a) Text    b) Comprehension questions    c) Grammar exercises    d) MCQ tests  
e) Listening task    f) Speaking    g) Reading    h) writing    i) Other ?

4. Identify the level of difficulty of your students face in the grammatical items on the following scale:

Items	Very difficult 1	Sometimes difficult 2	Not so difficult 3	Quite easy 4	very easy 5
a) Use of tenses					
b) Use of different Verb patterns					
c) Use of phrases and Clauses					
d) Use of Preposition					
e) Use of Articles					
f) Construction of sentences					
g) Appropriate vocabulary					
h) Spelling					
i) Punctuation					

5. In your opinion what are the causes of the difficulties of the students in English?

a) Lack of comprehension of grammar rules

b) Lack of knowledge of vocabulary

- c) Lack of comprehension of the content of the text
- d) Lack of knowledge of English/American culture
- e) Lack of correct pronunciation
- f) Thinking in Bangla not in English
- g) Being shy and scared of Speaking in English in class and making mistakes
- h) Lack of motivation for the subject
- i) Lack of opportunity to practice
- j) Lack of study or preparation for the English course

6. In your opinion what kind of difficulties do your students face in writing English?

- a) Lack of appropriate ideas
- b) Absence of logical reasoning (organization of ideas and text)
- c) Vocabulary, meaning, spelling, punctuation, capitalization
- d) Argumentation, exemplification, reference, overall structure
- e) Grammar ( tense, adverbs, adjectives, articles, prepositions, conjunctions etc....)
- f) Other (please specify)

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7. In your opinion, what may be the possible causes of students' learning difficulties in English?

- a. Students' do not have opportunities to read any additional material in English
- b. Students do not have access to TV/ radio programs broadcast in English
- c. Students do not read newspapers/ magazines in English
- d. Students do not have family support
- e. Students do not spend enough time in practicing English

## Section – C Questions on Motivation, Anxiety, Self efficacy

You can choose more than one in each case

1. What are the reasons do you think the students are learning English for?

- a. to get a good job
- b. for overseas higher studies
- c. because it is international language
- d. to meet and talk with many people in the world
- e. to understand and appreciate different cultures and literatures
- f. because the students like to learn a foreign language
- g. to take part in activities of other culture more freely
- h. because it is compulsory
- i. for getting good grades  j. to pass the examination

2. In your opinion, what is the reason of your students not taking part in classroom activities ?

- (a) They feel very shy
- (b) They are afraid of making mistakes
- (c) Fellow classmates will laugh at
- (d) They can't speak English
- (e) They don't have practice of speaking English

3. Do you engage your Ss in classroom activities? Yes  No

If yes put tick on the appropriate statement

- a) Give them pair work
- b) Give them group work
- c) Individual work
- d) Ask them questions on the lesson

4. In terms of practising the skills in class which of the following scale is appropriate for you, tick on them.

Skills	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
Practise Speaking					
Practise Reading					
Practise Listening					
Practise Writing					

5. Which of the following statements are true for your students?

- a. They are able to learn English
- b. They have the capability of communicating in English
- c. Girls are better than the boys in learning English
- d. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language
- e. Some students have special ability for learning foreign languages
- f. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it
- g. People in Bangladesh feel that it is important to speak English

6. Do you prepare lesson plan before conducting your class? Yes  No

If yes, how? Fully in written form  Not in written form  An outline

7. Do you think teaching aids are essential for teaching English language?

Yes  No

If yes, do you use teaching aids in the classroom?

Yes  No  Sometimes  Often

8. Mention two types of aid that you use in your class.

---

### Questions on TG and TB

9. Have you got a teachers' guide (TG) to conduct your English class? Yes

No

Dhaka University Institutional Repository

If no, where from do you get information about conducting the class effectively? Write in two sentences.

-----

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10. How much difficulty do you face while teaching the communicative textbook (TB) and following teachers' guide (TG). Put tick on suitable number.

	TB very difficult	sometimes difficult	Not so difficult	Quite easy	very easy
	1	2	3	4	5
TG	1	2	3	4	5

**Section – D Open ended questions**

1. Particularly in which area of language do your Students face difficulty? Mention at least 5 areas.

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2. In your opinion as a teacher how can you help your students to overcome the difficulties?

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3. In your opinion what are the main causes of students' anxiety in learning English?

Write in two sentences.

-----  
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-----  
-----

4. Please provide at least two specific suggestions to reduce students' anxiety and increase motivation in learning English in Bangladesh.

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-----  
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5. As a teacher how can you remove your students' fear of learning English ? Write in two sentences.

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## Appendix- E

### Classroom observation checklist

Upazilla..... Date.....  
 Class Observed..... Time.....  
 School..... Observer.....

Class Structure/ Content	Below A.	Average	Fair	Good	Excellent
Meets course/ lesson objectives					
Teacher is prepared and organized					
Practise language skills					
Explains grammar points in context					
Helps students to pronounce words					
Shouts at students' mistakes					
Allow Ss make fun of Ss doing mistakes while speaking English					
Pay attention to weaker students					
Explains vocabulary					
Provides feedback that gives Ss direction for improvement					

Methods / Interaction	Below A.	Average	Fair	Good	Excellent
Delivers well planned lessons					
Provides clear instructions for activities or exercises					
Employs interactive and / student led activities					
Engage students in pair and group work					
Encourages participation					
Error corrects in students' needs					

Students' activities	Below A.	Average	Fair	Good	Excellent
Students are energetic and eager					
Students can follow teachers' instructions					
Students face difficulty in reading					
Students face difficulty in grammar					
Students spell words correctly					
Students can communicate well					
Students are well prepared					
Students can correct themselves					

## **Appendix-F**

### **Expert interview protocols**

Thank you very much for your consent to the interview. During the interview you will give your own opinion on ELT in Bangladesh. Please do not hesitate to speak freely. Your opinion will be used for the study purpose only. Your opinion is very much important for the study so give an honest answer.

1. Give your opinion about ELT in Bangladesh
2. Present status of CLT
3. Classroom situation
4. Students' level
5. Overall performance
6. How students can be helped in developing their skills in English.
7. In your opinion what are the main difficulties students face in learning English?
8. In your opinion what are the main factors important in learning English?
9. How can teachers address students' difficulties arising out of psycholinguistic factors?
10. Give your opinion on the English text.
11. Opinion on English teachers
  - a. academic qualification
  - b. capacity of teaching
  - c. training
  - d. classroom activities
  - e. professional commitment
  - f. professional responsibilities
12. Give suggestions to improve the situation English at the secondary level of Education in  
Bangladesh.



## Official permission letters

Thu, May 5, 2011 7:35:38 PM

Re: Permission

From: "horwitz@mail.utexas.edu"

<horwitz@mail.utexas.edu>

View Contact

To: mariam begum <mariam\_chowdhury53@yahoo.com>

---

It's nice to meet you, (but maybe we have corresponded before). I don't know which scale you are referring to. I have several scales, but I do not have an attitude scale. You can find several of my scales in the book listed below.

Best wishes on your thesis.

ekh

\*\*\*\*\*

Elaine K. Horwitz

Director, Graduate Program in Foreign Language Education

Professor of Curriculum & Instruction

The University of Texas at Austin

Foreign Language Education, D6500

<http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/programs/fle/studentinfo/pstudents/faq/>

1 University Station

Austin, TX 78712

Phone: (512) 232-4108

Fax: (512) 471-8460

(Horwitz, 2008)

<http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Becoming-A-Language-Teacher-A-Practical-Guide-to-Second-Language-Learning-and-Teaching/9780205430826.page>

Mon, May 9, 2011 10:00:41 PM Dhaka University Institutional Repository

Re: Permission

From: "horwitz@mail.utexas.edu"

<horwitz@mail.utexas.edu>

[View Contact](#)

To: mariam begum <mariam\_chowdhury53@yahoo.com>

---

How interesting that many women in your country share that last name.

Here is my permission below:

I appreciate your interest in my work.

Subject to the usual requirements for acknowledgment, I am pleased to grant you permission to use the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale in your research. Specifically, you must acknowledge my authorship of the FLCAS in any oral or written reports of your research. I also request that you inform me of your findings. Some scoring information about the FLCAS instruments can be found in my book *Becoming a Language Teacher: A Practical Guide to Second Language Learning and Teaching*, Allyn & Bacon, 2008.

Best wishes on your project.

Sincerely,  
Elaine K. Horwitz

I hope things go well!  
Best,  
ekh

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর  
বাংলাদেশ, ঢাকা।

স্মারক নং- ওএম/২৩-সম/২০০৯/৫৫৬০/৫

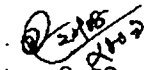
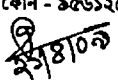
-সম

তারিখ-২১/০৪/০৯খ্রিঃ

বিষয় : গবেষণা তথ্য সংগ্রহের জন্য সরকারি/বেসরকারি বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শন অনুমতি প্রদান প্রসঙ্গে।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ের প্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, গবেষণা তথ্য ও উপাত্ত সংগ্রহের নিমিত্তে সরকারি/বেসরকারি বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের জন্য ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট এর নিম্নবর্ণিত ০২ জন সহযোগী অধ্যাপক তাঁদের নামের মাধ্যমে উল্লিখিত উপজেলাসমূহের কিছু সরকারি/বেসরকারি বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের জন্য নির্দেশক্রমে অনুমতি প্রদান করা হল।

ক্রমিক	নাম, পদবী ও বর্তমান কর্মস্থল	জেলা	যে সকল উপজেলা সমূহের বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শন করার অনুমতি প্রদান করা হল
০১.	জনাব মরিয়ম বেগম সহযোগী অধ্যাপক ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।	ঢাকা	ধামরাই
		কক্সবাজার	টেকনাফ
		রংপুর	দুর্গাচাঁদা
		মগের	অভয়নগর
		বরগুনা	পাথরঘাটা
		সিলেট	শ্রীমংগল
০২	জনাব সেলিনা বানু সহযোগী অধ্যাপক ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।	ঢাকা	ধামরাই
		নেত্রকোনা	নেত্রকোনা সদর
		ময়মনসিংহ	ভাদুকা
		কুমিল্লা	চাঁপিনা
		কক্সবাজার	কক্সবাজার সদর
		ফেনী	ফেনী সদর
		লালমনিরহাট	লালমনিরহাট সদর
		নাটোর	বাড়ইয়া
		পাবনা	দুপুরদী
		বাগেরহাট	বাগেরহাট সদর
		মেহেরপুর	গান্ধী
		মগের	বিকরপাছা
		বরগুনা	বেতাগী
		বরিশাল	গৌরনদী
		বরিশাল	বরিশাল সদর
		মৌলভী বাজার	শ্রীমংগল
যশোর	মাধবপুর		
সিলেট	সিলেট সদর		

  
(যোঃ ফরিদ উদ্দিন)  
সহকারী পরিচালক (মাধ্যমিক-১)  
ফোন - ৯৫৬১২৫৪।  


বিতরণঃ

- ✓ ০১। জনাব মরিয়ম বেগম,  
সহযোগী অধ্যাপক,  
শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
- ০২। জনাব সেলিনা বানু,  
সহযোগী অধ্যাপক,  
শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

অনুলিপি:

- ০১। জনাব ড. আবুল এহসান অধ্যাপক, শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
- ০২। জনাব ড. হিন্দিকুর রহমান, অধ্যাপক, শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
- ০৩। সংরক্ষণ নথি।

## Appendix-I

### শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য প্রশ্নমালা

প্রিয় শিক্ষার্থী,

তোমরা ইংরেজি শেখার ক্ষেত্রে শ্রেণীকক্ষে কী ধরনের সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হও তা জানার জন্য এই প্রশ্নমালাটি তৈরি করা হয়েছে। ১-৫ এর মানদণ্ডে যে বাক্যটি তোমার কাছে সঠিক মনে হয় সেটির উপর টিক চিহ্ন দাও।

এখানে উল্লেখ যে এক্ষেত্রে কোন সঠিক বা ভুল উত্তর নেই। তাই তোমার কাছ থেকে সত্য উত্তর আশা করি। তোমার উত্তর সম্পূর্ণ গোপন রাখা হবে এবং শুধু এ গবেষণার কাছে ব্যবহৃত হবে। তোমার উত্তর তোমার পরীক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে কোন প্রভাব ফেলবে না অথবা কোন উত্তরের জন্য তোমাকে দায়ি করা হবে না। অনুগ্রহপূর্বক সকল প্রশ্নের উত্তর দাও।

তোমার সহযোগিতার জন্য ধন্যবাদ।

### বিভাগ-এ : ব্যক্তিগত তথ্য

শ্রেণীঃ

উপজেলা/থামঃ

লিঙ্গ পুরুষ  মহিলা

পরিবার প্রধানের পেশা :

গত বার্ষিক পরীক্ষায় ইংরেজি বিষয়ে প্রাপ্ত নম্বর : ১ম পত্র

২য় পত্র

পরিবারে কতজন প্রাথমিক শিক্ষায় শিক্ষিত :

পিতার শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা :

ক) প্রাথমিক উত্তীর্ণ

খ) এস.এস.সি

গ) গ্রাজুয়েট

ঘ) মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রি

মাতার শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা :

ক) প্রাথমিক উত্তীর্ণ

খ) এস.এস.সি

গ) এস.এস.সি-এর উপর

১। কোন ধরনের পরিস্থিতি তোমার জন্য ভয় এবং দুঃশ্চিন্তার কারণ ?

(ক) লোকজনের সম্মুখে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলা

(খ) শ্রেণীকক্ষে বদমেজাজি শিক্ষক

(গ) লিখিত পরীক্ষা

(ঘ) কোনটাই নয়

২। তুমি যখন ইংরেজি ক্লাশে ভয় পাও তখন কী ঘটে ?

(ক) নার্ভাস অনুভব করা

(খ) আত্মবিশ্বাস হারিয়ে ফেলা

(গ) প্রচণ্ড বেগে বুক ঘড়ফড় করা

(ঘ) ঘামতে শুরু করা

(ঙ) প্রয়োজ্য নয়

৩। ইংরেজি ক্লাশে যখন তুমি ভয় পাও তখন কি কর ?

- (ক) ভাগা ভাগা ছোট ছোট বাক্য ব্যবহার করা
- (খ) অতিক্রমত কথা বলা শেষ কর
- (গ) দুঃশিক্ষাজনক পরিস্থিতি থেকে বেরিয়ে আসার চেষ্টা কর
- (ঘ) আত্মবিশ্বাস ফিরিয়ে আনার চেষ্টা কর
- (ঙ) প্রযোজ্য নয়

৪। তোমার মতে তোমার ইংরেজি শিক্ষক কীভাবে শ্রেণীকক্ষে দুঃশিক্ষিতা সৃষ্টিতে ভূমিকা পালন করেন ?

- (ক) শিক্ষক যদি খুব সাংঘাতিক রাগী হন
- (খ) সকল সময় ভুল সংশোধনে ব্যস্ত থাকেন
- (গ) শিক্ষক যদি বন্ধুত্বসুলভ না হন
- (ঘ) শিক্ষক যদি অতি সহানুভূতিশীল না হন

৫। শ্রেণীকক্ষে শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি ভাষা সম্পর্কিত দুঃশিক্ষিতা দূরীকরণে তোমার পরামর্শ কী ?

- (ক) বন্ধুত্বপূর্ণ শ্রেণীকক্ষ পরিবেশ
- (খ) শিক্ষার্থীদের শ্রেণীকক্ষে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে উৎসাহিত করা
- (গ) ইতিবাচক পরামর্শ প্রদান করা
- (ঘ) কথা বলার সময় ভুলত্রুটি সম্পর্কে দুঃশিক্ষিতা না করা

৬। শ্রেণীকক্ষে তোমার নার্ভাস অনুভব করার কারণ কী ?

- (ক) ইংরেজি শেখার ক্ষেত্রে তোমার আত্মবিশ্বাসের অভাব
- (খ) ইংরেজি অত্যন্ত কঠিন বিষয়
- (গ) শ্রেণীকক্ষে ইংরেজি সঠিক উপায়ে পড়ানো হয়নি
- (ঘ) ইংরেজি ভাষা শেখা সহজ নয়
- (ঙ) কোনটাই নয়

## সূচকসমূহ এবং প্রাসঙ্গিক বক্তব্য

নির্দেশনা : নিচের ছকের উক্তিসমূহ পড়ে যেটি তোমার জন্য প্রযোজ্য সেই ঘরে টিক চিহ্ন দাও।

উক্তিসমূহ	সব সময় ৪	প্রায়ই ৩	মাঝে মাঝে ২	কখনই নয় ১	প্রযোজ্য নয় ০
১. ইংরেজি শেখা প্রয়োজন কারণ ইংরেজি জানা আমাকে একটি ভাল কাজ পেতে সাহায্য করবে।					
২. ইংরেজি শেখা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কারণ ইংরেজি আমাকে ভবিষ্যতে উচ্চ শিক্ষা বা কাজের জন্য বিদেশে যেতে সাহায্য করবে।					
৩. ইংরেজি জানলে আমি বই, ম্যাগাজিন, খবর কাগজ পড়তে পারব।					
৪. ইংরেজি জানা আমাকে বিশ্বের অনেক দেশের লোকের সাথে কথা বলতে সাহায্য করবে।					
৫. ইংরেজি আমাকে অন্যান্য সাহিত্য ও সংস্কৃতি বুঝতে এবং মূল্যায়ন করতে সাহায্য করবে।					
৬. আমি ভয় পাই যখন কোন প্রস্তুতি ছাড়াই শ্রেণীকক্ষে আমাকে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে বলা হয়।					
৭. ইংরেজি ক্লাশে যখন আমি জানা জিনিস ভুলে যাই তখন আমি খুব অস্থির বোধ করি।					
৮. শিক্ষক যখন আমাকে ইংরেজি লেখা সংশোধন করেন অথচ আমি বুঝতে পারি না, আমার খুব খারাপ লাগে।					
৯. আমি খুব ভয় পাই যখন শিক্ষক আমার ছোটখাট ভুলগুলো ধরে ফেলেন।					
১০. ইংরেজি ক্লাশে যখন কিছু বলার বা লেখার জন্য আমাকে ডাকা হয়, আমার বুক ধড়ফড় করতে থাকে।					
১১. অন্যান্য বিষয়ের থেকে আমি ইংরেজি ক্লাশে কথা বলার সময় বেশি নার্ভাস এবং উদ্বিগ্ন থাকি।					
১২. ইংরেজি শিক্ষক যা বলেন তার প্রতিটি শব্দ আমি যখন বুঝতে পারি না, আমি খুব অস্থির হই।					
১৩. যে প্রশ্নের উত্তর আমি আগে থেকে শিখিনি, শিক্ষক যখন সে প্রশ্ন আমাকে জিজ্ঞেস করেন আমি খুব নার্ভাস বোধ করি।					
১৪. অন্যান্য আমার ইংরেজি রচনা পড়ে কি বলবে তা নিয়ে আমি মোটেই চিন্তিত নই।					
১৫. যখন অপ্রত্যাশিতভাবে আমাকে ইংরেজি রচনা লিখতে হয় আমি খুবই ভয় পাই।					

উক্তিগমূহ	সব সময় ৪	প্রায়ই ৩	মাঝে মাঝে ২	কখনই নয় ১	প্রয়োজ্য নয় ০
১৬. আমি ভয়ে কাঁপতে থাকি যখন আমি বুঝতে পারি যে আমাকে ইংরেজি ক্লাশে প্রশ্ন করা হবে।					
১৭. আমি ইংরেজি বিষয়ের ফলাফল কি হবে তা নিয়ে দুঃস্বপ্না করি।					
১৮. ইংরেজি ক্লাশের জন্য প্রস্তুতির ব্যাপারে আমার কোন চিন্তা নেই।					
১৯. আগে থেকে প্রস্তুতি থাকা সত্ত্বেও আমি ইংরেজি ক্লাশে নার্ভাস হয়ে যাই।					
২০. আমি খুব অস্থির হই এটা বেব যে আমি যখন ইংরেজিতে কথা বলবো অন্য শিক্ষার্থীরা আমাকে দেকে হাসবে।					

## সংক্ষিপ্ত উত্তর দাও

১। ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার ক্ষেত্রে তুমি কী কী সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হও ?

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২। ইংরেজি শব্দ/বস্তু শুনে বোজার ক্ষেত্রে তুমি কী ধরনের অসুবিধা অনুভব কর ?

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৩। কোন বিষয় ইংরেজিতে লিখতে হলে তুমি কী সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হও ?

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৪। ইংরেজি গ্রামার এর কোন কোন বিষয় তোমার কাছে কঠিন মনে হয় ? বিষয়গুলোর নাম লিখ।

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৫। ইংরেজি পাঠ্যপুস্তকের কোন বিষয় তোমার জন্য বেশ কঠিন ?

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৬। ইংরেজি শিক্ষকের কাছ থেকে তুমি কী ধরনের সহযোগিতা পেলে তোমার ইংরেজির পাঠ সহজ হবে বলে মনে কর ?

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৭। ইংরেজি ভাষা শেখার ক্ষেত্রে তোমার জন্য সবচেয়ে কঠিন বিষয় কী ? দু'টি বাক্যে উত্তর দাও।

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৮। ইংরেজি বই, ম্যাগাজিন ইত্যাদি পড়ার ক্ষেত্রে কোন বিষয়টি তোমার নিকট সবচেয়ে কঠিন অনুভূত হয়? দু'টি বাক্যে উত্তর দাও।

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## Appendix-J

### শিক্ষকদের জন্য প্রশ্নমালা

#### বিভাগ-ক : ব্যক্তিগত তথ্য

১. বিদ্যালয়ের নাম : \_\_\_\_\_
২. উপজিলা : \_\_\_\_\_
৩. জন্ম তারিখ : ----- বয়স: ----- লিঙ্গ পুরুষ  মহিলা
৪. সর্বোচ্চ শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা :
৫. শ্রেণীকক্ষে গড় শিক্ষার্থী :
৬. পেশাগত যোগ্যতা : সি-ইন-এড  বি.এড  এম.এড
৭. ইংরেজি শ্রেণীকক্ষে 'কমিউনিকোটিভ' শিক্ষণ পদ্ধতি প্রবর্তনের পূর্বে আপনি কোন প্রশিক্ষণ পেয়েছেন ?  
হ্যাঁ  না

আপনার উত্তর যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তা হলে আপনি বিশেষ কি কৌশল শিখেছেন তা দুটি বাক্যে প্রকাশ করুন।

#### বিভাগ-খ: কাঠিন্য সম্পর্কিত প্রশ্ন

সঠিক উত্তরে 'টিক' চিহ্ন দিন। আপনি প্রতিক্ষেত্রে একের অধিক উত্তর নির্বাচন করতে পারেন।

১. আপনার মতে নবন ও দশম শ্রেণীর নির্ধারিত ইংরেজি পাঠ্যসূচি কঠিন/সহজ ?  
খুব কঠিন  তেমন কঠিন নয়  তেমন সহজ নয়  সহজ
২. আপনার মতে আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি মান কেমন ?  
খুব ভাল  ভাল  মোটামুটি  গড়মানের নিচে  ভাল নয়
৩. আপনার বিবেচনায় আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য ইংরেজি শেখার ক্ষেত্রে কোন বিষয়টি কঠিন ?  
(ক) পাঠ্যপুস্তক  (খ) অনুধাবনমূলক প্রশ্ন   
(গ) গ্রামার অনুশীলন  (ঘ) বহুনির্বাচনী প্রশ্নসমূহ   
(ঙ) শ্রবণ কাজ  (চ) ইংরেজিতে কথা বলা   
(ছ) পঠন  (জ) ইংরেজিতে কিছু লেখা   
(ঝ) অন্যান্য

৪. নিচের ছকে উল্লেখিত বিষয়সমূহ আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য কতখানি কঠিন বলে আপনি অনুভব করেন তা নির্দেশ করুন।

বিষয়সমূহ	খুব কঠিন	মাঝে মাঝে কঠিন	তেমন কঠিন নয়	মোটামুটি সহজ	খুবই সহজ
(ক) Tense-এর ব্যবহার					
(খ) বিভিন্ন ধরনের Verb-এর ব্যবহার					
(গ) Phrase এবং Clause-এর ব্যবহার					
(ঘ) Preposition-এর ব্যবহার					
(ঙ) Article-এর ব্যবহার					
(চ) বাক্য গঠন					
(ছ) সঠিক শব্দের ব্যবহার					
(জ) শব্দের বানান					
(ঝ) বিরাম চিহ্নের ব্যবহার					

৫. আপনার বিবেচনায় ইংরেজি বিষয় শিক্ষার্থীদের নিকট কঠিন হওয়ার কারণ কী ?

- (ক) গ্রামার-এর নিয়ম-কানুন না বোঝা
- (খ) পর্যাপ্ত শব্দ ভান্ডারের অভাব
- (গ) পাঠ্যপুস্তকের বিষয়বস্তু না বোঝা
- (ঘ) ইংরেজি/আমেরিকান সংস্কৃতি সম্পর্কে না জানা
- (ঙ) সঠিক উচ্চারণ না জানা
- (চ) ইংরেজির পরিবর্তে বাংলা ভাষায় চিন্তা করা
- (ছ) ইংরেজি ক্লাশে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে গিয়ে ভুল করা/ভয় পাওয়া/লজ্জা অনুভব করা
- (জ) ইংরেজি বিষয়ে প্রেষণার অভাব
- (ঝ) অনুশীলনের সুযোগের অভাব
- (ঞ) ইংরেজি বিষয় পড়ালেখার অথবা প্রস্তুতির অভাব

৬. আপনার মতে ইংরেজি লেখার ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষার্থীরা কোন বিষয় কঠিন অনুভব করে ?

- (ক) সঠিক ধারণার অভাব
- (খ) ধারণাসমূহের সংগঠনের অভাব
- (গ) শব্দভাণ্ডার, অর্থ, বানান, বিরামচিহ্ন, বড় হাতের অক্ষর এর ব্যবহার ইত্যাদি
- (ঘ) argumentation, exemplification, reference, overall structure
- (ঙ) Grammar (tense, adverbs, adjectives, articles, prepositions, conjunctions)
- (চ) অন্যান্য (অনুগ্রহপূর্বক উল্লেখ করুন)

৭. আপনার বিবেচনায় শিক্ষার্থীদের নিকট ইংরেজি বিষয় কঠিন হওয়ার সম্ভাব্য কারণসমূহ

- (ক) শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি বিষয়ে অতিরিক্ত পড়ালেখার সুযোগের অভাব
- (খ) শিক্ষার্থীদের রেডিও, টেলিভিশন-এ প্রচারিত ইংরেজি কার্যক্রম দেখার সুযোগ নেই
- (গ) ইংরেজিতে প্রচারিত খবরের কাগজ ও ম্যাগাজিন শিক্ষার্থীরা পড়ে না
- (ঘ) শিক্ষার্থীরা ইংরেজি শেখার জন্য পর্যাপ্ত সময় ব্যয় করে না

বিভাগ-ঘ: প্রেষণা, দুঃস্বিনাত, আঅবিশ্বাসের উপর প্রশ্নাবলী। সঠিক উত্তরে টিক চিহ্ন দিন।  
প্রতিক্ষেত্রে আপনি ংকের অধিক উত্তর নির্বাচন করতে পারেন)

১. শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি শেখার কারণ কী বলে আপনি মনে করেন ?
  - (ক) চাকুরী লাভের আশা
  - (খ) বিদেশে উচ্চ শিক্ষা লাভের জন্য
  - (গ) কারণ ইংরেজি আন্তর্জাতিক ভাষা
  - (ঘ) বিশ্বের অনেক লোকের সাথে সাক্ষাৎ ও কথা বলার জন্য
  - (ঙ) বিভিন্ন সাহিত্য ও সংস্কৃতি বোঝা ও মূল্যায়ন করা
  - (চ) কারণ শিক্ষার্থীরা ংকটি বিদেশী ভাষা শিখতে পছন্দ করে
  - (ছ) অন্য সংস্কৃতির কর্মকাণ্ডে সহজে অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য
  - (জ) কারণ ইংরেজি শেখা শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য বাধ্যতামূলক
  - (ঝ) পরীক্ষায় ভাল গ্রেড লাভের আশায়
  - (ঞ) পরীক্ষা পাশের জন্য
২. আপনার শ্রেণীকক্ষে শিক্ষার্থীরা বিভিন্ন কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ না করার কারণ কী ?
  - (ক) শিক্ষার্থীরা লজ্জিত বোধ করে
  - (খ) শিক্ষার্থীরা ভীত বোধ করে যে, তারা ভুল করবে
  - (গ) অন্যান্য শিক্ষার্থীরা তাদের দেখে হাসবে
  - (ঘ) তারা ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে পারে না
  - (ঙ) তাদের ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার অনুশীলন নেই
৩. আপনি কি আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের শ্রেণীকক্ষে বিভিন্ন কর্মকাণ্ডে নিয়োজিত করেন ? হ্যাঁ না  
আপনার উত্তর যদি হ্যাঁ হয় তাহলে সঠিক উত্তরে টিক চিহ্ন দিন।
  - (ক) জোড়া দলে কাজ করান
  - (খ) দলগত কাজ করান
  - (গ) ব্যক্তিগত কাজ দেন
  - (ঘ) পাঠ সম্পর্কিত প্রশ্ন জিজ্ঞেস করেন
৪. শ্রেণীকক্ষে দক্ষতা অনুশীলনের ক্ষেত্রে নিচের ছকের কোনটি আপনার জন্য প্রযোজ্য ? টিক চিহ্ন দিন।

বিষয়সমূহ	কখনো নয় ১	কোনও সময় ২	মাঝে মাঝে ৩	প্রায়ই ৪	সব সময় ৫
কখন অনুশীলন					
পঠন অনুশীলন					
শ্রবন অনুশীলন					
লিখন অনুশীলন					

৫. আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য নিচের কোনটি প্রযোজ্য ?

- (ক) তারা ইংরেজি শিখতে সক্ষম  
 (খ) তাদের ইংরেজিতে যোগাযোগ করার দক্ষতা আছে  
 (গ) ছেলেদের তুলনায় মেয়েরা ইংরেজি শেখায় পারদর্শী  
 (ঘ) বয়স্কদের অপেক্ষা অল্প বয়সী ছেলেমেয়েরা সহজে বিদেশী ভাষা শিখতে সক্ষম  
 (ঙ) ইংরেজি বলা এবং বোঝার চেয়ে পড়া সহজ  
 (চ) বাংলাদেশে শিক্ষার্থীরা ইংরেজি বলা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মনে করে

৬. আপনি কি ক্লাশ নেয়ার আগে পাঠ পরিকল্পনা করেন ?

হ্যাঁ  না

যদি আপনার উত্তর হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে কেমন পরিকল্পনা করেন ?

সম্পূর্ণ পরিকল্পনা লিখিত  লিখিত নয়  একটি Outline

৭. আপনার বিবেচনায় ইংরেজি শিক্ষণ এর জন্য পাঠ সহায়ক উপকরণ (TA) কি প্রয়োজন ?

আপনার উত্তর যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, আপনি কি শ্রেণীকক্ষে পাঠ সহায়ক উপকরণ ব্যবহার করেন ?

হ্যাঁ  না  মাঝে মাঝে  প্রায়ই

৮. আপনি যে ধরনের উপকরণ শ্রেণীকক্ষে ব্যবহার করেন তার দু'টি নাম উল্লেখ করুন।

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### পাঠ্যপুস্তক এবং শিক্ষক নির্দেশিকা সম্পর্কিত প্রশ্ন

৯. আপনি কি শিক্ষক নির্দেশিকা পেয়েছেন ?

আপনার উত্তর যদি না হয় তাহলে ক্লাশ কার্যকর উপায়ে পরিচালনার জন্য আপনি কোন নির্দেশিকা ব্যবহার করেন তা দু'টি বাক্যে সংক্ষেপে প্রকাশ করুন।

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১০. English for Today পাঠ্যপুস্তক এবং শিক্ষক নির্দেশিকা (TG) ব্যবহারকালে আপনি কতটা সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হন? সঠিক নম্বরের টিক চিহ্ন দিন।

বিষয়সমূহ	খুব কঠিন ১	মাঝে মাঝে কঠিন ২	তেমন কঠিন নয় ৩	মোটামুটি সহজ ৪	খুবই সহজ ৫
কথন অনুশীলন					
পঠন অনুশীলন					
পাঠ্যপুস্তক					

## বিভাগ-ঘ : উন্মুক্ত প্রশ্নাবলী

১. আপনার শিক্ষার্থীরা বিশেষভাবে ইংরেজির কোন বিষয়ে বেশি অসুবিধা অনুভব করে ? কমপক্ষে ৫টি বিষয় উল্লেখ কর।

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২. আপনার মতে শিক্ষক হিসেবে শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি ভাষার অসুবিধা দূরীকরণে কী ভূমিকা পালন করতে পারেন ? দু'টি বাক্যে প্রকাশ করুন।

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৩. ইংরেজি শেখার ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষার্থীদের উদ্বেগ/দুঃশিক্ষার প্রধান কারণ কী বলে আপনি মনে করেন ? দু'টি বাক্যে প্রকাশ করুন।

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৪. আপনি শিক্ষার্থীদের দুঃশিক্ষা দূরীকরণে এবং তাদের ইংরেজি শেখার আগ্রহ/প্রেম সৃষ্টিতে অন্ততঃ দু'টি পরামর্শ প্রদান করুন।

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৫. আপনি শিক্ষক হিসেবে আপনার শিক্ষার্থীদের ইংরেজি শেখার ভীতি কিভাবে দূর করতে পারেন ? দু'টি বাক্যে প্রকাশ করুন।

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