

Assessing Learners in Bangladeshi Secondary English Classrooms-Reflection from the Teachers' Experience

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Abstract: The purpose of this qualitative study is to evaluate teachers' current perceptions on English classroom assessment in secondary schools in Bangladesh. Five semi-structured interviews with five English teachers from two separate secondary schools were conducted to examine the teachers' relevant understandings and experiences. These findings revealed that the classification of English classroom assessment method in Bangladesh's secondary schools do not portray a coordinated growth of all of the learners' language skills, and that there are contradictions between the original goals of teaching English as well as the real teaching methods in Bangladesh's secondary schools. Although summative assessment still reigns supreme, formative assessment is steadily gaining ground. According to the findings, current assessment is typically focused on reading and writing. The secondary English language program, on the other hand, will have to be modified in order to integrate all four abilities in the assessment system for overall language growth. Improved training facilities for teachers to improve their efficiency and interaction with students should also be evaluated.

Keyword: *Assessment, Teacher, Learners, English classroom, Secondary school, Bangladesh.*

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I. Introduction

Language acquisition is concerned with the development of certain skills that are honed and improved via repetition and evaluation. The development of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing is the goal of communicative language instruction and sustain through valid evaluation (Kamaluddin cited in Foster, 2009). However, in any field of education, assessment is essential to the learning and teaching process. Assessing students is an essential aspect of a teacher's instruction (Nitko, 1996). Thus, the goals and objectives of the language curriculum govern the assessment plans. Meanwhile, the assessment process of Bangladeshi secondary English classroom has traditionally been guided by educational programs but the framework only addressed students' ability to retain information and perceive information. As a result, students were supposed to depend excessively on their memorizing skills, causing them to become handicapped and unable to make an effective contribution to the community (Begum & Farooqui, 2008). Other aspects of knowledge adroitness such as implementation, investigation, integration, and evaluation are incorporated in the assessment to a lesser extent. Furthermore, the assessment method ignored several crucial skills such as oral presentation, management, compassion, cooperative attitude, classroom attitude, co-curricular activities, and moral attitudes. According to Linn & Gronland (2005), it is a multi-step approach for identifying the appropriateness of a pupil's academic achievement

However, though the concepts "test" and "assessment" are sometimes used interchangeably in language evaluation studies, there are important distinctions (Brown & Lee, 2015). Brown and Lee (2015) defined "test" as a well-designed mechanism with questionnaire items that uses performance to thoroughly examine a student's abilities or aptitude in a certain learning domain. As a general term, "assessment" refers to a continual process that uses a number of ways to determine whether or not students learn more effectively in their studies (Islam & BtStapa, 2019).

Moreover, one of the most important parts of the teaching-learning process is teachers' classroom assessment techniques which relate to curriculum, instructional mechanism, and students' learning outcomes. Koh (2011) in her study revealed that teachers' literacy in assessment ensured sustainable positive outcomes in teaching learning process. To improve student learning, teachers use classroom quizzes, presentations, question-and-answer sessions, projects, and group activities. These activities allow students to test what they've learned, improve thinking patterns, stimulate their neurons, and boost their confidence in their new skills and knowledge. Since 2007, a new measurement dimension has been added to countrywide assessment methodologies designated as School Base Assessment (SBA) (Begum & Farooqui, 2008). According to Ahsan (2009), there are two sorts of assessments: formative and summative assessments. The current English

curriculum (NCTB, 2012) places a strong emphasis on summative evaluation via final examinations. Formative assessment has received less attention. This study concentrated on two forms of educational process: classroom assessment and feedback from the teachers' point of view. It is noticed that the teachers are not capable of using different assessment mode in English classroom. Again, these teachers lack valid professional training on assessment. According to Koh and Luke (2009), teachers' professional development through training can ensure students' improved learning process. This study, thus, tried to figure out the current condition of English language assessment in the Bangladeshi secondary classrooms from the teachers' conception, practice and challenges.

Assessment in Teaching English in Different Phases

Curriculum, teaching, and evaluation are all intertwined (Pellegrino, 2010). However, it is sad that assessment policies have not been implemented in the Bangladeshi secondary English Curriculum. Without defined assessment guidelines, teachers at this level will naturally choose whichever evaluation processes suit them best at the expense of learners' meaningful practice, which is assisted through assessment (Shepard, 2000). Though, in 2016, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), a branch of Bangladesh's Ministry of Education (MOE) in charge of issuing and distributing syllabuses, instructors' guidelines, and several reference materials, released a Teachers' Handbook that included information on analysis that emphasized ongoing assessment (NCTB, 2016). After completing fifth grade, pupils take their inaugural public examination, widely recognized as the Primary Education Completion Examinations (PECE). Matching, true/false, and brief answer questions are common exam items, as are short essays, filling in the gaps with provided hints, letter writing, rearranging words to form sentences, as well as filling out forms with information (DainikShiksha, 2020). The traditional approach of assessment, which focuses on discrete test items, is shown by these test items. Only a few communicative tasks are included in the test, which can be used to assess students' capacity to develop discourse. Thus, testing a random group of student's English language ability is unachievable due to the evaluative nature of this test. Furthermore, the test lacks validity because it excludes listening and speaking, two crucial English language abilities, even though the curriculum includes all four language skills.

The junior secondary English curriculum (grades 6-8), alternatively, uses both formative and summative assessment approaches (National Curriculum, 2012). The syllabus refers to formative assessment as continuous assessment (CA) and claims that CA has a lot of room for improvement to guide learners achieve a number of things. CA, for example, is assisting students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, CA enables teachers to evaluate pupils in a cost-effective and time-efficient manner. Most importantly, CA assists instructors in understanding the psychosocial consequences of assessments on students, allowing teachers to create aid measures to assist students in avoiding the bad impacts of assessments. According to the curriculum (2012), instructors can use the CA approaches to collect information about the efficacy of their teaching methods, and when problems are discovered, they can use the knowledge to alter their teaching methods. Additionally, instructors can use the CA approaches to collect information about the efficacy of their teaching methods, and when problems are discovered, they can use the knowledge to alter their teaching methods. Half-yearly and final tests are used for summative assessment at this level; while students in grade 8 take another board examination entitled the Junior School Certificate (JSC). Even though the syllabus incorporates all four skills, the JSC Examination's English test does not include listening and speaking skills, leaving only reading and writing competency, as well as grammatical and comprehension questions.

Pupils in class 9 and 10 are introduced to a further phase of the National English Curriculum (2012) that concludes in the utmost extensively used public test, the Secondary School Certificate (SSC). Paper 1 and paper 2 content packages are used to implement this curriculum. The themes of paper 1 are conducted in the classroom via a textbook known as English for Today (EFT), which is developed based on numerous topics such as habitat, social community members, recreation activities and interests, early life, commute, hospitality, whereas the themes of paper 2 are grammatical and compositional abilities (National Curriculum, 2012). Classwork, ongoing evaluation, final tests, and public exams are all listed as assessment techniques in the curriculum. The allocation of marks is also stated in the curriculum, indicating an asymmetrical priority. Listening and speaking have been given 20 marks (10 for each talent), whereas reading and writing have been given 80 marks (40 for each skill). However, the SSC does not include listening and speaking abilities.

The higher secondary English curriculum emphasizes the teaching and learning of English as a skill-based course, allowing students to obtain proficiency in the language and communicate directly in real-life circumstances (National Curriculum, 2012). As a result, English curriculum for higher secondary, learner-centered approaches to enhancing students' communicative skills were given preference, and efforts were made to combine all four English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and some other aspects of language: sentence construction and comprehension (National Curriculum, 2012). Paper 1 and paper 2 of English are two sets of specific content used to present the course to the students. The topics of English paper 1

have been adapted into a course called English for Today (EFT), particularly covers a broad variety of topics including such as scientific and technological inventions , mythology and literature, transportation instruction , civil liberties, harmony, as well as violence. Grammar and composition abilities are the subjects of paper 2. Regular classroom evaluation, internal tests, and public examinations recognized as the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) are all part of the English assessment plan at the higher secondary level (Ali et al., 2018).

In Bangladesh, assessment and feedback are an integral part of English language instruction in higher education (Hasan, 2020, p.215). In the university public sector, assessment in English courses offered has likewise been enslaved by a rigid structure (Hasan, 2020). In addition, similar to pre-university traditions, there is a set method for assessing students' English skills. In private universities, on the other hand, the method is slightly different. We would agree that English language assessment in Bangladesh's private institutions has become more emancipated, and professors have more flexibility. As a result, private institution lecturers employ a various formative classroom assessment methods.

Since examinations are routinely administered in Bangladesh, the whole measurement strategy is test oriented (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018a, 2018b; Ali et al., 2018). Functional testing is one of these formative assessment procedures mentioned in this study (Das et al., 2014). We strongly feel that assessment, with such genuine goal of encouraging knowledge by modifying instructional methods and teaching/learning contents, is difficult to accomplish in Bangladesh for a variety of reasons, which are described and explained below.

Unproductive assessment methods, primarily based on rote memorization, dominate the testing and evaluation system in Bangladesh English language education and learning (National Education Policy, 2010). The current evaluation techniques are not connected with the curriculum's strategic goals, according to the Expert Panel for the Education of English within the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2010). As a result, they compromise assessment validity, an important quality parameter. Researchers and educators have also addressed the validity issue, citing a contradiction between what would be "supposed to be taught and what is measured" (Das et al., 2014, p. 330). As a result, assessment methods are unable to evaluate whether learners are developing linguistic competence, a goal to improve English that is indicated in syllabuses, to maximize efficiency in realistic conditions. (Das et al., 2014).

Bangladesh adopted communicative language teaching (CLT) as a mode of instruction at the secondary levels in 1996. (National Curriculum, 2012). Individuals and institutions were expected to employ the evaluation incorporated into the CLT methodology. CLT assessment techniques, on either side, have faced opposition since their inception (Quader, 2001). Das et al. (2014) reaffirm Quader's observation from a decade and a half years ago, stating that present assessment procedures have always been primarily dependent on paper and pencil high-stakes exams. Worst of all, because students are anxious to pass the tests, such tests encourage students to recall language patterns and chunks of material that have been designed ahead of time (Rahman, Kabir, & Afroze, 2006). Because evaluation has an impact on students' learning patterns, this memorizing strategy prevents pupils from truly learning English and instead forces them to study for the tests.

According to Koh (2012), for enabling the 21st century based classroom teachers need to be literate in both assessing learners and creating assessment models as well. Overall, the total assessment system of the Bangladeshi secondary English classroom is under question due to the validity and credibility. The assessment portfolio does not emphasise totally on what it is mentioned in the curriculum and education policy. As a result, classroom teachers rarely imply any assessment grid or rubrics during evaluating their students. This study concentrating on the teachers' experience and making some observation on the theoretical background of assessment, tried to reflect what could be infused in English assessment system in the secondary classrooms.

II. Methodology

The 'semi-structured qualitative interview' with five teachers of secondary school was employed to conduct the exploration in this study. This study sought to learn about teachers' current comprehensions on English language classroom assessment in Bangladeshi secondary schools. This also focused on finding how teachers suppose about, engage in, and practice classroom assessment; what issues they have in enforcing (language assessment), particularly in the classroom, and how they develop strategies to address obstacles. We discovered the significant dissociate between class conditions and assessment processes. As a result, we chose the content of 'English classroom assessment' as the focus of our research and developed the following research questions.

- What current understandings do Bangladeshi secondary English language teachers hold about assessment?
- What challenges do the teachers experience in assessing English language?
- Is current system grounded on modern theory? If not, where are the lacking?

However, there are no specific conditions for data collection, analysis and participants. According to Patton (1990), "Sample size relies on what you want to find, the intention of the inquiry, what is at threat, what will be effective, and what can be performed with handed energy and budget." Thus, five English teachers for individual interviews were selected believing that having a small number of participants would allow for further

in-depth data and information. In order to pursue a qualitative approach to English classroom assessment in Bangladeshi secondary schools, five English teachers from two secondary schools, three from one and two from another were selected randomly. In order to acquire descriptive and logical information, semi structured interviews were conducted.

Semi- structured Interview

Interview method is a useful tool for learning about others and gathering information (Fontana & Frey, 2005). It could be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. In this study, semi-structured interviews were applied to collect factual information about the content from the participants' lived gets. A semi-structured interview is a descriptive statistical strategy that involves methodical questioning of multiple individualities in a formal and casual environment at the same time (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Semi-structured interview helps the experimenter and participants to dig a bit deeper into the study's topic. It was believed that interview is a particular technique to record how an individual thinks/understands on a certain issue and it also allows for more detailed expression of one's thoughts.

Semi-structured interviews have some drawbacks. Interview medication and prosecution take time. The researcher will need knowledge and experience to execute the interviews. Transcription and data analysis are both time-consuming tasks. In order to conduct successful interviews, the researcher must establish a connection with the interviewee. Meanwhile, an interview is a structured discussion between two or more people with the goal of gathering qualitative information in the participants' particular ideas so that the experimenter may learn how people perceive a particular study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Some sample questions on classroom assessment were used to gain data from the interviews with the teachers. Teacher interviews were carried about 30 minutes. The process was not intermediated during the interview rather heeded hardly and sometimes added some inquiring questions to evoke further exploratory views from the respondents. Conversations were recorded so that the data could be coded smoothly. The major principles guided the interviews are teachers' current comprehensions about classroom assessment, teachers' language assessment practices, their classroom assessment procedures, the disparity between class conditions and being assessment styles, and different assessment procedures used by teachers.

Data analysis

"Qualitative data analysis is a tough element since it demands study and explanation, rather than complex specialized procedure. It's an integrative system" (Taylor and Bogdan (1998). "Analysis of the data" is defined by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) as "data processing, grading it, dividing it down into simple bits, organizing it, mixing it, and finding patterns." Meanwhile, "Analysis of data is a methodical procedure and a robotic action", according to Tesch (1990). He continued "The research methodology should be instructional and structured but not tough; data are segmented and divided into manageable portions, and the data are assembled according to a medium attained from the data themselves."

At first, the conversations were sequenced in order to gain information regarding teachers' perspectives on English classroom assessments in Bangladeshi secondary schools. The conversations were recorded more than once while noting down to ensure correct summary. The summary was studied and reviewed several times, re-transmitted, and posted it to each teacher, asking them to read it closely, review it, and return back it to me with feedback.

Each piece of information was observed carefully to see how it linked to the others. The data was then classified, and the canons were sorted into groups to determine the aspect of the research. Some information had multitudinous codes. To classify and dissect the information, the data were coded focusing the clarity. Twelve interview questions for five teachers were prepared at first. Then answers were collected from six interview questions from the teachers by dispatch the alternate time. In order to uncover the parallels, differences, and obstacles for each problem/question, every interview question was scrutinized with the mixed reactions of each unique teacher, and anatomized accordingly each datasets. The collected data was enciphered and segmented to determine themes. Accordingly, the results was examined based on the research questions and classified it into three categories: 'Conceptions of classroom assessment,' 'Procedures and assessment of language skills,' and 'Crucial problems and gaps,' each of which had multiple subcategories. But, there were certain unanswered questions and information, and the research methodology was limited by these unanswered and unresolved questions.

III. Findings and Discussions

Findings

The findings obtained through semi-structured interviews are summarized into categories relating to the core themes of the study. The information was organized into three categories: conception of classroom assessment, procedures and assessment of language skills, and crucial problems and gaps related to English language assessment in school context. The outcomes of this research are discussed in this chapter.

Conception of English classroom assessment

As each of the five teachers in the research addressed individual elements of English classroom evaluation, they all had a very sound perception of it. Their conception suggested how assessment is fundamental both for instructors and learners' progression, and even that, while summative assessment seems to play a significant role in the education system; formative assessment has already begun in the education system.

R2 identified, for example, "*There is a significant association between teaching and assessment since the instructor can evaluate his or her learners by assessment, either summatively or formatively, such can have an observation of his or her efficiency.*"

"*Without assessment, education and learning cannot function,*" respectively R1 and R4 accepted. Formative assessment, according to all three teachers, is an important method for analyzing what kids understand and want to do. "*Through evaluation, I can detect the skills, what they'll do, and then I can specify further steps in the process,*" R1 added. He believes that summative assessment is a very official, systematic, and established procedure. "*Summative assessment*", according to R5, "*is a database that provides an overall image of the institution's achievement, and the outcome tells the guardians regarding the obstacles, achievements, and shortcomings. As a result, it provides a possibility for people to relate (schools, teachers, pupils, and guardians) in order to establish a connection.*"

Similarly, R3 mentioned that "*assessment empowers teachers to pinpoint pupils' hardships and focus on the future.*" *It is effective in influencing students' thoughts that contributes in the analysis of students' passion and performance.*"

The engaging role of assessment for learners was also underlined or appreciated by R5. "*Students may have a good judgment about their performance of what they have studied,*" she states, "*and they are strongly driven by assessment as students are willing to take hurdles, therefore it is a challenging task for them.*"

She also mentioned how vital it is for teachers to make arrangements. "*We can identify the weakness, how productive we are at instructing, and when we have any limitations, we can modify the process and set ourselves as teachers.*" She also noted, "*Assessment plays a major part in effective teaching.*" R4 went on to say that formative and summative assessment are completely dissimilar. In fact, he thought formative assessment was complicated and time-consuming. He did concede, meanwhile, that formative assessment could drag learners' new ideas and is an evolving process.

Procedures and assessment of language skills

The portion starts with the students' reading skills assessment by teachers, then moves on to the students' writing skills assessment, and finally, the students' listening and speaking skills assessment. It explains how English teachers can guide learners with their knowledge.

Reading is an effective way of learning a foreign language. The assessment of English language skills in Bangladesh is mostly centered on reading & writing skill abilities. The current reading assessment has experienced various alterations, according to the teachers.

R1 explains his strategies: "*Earlier in our day, teachers encouraged students to read aloud in the class.*" He further extended, "*But now we encourage our kids to read quietly because we feel it is more helpful to analyzing the book.*" R2 added "*There are some reading questions, for comparison purposes. True-false, multiple - choice questions, and gap filling with words are some of the exercises I use to practice responding to questions.*" Meanwhile, R4 commented, "*I arranged some comprehension for testing pupils' reading skills for analyzing reading skills. In the lecture, I present a concept to the children, involve them in tasks, collect feedback, and assess whether or not they have grasped the idea.*"

R3's viewpoint was related to that of the others. "*To attain the greatest outcome for testing reading skills, I choose a text book,*" he explained.

Meanwhile, teachers considered assessing writing skills as more challenging than assessing reading skills. When it comes to assessing writing, teachers need a huge amount of time and attention. Some instructors stated that they utilized verbal/written feedback to assess their learners' writing. Personal discussions are always recommended as a good way to examine and enhance students' writing skills.

R5 discussed how she had helped students with their writing by establishing a framework, pre-writing tasks, co - creative techniques, and reviewing on their work:

“For the purposes of assessing writing skills, let's assume it's an essay. When I first come to class, I announce the topic and gather some relevant information from their own personal experience. Then I attempt to identify the key features, write them down, and then see what they have to say about it. Afterward, I provide them certain instructions to assist them in writing appropriately, and then I team them up and provide each duo a subject to write on. As a result, you must work with this subject.” R2 specifically said that he used focused writing in English classes in majority cases. For assessing writing. All five teachers agreed that they always engaged themselves in discussions with the students first before involving them in deliberation. Two teachers (R1 and R5) noted that they occasionally recommended cross checking from the pupils. Another two teachers (R3 and R4) stated that guided writing was their favourite approach in the class and that it was an essential part.

Moreover, the practice of four skills is the foundation of the English language curriculum in Bangladesh's secondary schools. However, in practice, public tests are completely reliant on reading and writing. This could explain why the development of these two skills is given next to no emphasis by teachers. Despite the fact that they are not designed to evaluate listening and speaking abilities officially for the exam, all the teachers in this study claimed that they tried so in the class while instructing the English language.

R1, for example, stated, *“Learners in Bangladesh primarily acquire English in the class. In order to achieve certification expectations, they have a comprehensive national syllabus that must be completed throughout the year.”* He went on to say, *“Children mostly practice their speaking skill in class. They have few chances to practice their English beyond the class.”* In response to being asked to evaluate the students' listening skills, he stated, *“There are numerous listening sections in the book to help with listening skills. A teacher or student may read the entire slowly and clearly either one twice in class. The text is heard by learners. The teacher then writes certain inquiries on the board for them to evaluate, such as questionnaire, true or false answers, writing brief answers, descriptive answers, and the headline of the article. The pupils finish the activity, and the teacher collects the performance and provides assessment to the class. In this manner, the teacher evaluates the students' listening skills in the class.”*

“All four skills are represented equally in the language teaching and learning curriculum”, according to R5, *“however listening and speaking are still not incorporated in public exams. As a consequence, testing pupils' listening and speaking skills in a school setting is limited. Both of these skills are evaluated under the recently established School Based Assessment (SBA) approach.”* However, in response to a query of assessing speaking skills, R2 mentioned that the instructor can involve the children in group/pair conversation to develop speaking skills. Students can then express their opinions, perform their tasks, and represent them to the class in this manner. The instructor can also create a learning environment via telling a story. The tale is started by the instructor, and then it is completed by a class of students, with the instructor acting as a mediator. She described some of the tactics in detail:

“The instructor may also choose topic notes; learners will pick a number at randomly and openly discuss about it for 5-10 minutes. After completing the topic, the teacher will evaluate and provide constructive criticism. The instructor may occasionally organize a debate or presentation in the classroom/school to encourage learners to develop their English speaking skills.”

R3 elaborated: *“For speaking, we give children simple questions, they narrate imagery, practice conversation, storytelling, and exhibit their teamwork, individual assignments speaking, debating, and so on.”* Actually, it's the most challenging. Our children are nervous and don't want to talk in public because their pronunciation is pretty awful.”

To conclude, despite the absence of a listening and speaking skills analysis in the assessment, all the five participants in this study acknowledged that they tested listening and speaking skills inside the class. R1 stated that he observed the before and after listening tasks, encouraged children to listen, read the article aloud in classroom, made students complete the relevant data after listening, and then made recommendations. R2 stated that she used team conversations to assist learners improve speaking, while R1 said that he frequently arranged debate/presentation. R2 noted that she adopted a story-telling technique, and R3 said that he used pictorial representation to practice and evaluate speaking skills, either individually or collectively. They were able to improve listening and speaking in the school this way.

Specific assessment strategies that teachers apply in diverse circumstances were discussed by the teachers in this research. Some of these methods seemed to influence learners' development in a positive way. All the five teachers in the research stated that they hold one to one sessions or talked with learners in order to know and understand about individual deficiencies and provide guidance to help them to develop. They acknowledged that they discussed the issues in their classrooms with their colleagues and that they shared their perspectives and insights about assessment.

R1 and R4 revealed that they occasionally hold master classes to identify the problems that students are having in the class or elsewhere. R2, R3, and R4 continued by stating that by reviewing pupils' profiles, they also tried to identify them properly, learning about their strengths and weaknesses, and develop their interactions with them. They also decided to meet after the exam to analyze the questionnaire and set up some procedures

for scoring the answer sheets in their assessment. Furthermore, R2 and R1 revealed that they moderated the questions to ensure quality. These teachers said that they obtained information from the school. They added that there were a few students who continuously faced issues. They identified the student's past record and proceeded to provide guidance in order to fix this issue.

Challenges Teachers Face in Classroom Assessment

While assessing students in class, teachers encounter serious difficulties. Some of these difficulties are caused by learners' aptitude, some by students' and teachers' educational backgrounds, and yet others by structural problems.

Large classes were acknowledged as a key impediment to English language skills development and evaluation by teachers in this study. R2 noted, *"Some children are afraid and hesitant to engage because they come from a poor society"*. She claimed that the significant number of students in a class, as well as the interior space, created obstacles while assessing the kids.

Meanwhile, the competence level of the children was noted as a significant obstacle by two other teachers (R1 and R3). *"The lack of modern instructional tool"*, according to R1 and R3, *"is the biggest hurdle to assess students due to the highly variable levels of students, their level of knowledge, and the teachers' responsibilities."*

Other two teachers, R4 and R5, agreed that a limitation of class time is a challenge because they cannot finish everything, cannot review everyone's answers, and discuss everyone's activities. R2 shared similar opinions, claiming *"due to hectic schedule, teachers lack personal concentration and haven't the chance to examine writing tasks"*. R1 stated, *"teacher must accomplish the coursework within the time constraint due to the massive test pressure."*

Classroom assessment is extremely important for students' progress, according to all the five teachers in the investigation. Meanwhile, R1 believed, *"almost all secondary English teachers in Bangladesh prefer a conventional process, in which they speak their native tongue in classroom and emphasis on finishing the subject in the allotted time."*

He went on to say *"the education system and curriculum follow a collaborative model that emphasizes student-centered functions, interaction methodologies, and increased class participation. However, this is not portrayed in the ELT situation. The majority of the teachers are unskilled and inexperienced with CLT."*

He further added, *"Teachers', students', and guardians' mindsets can all be hostile."* Teachers find it difficult to deal in part because moving away from conventional techniques is generally difficult.

R5 remarked, *"Certain students do not want to learn effectively and instead place more emphasis on finishing the coursework and getting good grades on the tests"*. All five respondents believed that involving learners actively in the participatory learning method is challenging due to a lack of appropriate school environments, material resources, and modern teaching materials.

IV. Discussions

According to the study, current assessment techniques do not represent all components of the syllabus that focus on a consistent evaluation process. Similarly, assessment need not consider taking to account all relevant factors of crucial competencies, information, and concepts, as well as improvement in understanding and critical analysis.

Conception of English classroom assessment

The language curriculum in Bangladesh is dominated by summative assessment. While summative assessment is crucial for students' entire educational progress and evaluation, formative assessment has a significant impact on educational practices in the classroom. Nonetheless, all the teachers in the research stated that they relied heavily on summative assessments and do limited communication with students about the progress or with other instructors about the training throughout the teaching and learning activities.

Formative assessment, on the other hand, involves various types, ongoing evaluations of learner performance and comprehension within the curriculum. Teachers can then change their teaching strategies to enhance specified learning requirements as a consequence of the formative assessment process. Formative assessment is the most successful method for fostering good student performance, according to OECD (2006) studies. It's also fundamental in ensuring student outcomes equity and developing learners' "learning to perform" qualities.

According to Chappius&Chappius (2008), assessment is an ongoing constant procedure in which both instructors and learners can make judgments regarding next lesson steps based on formative assessment results. There is a significant alliance between teaching and assessment, according to all five teachers in this study. They discussed how evaluation and instruction complement each other. These teachers were conscious of the positive

evaluation purposes as well as the demands of their students. They stated that formative assessment allows pupils in the classroom to acquire more inventiveness.

Other researchers (Cowie & Bell, 1999) also stated that the concept of formative assessment is difficult for new or untrained teachers. This viewpoint was shared by all the participants in this research. Teachers' perspectives regarding evaluation can also have a role in fostering creativity, either positively or negatively. According to all the five respondents, implementing formative assessment is difficult because nowadays many teachers have only been trained in the conventional summative assessment.

Procedures and assessment of language skills

Despite the fact that the syllabus demonstrates the importance of practicing four language skills in various tasks, the study found that the teachers lack the knowledge to put them into practice. The outcomes of the research focused on teachers' current perceptions of the problems they confront while assessing language skills. In this study, all five teachers stated that they were using reading comprehension in the classroom test to measure reading skills. Learners receive instruction to read the book and fill out the questionnaire, after which the instructor gives commentary on the work. The five participants stated that they haven't even availability of direction which can guide them in understanding how to present a specific topic in the classroom. Furthermore, there is a short supply of instructional tools such as laptops, OHPs, and other tools that are required to keep students interested. The poor quality of the classroom setting in Bangladeshi secondary schools was reported in a series of surveys (Haq, 2004). Insufficient instructional tools and lack of professional efficacy were the reasons for poor teacher performance, according to Hamid's (2010) investigation with eight secondary schools. All five teachers in this study showed a good agreement in similar concern as the key impediment to adopt great teaching in the classroom.

In the textbook recommended by the NCTB, there are some supervised compositions and some creative writing activities for assessing writing (NCTB). Before beginning to write, the teacher should involve the children in a variety of free hand writing exercises. Learners first analyze, and after that write, then correct grammar and vocabulary, then rewrite, and finally complete the final text. Khan's (1999) study of 'Assessing writing' in the Bangladeshi setting, which was focused on 'writing composition' at the Higher Secondary level, revealed the pupils' lack of tactical ideas about writing skills. In this research, all the teachers mentioned that due to their job load, big class size, and class time, they are unable to engage students in creative written assignments. Aside from that, standard public examinations provide little or no opportunity for different writing assessment, and majority students sit down and answer the questions using basic memorization skills.

Although "The Curriculum and Syllabus Report" (NCTB, 2012) stated that "English is not a content-based subject rather it is a skill-based subject" and emphasized evaluation of the four language skills, all the five teachers in this study stated that exams are determined by two skills: reading and writing. Experts claimed that both teachers and pupils undervalue listening and speaking skills. Butler and Stevens (1997) recognized listening and speaking skills are essential components, highlighting the significance of increased student engagement in the development of these two abilities.

According to Hamid and Baldauf (2008), the poor standard of CLT techniques in Bangladeshi secondary schools is due to a lack of teacher confidence and insufficient classroom practice. Speaking is one of the most crucial abilities in acquiring second languages, according to other academics. According to Horak (1999), the majority instructors prefer to skip assessing speaking abilities because they believe this is complicated as well as time consuming in a large class. All the five teachers in this study addressed the need of including listening and speaking competencies in the assessment methods by assigning some marks for both school and public examinations.

Speaking skills is an important aspect in learning and instruction in Bangladesh, and students find it incredibly difficult to acquire because these abilities are not currently evaluated formally in examination. Unfortunately, most of classes are neither structured nor equipped to measure this skills. Apart from that, they lack audio/video and other materials. Despite the fact that the respondents in this study do not speak English fluently, they have the necessary competencies in grammar, reading, and writing. Oral evaluation appears to be avoided by them since it takes time and requires a lot of planning and practical help. Teachers, according the findings, must try and ensure that there would be enough activity in the classroom. Each skill should be assigned a score. It is possible to give a variety of listening and speaking resources. Then we'll be able to more effectively evaluate our students' listening and speaking abilities.

As per Mueller-Joseph (2007), classroom assessment leads to enhanced student engagement, analytic autonomy and self-determination for students, and the teacher's choice of how to examine and answer back to their (students') statistical information. Bangladeshi instructors rarely test speaking skills in the classroom, according to Begum and Farooqui (2008), instead emphasizing on finishing the course. In this study, all five teachers admitted that they engaged their pupils in a variety of programs while instructing in the classroom. Teachers

struggle to identify each student's basic knowledge, skills, and shortcomings due to the vast number of pupils in each class.

These findings corroborated previous findings. According to Black and Wiliam (1998a), feedback is the most important aspect of formative assessment. Feedback is effective in providing information in reaching the desired level of learning achievements. Williams (2001) emphasized the need of providing good feedback to students in order to help them achieve better. According to Wiggins (1993), feedback assists the students with meaningful information that upgrade their study, and according to Sadler (1989), both teachers and students may pinpoint their problems and determine the next strategies in teaching and learning. Teachers in this study stated that they do not have enough time providing constructive criticism to each and every learner. As a result, students lack the motivation to maximize their effectiveness without teacher feedback.

The Crucial problems and gaps related to English language assessment in school context

All five teachers in this investigation addressed a series of problems, including a shortage of facilities and experience, specifically if both instructors and learners are unlikely to participate in interaction classroom instruction. Time limitation and intellectual capacity and application seems to have been a difficulty for the teachers. Several instructors have been unable to get CLT certification, according to Hamid (2010), or those who have possessed insufficient perceptions of CLT as well as its implementation in the curriculum.

The mismatch of both the syllabus criteria and the current assessment tasks in the schools was also noticed by the respondents in this investigation. Aside from the fact that interactional practices to classroom instruction are encouraged, teachers struggle to communicate students throughout the demanded practices even though the majority individuals possess poor English vocabulary knowledge, a weak understanding of English grammar, and a complete absence of English fluency. As a result, the teachers in this study adopted different approaches to involve learners through any spoken speaking activities. According to the respondents, teachers possess negligible potentiality to be guided by the curriculum. Throughout this analysis, all the teachers noted that teachers are just unable to form instructional decisions beyond the framework established by the 'National Curriculum and Textbook Board.'

The concentration of curriculum policies must be on learning outcomes of students, as well as determining and making decisions based on the competencies of students are supposed to execute since a specific time span (Philips, 2000).

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to learn more about English teachers' perceptions about classroom assessment in Bangladeshi secondary schools. As per the findings, summative evaluation represents the largest language assessment method. It also reflects that formative assessment particularly influences learning chances for students to enhance their innovative thinking but teachers face difficulties in applying formative assessment procedures since there appear to be multiple legal obstacles to lesson planning. Teachers described the significance along with all language knowledge in the assessment, as well as the importance of promoting better classroom infrastructure for effective English teaching.

The analysis revealed that teachers were attempting to move away from the conventional methodology to a communicative path to classroom teaching. In the method of classroom instruction, there has been a progressive increase. The teachers integrated several teaching-learning techniques they adopted; it greatly assisted them in increasing the knowledge. For more effective learning, the teachers highlighted the significance of more student outcomes through multiple learning activities with peers task, group tasks, games, and presentation, as well as they identified that without some modifications in the initial assessment it would not resolve the doubt in the assessment criteria.

VI. Recommendations and Implications:

If long - lasting improvements in the assessment of a clear comprehension and techniques of evaluation is to be established, my study that identified a lot of issues that must be resolved.

Implication for pre-service and in-service teachers' education:

Continuous training and development programs for English teachers might be arranged to promote latest developments in English language assessment. Teachers completing their training can join their institution and run Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes on assessment. In secondary schools, a well language education program with an appropriate syllabus framework for measuring all four English language skills should be designed. Guidelines must be reinforced, and a greater effort in execution must be undertaken for meaningful reforms in English assessment in secondary schools.

Limitations:

This study has a limited sample size because it is completed in a city. It would be preferable if the samples came from the variety of locations, such as cities, towns, and rural areas. Only five English language teachers were chosen for semi-structured interviews and no teachers from other conventional (government controlled) schools were included in the investigation. The study could have different outcomes if there were other teachers from various categories were involved. No samples (individuals) from the students were chosen for this research. This could have provided more enlightening recommendations for improving English language classroom conditions in Bangladeshi high schools. The samples for this analysis were taken from a specific location. More wide - ranging samples from multiple sources, may have different outcomes. It is believed that the class observation could get some additional perspective into how English language instructors and learners interact, as well as how they adapt to certain feedback in the English classroom. Aside from this, academic engagement was not included in the survey, which may have offered valuable information about classroom context and the actuality of what happened between teachers and students.

Further research:

Many unsolved issues have emerged as a consequence of the findings of the research that must be investigated. More samples (individuals) from the governmental level may be included in a future research, which could bring new perspectives. A quantitative/mixed study involving a wide sample of students and teachers from several places in the country could provide deeper overview of the current English classroom assessment scenario in secondary schools in the Bangladesh.

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