

The Struggle to Teach in English: A Case Study in Bangladesh

Dr Sabrin Farooqui¹

Abstract

Considering the increasing importance of English in national modernisation, the government and the educational policy makers in Bangladesh have taken steps to bring changes in English language teaching. One of these attempts is to use English as the only language of instruction which requires teachers to use the target language exclusively while teaching in the class. This case study explores how teachers implement this top-down policy in classroom. It focuses on teachers' use of the language of instruction and shows there is a gap between policy imperatives and classroom realities. Data collected through classroom observation and a series of interviews with secondary English language teachers reveal that various contextual factors interact with teachers' use of English as the language of instruction as has been suggested in the textbook and the teachers' guide. This paper identifies several significant issues which need attention of the educational policy makers.

Keywords: Language of Instruction, Education in Bangladesh, Secondary Education, English Language Teaching

Introduction

Developing communicative language ability is the global goal of current English language education. Various attempts are made to achieve this goal since it is the language of knowledge as well as the language that equips students for the workforce.

Proficiency in English language is considered as an indicator of success also in Bangladesh. A good level of proficiency is a pre-requisite for getting a good job there.

¹ Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, 50 Princeton Circuit, Auburn, NSW 2144, Australia.
Email: sabrin.farooqui@sydney.edu.au, sabrinfarooqui@yahoo.com.au, Phone: (612) 83746678 (work), 0423750873 (mobile)

Regarding the importance of learning English language in Bangladesh, Imam (2005) reports: "In Bangladesh it is now essential for even factory worker, who earn less than the minimum wage, to know some English, the language of the labels on goods and packaging" (Imam 2005, p. 480).

The government along with the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and other educational organisations in Bangladesh have been putting efforts since 1990s to ensure the quality of English teaching in secondary education and increase students' level of English language proficiency (Chowdhury & Farooqui, 2012; Farooqui, 2008; Haider & Chowdhury, 2012; Hamid & Honan, 2012). The new curriculum of English language teaching was introduced as part of the English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) in 1998. This project set out to bring changes in textbook, examination and in-service teacher training. This new curriculum aimed at relocating the teaching and learning of English from a traditional grammar based approach to a function-based communicative approach. The textbook which has been published as part of this new curriculum in Bangladesh is the primary instructional resource utilised by teachers and students in language classrooms. A teachers' guide has also been published with the text to *guide teachers in teaching*. It is intended that teachers will follow the guide while teaching the text.

The importance of teaching English in English is articulated on the textbook and the teacher's guide. As Farooqui (2008) indicates that one of the main features of the curriculum is to use English as the only language of instruction. There is no option of using native language in any activity. In-service training has also been arranged for the teachers to facilitate better use of the new textbook effectively. It stresses the need for students to learn to communicate in English rather than to just master the structure of the language.

Although new curriculum is introduced to improve the quality of education, literature shows that classroom teaching does not always change according to curricular modifications and alterations (Li, 2001; Su, 2006; Wall & Alderson, 1993). Teachers receive training to implement the curriculum but various factors affect the implementation of teacher training.

This exploratory research will generate information about the ways the teachers in secondary level of Bangladesh actually teach in class and will investigate if the instructional language is influenced by contextual factors.

The aims relevant to the study reported here are centred on two main questions: i) What instructional language does an English language teachers use in an English mandated language classroom at secondary schools in Bangladesh? ii) What are the underlying factors for the teachers' particular language use?

The paper begins with a brief review of the English Language Teaching (ELT) context in Bangladesh. It then reports on contemporary research conducted on how contextual factors influence teachers' instructional language use and this is followed by an account of the research methodology. These all prepare the way for the main part of the paper which contains presentation and discussion of relevant data including interview extracts. In the final section, recommendations are made for the improvement of English language teaching scenario in Bangladesh.

Literature Review

Literature shows that teacher's English language proficiency level significantly impacts teaching (Nunan, 2003; Orafi & Borg, 2009) While exploring policies and practice in China, Nunan (2003) shows that the communicative approach which is the current trend of teaching English language cannot be applied properly due to a lack of teachers with a high level of proficiency in English. The situation is more serious in rural areas than it is in urban areas due to fewer proficient teachers in these areas. Nunan finds similar differences in the teaching practice in Malaysia. This study reflects findings by Orafi and Borg (2009) that show that teachers' language proficiency level cause problems practising speaking skills with students in Libya. "The new curriculum, though, aims to develop students' oral communication skills, teachers' own limitations in this respect are therefore problematic" (Orafi & Borg, 2009, p. 251). Nishino and Watanabe (2008) also find similar situation in Japan.

A significant number of research (Carless, 2004; Kang, 2008; Nunan, 2003; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shin, 2012; Su, 2006) have considered English language instruction policy in education. In a case study in Hong Kong primary school language classroom, Carless (2004) explores teachers' use of classroom language.

He explores teachers' target language use both for instruction and communication in the class and develops a contextualised picture of classroom language use with young foreign language learners.

The result shows that the quantity of target language depends on teachers' own proficiency, experience and beliefs rather than learners' language proficiency.

Opposite to what Carless found, the study conducted by Su (2006) shows that teacher's instructional language use depends on contextual issues rather than teacher's own proficiency. He explores the beliefs, classroom experiences and teaching experience of 10 teachers in English language class in elementary level in Taiwan and shows how the teachers perceive and implement the policy in the classroom, what positive and negative effect the new policy has in the classroom teaching. The interview and observation data reveal the difficulties teachers face in implementing the new language policy. They have to plan English classes with the constraints of a large class of students and with mixed level of proficiency, limited teaching hours and resources. Similar findings is reflected on a study conducted by Shin (2012) where he emphasises on the fact that a more important factor than the teacher's ability is to create school systems and school cultures that enable teachers to apply the teaching method they are trained to use. Data collected through questionnaires, interviews and critical incident report shows that the choice of instructional language is influenced by institutional constraints, school cultures and norms surrounding the teaching and learning of English, rather than the teacher's individual capabilities.

The English language proficiency of students also plays a significant role in teaching practices. In a case study of a Korean elementary school, Kang (2008) shows that teacher use both English and the first language for many pedagogical reasons among which her attention to her students' interest was main, which is in contrast to many studies (Carless, 2004; Shin, 2012; Su, 2006) which indicate that English language teachers' language use is mainly determined by teachers' proficiency in English.

There have been a few studies on classroom practice in Bangladeshi schools and in one of these studies, Haider and Chowdhury (2012) make an analysis of the current English curriculum and textbooks for the secondary grades and explore some aspects of current classroom practice. One of the findings of this study shows that out of 16 participant teachers, only two teachers were found using English as the medium of instruction throughout the lesson. This study shows that most of the participants use a mixture of both English and Bangla, the first language.

"Teachers had a tendency of slipping in to Bangla after starting a sentence in English" (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012, p.17).

The only reason mentioned in this study is teachers' poor proficiency level in English. "They prefer Bangla as a medium of instruction even for their English lessons due to their poor level of proficiency in English" (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012, p.18). Similarly, in another study conducted on primary education in Bangladesh, Hamid and Honan (2012) investigates classroom discourse and interaction, learning activities and teacher and learner behaviour in primary education. It was found that teachers use both Bangla and English while teaching English. In some cases, teachers start teaching in English but switch to Bangla after sometime.

The teacher-dominated pedagogy included such activities as the teacher reading from the textbook and explaining something in Bangla, the L1 and English, the L2. Although explanation in Bangla was observed at all stages of observation, explanation in English disappeared from the classes observed after the 15th minute. (Hamid & Honan, 2012, p.146)

In another relevant study in Bangladesh, Chowdhury and Farooqui (2012) provide information on the current development of language policy and language education in secondary level of Bangladesh. They take a critical look at current English language teaching policies of secondary education in Bangladesh. In particular it focuses on the factors that are influencing teachers' teaching practices and the extent to which these training programmes are functionally relevant in helping English language teachers use the new communicative textbook. Data from classroom lessons and teacher statements show that although teachers are aware of the new policy, they focus on their beliefs, personal experiences and immediate classroom priorities that influence daily lessons. They still teach following the traditional language teaching method and students are rarely asked to get involved in communicative activities. "It is interesting to note that their actions manifested nothing more than a faint allusion to their training" (Chowdhury & Farooqui, 2011, p. 157).

Little research has been carried out on the topic of how the contextual factors influence teachers' language of instruction in teaching English in Bangladesh.

There might be issues, other than the ones found in studies conducted in other Asian countries with similar teaching context.

Moreover, these above mentioned three studies in Bangladesh provide a picture of implementation of the new curriculum but none of them present the in-depth analysis of the reasons of teachers' choice of instructional language in secondary level. Certain issues related to teachers' language of instruction have not been explored in detail. For example, what language do teachers use while teaching English? Is it possible for the teachers to teach in English? If not, what obstacles do they have? Unless these areas are explored, it is not possible to get a complete understanding of the teaching method in response to the government's new policy regarding to teaching English in English to develop the English language competence of the students. In-depth investigation needs to be carried out through interviews and classroom observations in order to get the actual picture of teaching-learning situation of English language in Bangladesh. The paper addresses some of these issues.

Method

Within the qualitative orientation, a case study approach has been chosen for this study since it explores in detail teachers' use of instructional language in secondary level in Bangladesh and the reasons behind that. Punch (2005) states that a "case study aims to understand the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context" (p.144). Yin (2009) further argues that case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' and 'why' questions are asked (p. 4).

In order to provide a wider range of perspectives of teachers in different contexts, 26 teachers from 12 schools situated in urban and rural areas of Bangladesh were randomly selected as participants of this study. This sample is representative of teachers from diverse backgrounds (a profile of the participants has been provided in Table 1). Participants have been given pseudonyms in this paper in order to protect their identity.

Data were collected through interviews with teachers and observation of classroom lessons. Semi-structured interviews were held with the English language teachers of secondary level. Using semi-structured interviews allows the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues arising in the discussion (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Each teacher was interviewed twice, once before the observations of classroom teaching and once after that. Semi-structured classroom observation of classroom teaching followed the first interview.

The purpose of the classroom observation was to understand what language teachers use while teaching. Description of each activity was recorded on the observation sheet (see Appendix A). The pre-observation interviews were taken to gain some general understanding of teachers' teaching and learning experiences. The questions of post-observation interviews were constructed on the basis of what the author had observed. The interview helped deepen the author's understanding of the observed patterns in the teachers' English language use in class. A list of interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

Interview data was transcribed verbatim by the author. Transcripts were then imported into a software programme NVivo for qualitative analysis, and all of the raw data was related to a coding system electronically. As more data was analysed, the coding system itself was refined and adopted as necessary in response to new codes. Recurrent themes regarding the reasons of using the language of instruction were identified. The data reported here are drawn from a larger study conducted by the author where she investigated factors influencing various aspects of English language teaching in Bangladesh.

Findings

The new curriculum emphasises making English the language of instruction in order to develop the language skills of the students. It is emphasised in all the training programs but classrooms data show it is not used as the sole language of instruction to teach the textbook in the class. Teachers outside urban areas taught almost totally in Bangla, three teachers in the urban area taught in English in all their classes, while other teachers in the urban areas used both Bangla and English while teaching. After reading a passage from the text book, teachers translated it into Bangla and whenever they asked students any questions in English, they immediately translated that passage into Bangla. During the observation of the class of Amrin, a teacher in the urban area, was teaching Lesson 7 from the textbook (see Appendix D). The author found her teaching in English all the time but when she asked the students to do some activities from the main passage, none of the students understood. The teacher had to translate that into Bangla and only then could the students understand her instructions.

Teachers mentioned two reasons for using Bangla in the classroom – the language proficiency of the students and the language proficiency of the teachers themselves. These two themes have been discussed in detail in following section, making liberal use of quotations to enable exploring teachers' own voice.

Language Proficiency of Students

In many places students' low proficiency in English worked as a barrier for teachers in using English as the only language of instruction. Twelve participants mentioned that students' English language proficiency was too low to be able to understand teacher's instruction in English and therefore they chose to teach in Bangla. Observation shows that Rahman, a teacher of Dhaka city, taught in both Bangla and English. Later he said "Classes are held in both Bangla and English so that the students can comprehend better" (Rahman). Hafiz, a teacher with 13 years teaching experience in a rural school also said that the reason of teaching in Bangla was to make things comprehensible to the students:

According to the new textbook, we are supposed to teach in English in classroom. ELTIP training emphasised this point. After receiving the training, I started trying to take classes in English but I found that students could not understand me if I spoke in English. Gradually, I left the habit of teaching in English. If students cannot understand English, what is the point of teaching in English? (Hafiz)

Data showed that while teaching in the classroom, participant Shamim explained the meanings of the new words in Bangla. When he was asked the reason for that, he gave an example and said "'carols' means 'song' but it will be difficult for many students to understand the meaning if I say it in English" (Shamim).

Students' language proficiency is particularly low in rural areas and the socio-economic status of the students in rural areas appeared to be a major reason for the low proficiency of the students. Kabir, a teacher in the rural area, said that since students in these areas came from under privileged and uneducated poor families, they did not find anyone at home to help them learn English and they received little exposure to English language outside the classroom. "Students are from poor and uneducated family.

If they could learn English at home, they would have improved their proficiency in that language" (Kabir). Moreover, as argued by two other teachers of rural areas, since the parents in rural areas were poor, they could not afford to spend money for private tuition. In many situations, their son or daughter was the first person in their families to get the education.

Therefore, students did not find any place other than the school to develop their English language skills. Thus the socio-economic status of students created insufficient scope of practising English, especially in the rural areas and it contributed to teachers having to resort to Bangla as a medium of instruction in the classroom. This was voiced as a major issue of concern for all participant teachers in rural areas.

All of these above mentioned teachers compared students of rural areas with students of urban areas. According to these teachers, students of urban areas could be helped by their parents at home and since parents could spend money for private tuition of the children, students also found places outside school where they practised English. As participant Sunil commented

Students of rural area listen to English only when they are in school. They do not get any language input when they are home whereas the kids of urban area get help from their private tutors. Their educated parents can also help them with learning English. That's why their English language skill is more developed.(Sunil)

Teachers of rural schools also emphasised the fact that students' level of proficiency in English was particularly low in schools situated in rural areas of the country due to certain school administrative issues. Most of the students failed in Mathematics and English in primary level. Participant Ashish explained that the teachers still had to promote these students to secondary level because if teachers stopped promoting them, the parents would stop their education altogether. Schools could not run in such a situation and moreover, if they were not promoted, the parents would request the management committee to promote them to the next level and the committee would pressurise the teachers. Therefore the students who were not qualified enough kept getting promoted to the next level and in these ways students of rural schools could never improve their proficiency in English no matter which grade they were studying in. Teachers of rural areas considered these reasons as major hindrances in developing the proficiency of students in rural areas.

Language Proficiency of Teachers

A further barrier impinging on the target language use in Bangladesh relates to the language proficiency of the teachers. Teachers' own inability to speak in English worked as a hindrance to using English as a medium of instruction.

It appeared that teacher's academic background and their choice of profession caused such inability to use English language in classrooms.

Teachers' academic background is one of the main reasons of their low proficiency in English. Teachers were low earning people in rural areas which made people with good academic background reluctant about taking up teaching as a profession in these areas and this also worked as a reason for most teachers not being able to teach in English. Participants stated that school teachers are paid very low in Bangladesh. However teachers of urban areas could still supplement income by doing private tuition but teachers of rural areas did not often get any such opportunity as their students did not belong to wealthy families. Kabir, who had been teaching in a school in rural Comilla for 18 years said:

We don't have good teachers in these rural areas. Most of the teachers who teach English had only a course on English in Bachelor in Education (BEd). In this school, you cannot expect an English teacher who completed Bachelors with major in English. People with good academic background do not take teaching as a profession because teachers do not get good salary. These people opt for professions other than teaching. (Kabir)

Shamim said that often an English teacher was a graduate in a different subject and found it difficult to instruct students in English. He added that he did his undergraduate degree in Political Science and he never had to speak English in the class and so as an English teacher he found it difficult to speak English fluently to his students. In order to compensate for such lack of proficiency in English, teachers resorted to using Bangla as a more convenient medium of instruction, both for themselves and for their students. Administrative politics in rural schools seemed to be another reason behind the insufficient English skills of some teachers. Participants reported that in some cases people not qualified enough to become English teachers had been appointed since they received recommendation from local influential people.

These teachers found it difficult to teach in the English language. As Hafiz mentioned, the political leaders and rich people of the locality who were in charge of the School Management Committee (SMC), exerted a lot of influence in the recruitment of new teachers.

He noted that some of the teachers in rural areas were appointed on the basis of their good network with the influential people of the local community. Even if those teachers were not capable to teach, the Principal of the school had to retain them due to political reasons. The Principal could not dismiss them because such decision might implicate his/her job as member of the SMC, in that case, go against the Principal. Such administrative politics seemed to work behind appointing under-qualified teachers which implicated the teaching practices.

This section has shown that although the new curriculum emphasises the use of English as the language of instruction, observation notes revealed that teachers did not always use English in practice in the classroom. Interview data shows that the teachers' and students' low proficiency created barriers in using English in classrooms, a problem which originated from a range of socio-economic and political – administrative factors.

Discussion

The new curriculum emphasises that English should be the language of instruction. However, students' and teachers' low proficiency in English language significantly created barrier in using English as a medium of instruction in classrooms. Although all the training programs instruct teachers that English will be the only language of instruction in class, the data shows that the participant teachers in the urban area used both Bangla and English while teaching whereas the teachers outside urban areas taught only in Bangla. Most of the teachers pointed out students' low proficiency in English as the reason for teachers' use of Bangla as a language of instruction. If teachers taught in English, students would not be able to understand, so they did not use English while teaching.

Teachers' own low proficiency in English language also sometimes caused difficulties in instructing in English, particularly in rural Bangladesh. Their academic background worked behind such inability. As found in this study and mentioned earlier, there were no subject teachers in schools and any teacher could teach any subject.

No specific academic degree was formally required in order to be an English language teacher in schools of Bangladesh.

Such condition further made it difficult to expect teachers to instruct in English. As discussed earlier, Nunan (2003) found a similar situation in China and Malaysia where there was a dearth of teachers with a high level of proficiency in English language which resulted in difficulty in following the communicative method.

Regional Disparity

The study showed conspicuous difference in using English as the language of instruction between the rural and urban areas in Bangladesh. While teachers of urban areas used English and Bangla, the teachers of rural areas taught only in Bangla. Participants believed that there was a major difference in the skill levels between students of rural and urban areas. Teachers in rural areas could not teach in English because they thought that the students did not have the ability to understand English. Most of the parents were uneducated farmers in rural areas and in many situations, the student was the first person in his/her family to get the education. Students, therefore, did not get any help from their home or family, and school was the only place where they learned English. By contrast, in urban areas students received additional out-of-school help from their parents at home. They found places outside school where they could learn English and parents could also spend money for private tuition of the children. These reasons worked as hindrances in developing the proficiency of students in rural areas.

The academic qualifications of teachers themselves also varied greatly and this influenced their use of English in class. Nunan (2003) found the difference in teachers' proficiency level but his study did not explore their use of language of instruction. Hasan also (2004) found that teachers of urban areas in Bangladesh were more qualified than those of rural areas. However, he did not show whether differences in teachers' academic qualifications created any disparity in teaching practices. The current study shows that differences in academic qualification of teachers caused difference in their proficiency in the English language and created regional disparity in Bangladesh. People with good academic backgrounds were reluctant to teach in rural areas since teachers in these areas did not get the opportunity of doing private tuition whereas teachers in urban areas could supplement their income by doing private tuition.

Thus lower income made people with high academic profile unwilling to take teaching up as a profession especially in rural areas.

This study reflected what Hu (2005) found in China. He claimed that qualified teachers in China opt for teaching in cities and coastal areas since those areas offer better living standards, economic prosperity and better opportunities for teacher training. The current study further affirms that differences in the professional qualification of teachers can cause differences in teaching practice between two areas in the same country.

Conclusion

Pedagogical changes cannot be made ignoring the context within which they are to be implemented. Despite the government's efforts in arranging teacher training to teach the new curriculum effectively, there is at present a conspicuous disjunction between curriculum rhetoric and pedagogical reality in Bangladesh, rendering the teaching approach inappropriate or ineffective. This study provides an insight into the range of factors which do not allow the teachers instructing in English as has been suggested in textbook and teachers' guide. Initiatives need to be taken in order to improve this teaching-learning situation. The learner variables and the instructional variables should be considered to make a decision on adopting appropriate method. The success of English language teaching will depend on the government's commitment to work on contextual constraints and finding ways to overcome them as well as the international sponsors' commitment in responding to academic research in the field. It is hoped that the government of Bangladesh will take proper steps to eradicate the problems mentioned and make the teaching material more effective to improve the educational situation of the country.

Future Direction

The findings of this study help to identify in detail the factors that are influencing teachers' use of instructional language as has been suggested in the textbook and the teachers' guide and thus helps to obtain a deeper understanding of teaching style in schools across both urban and rural areas in Bangladesh. As well as validating previous literature on the impact of contextual factors on classroom teaching, it steps beyond it by identifying certain issues previously isolated as possible influential factors in research conducted in Bangladesh and other countries with similar context.

Furthermore, it makes in-depth investigation of how these factors have rendered the initiatives of the government futile in a variety of ways.

The study serves to increase the awareness of educational policymakers of bringing any change to the teaching approach and implementing it in countries with similar contexts. Further research is recommended involving more participants from various areas which might yield a more comprehensive picture of the teaching-learning situation of English in Bangladesh.

References

- Baldauf, R. B., Jr., Li, M.-L., & Zhao, S.-H. (2008). Language acquisition management inside and outside of school. In B. B. Kachru, Y. Kachru, & C. L. Nelson (Eds.), *Handbook of educational linguistics* (pp. 233–250). New York: Springer.
- Carless, D. R. (2004). A contextualised examination of target language use in the primary school foreign language classroom. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 104-119.
- Chowdhury, R., & Farooqui, S. (2011). Teacher training and teaching practice: The changing landscape of ELT in secondary education in Bangladesh. In L. Farrell (Ed.), *English language education in South Asia: From policy to pedagogy* (pp. 147-159). Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Farooqui, S. (2008). Teachers' perceptions of textbook and teachers' guide: A study in secondary education in Bangladesh. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 5(4), 181-200.
- Haider, M.Z., & Chowdhury, T.A. (2012). Repositioning of CLT from curriculum to classroom: A review of the English language instructions at Bangladeshi secondary schools. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(4), 12-22.
- Imam, S. R. (2005). English as a global language and the question of nation-building education in Bangladesh. *Comparative Education*, 41(4) 471-486.
- Hamid, M. O., & Honan, E. (2012). Communicative English in the primary classroom: Implications for English-in-education policy and practice in Bangladesh. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 25(2), 139-156.
- Hasan, M. K. (2004). A linguistic study of English language curriculum at the secondary level in Bangladesh: A communicative approach to curriculum development. *Language in India*, 4(8). Retrieved December 11, 2013, from <http://www.languageinindia.com/aug2004/html>
- Hu, G. (2005). Contextual influences on instructional practices: A Chinese case for an ecological approach to ELT. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39 (4), 635-660.
- Kang, D. (2008). The classroom language use of a Korean elementary school EFL teacher: Another look at TETE. *System*, 38, 214-226
- Li, D. (2001). Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. In D. R. Hall & A. Hewings (Eds.), *Innovation in English language teaching: A reader* (pp. 149-165). London: Routledge.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G.B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4thed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nishino, T., & Watanabe, M. (2008). Communication-oriented policies versus classroom realities in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(1), 133-138.
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37 (4), 589-613.

- Orafi, S. M. S., & Borg, S. (2009). Intentions and realities in implementing communicative curriculum reform. *System*, 37, 243-253.
- Punch, K. F. (2005). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative Approaches* (2nded.). Thousand Oaks; CA: Sage.
- Shin,S.(2012). It cannot be done alone: The socialization of novice English teachers in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(3), 542-567.
- Su, Y. (2006). EFL teachers' perceptions of English language policy at the elementary level in Taiwan. *Educational Studies*, 32 (3), 265-283.
- Wall, D., & Alderson, C. (1993).Examining washback: The Sri Lankan impact study.*Language Testing*, 10(1), 41-68.
- Yin, R. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). LA: Sage.

Table 1: Profile of Participants

Name*	Age	Gender	Teaching Experien	Area of School	Academic Degr	Training Degrees**
Anisur	42	M	10	Urban	BA, MA	BEd, ELTIP, ELT
Shamim	33	M	5	Urban	BA, MA	BEd, ELTIP, ELT
Amrin	36	F	11	Rural	BA, MA	BEd, MEd, ELTIP
Rubaba	55	F	22	Rural	BA	BEd, ELTIP
Lokman	58	M	35	Rural	BA	BEd, MEd
Akbar	34	M	9	Rural	BA	BEd
Sunil	52	M	21	Rural	BA	BEd, ELT
Jamil	51	M	20	Rural	BA	BEd,
Ayasha	38	F	11	Urban	BA, MA	BEd
Anjali	52	F	27	Urban	BA, MA	BEd, ELT
Ashish	40	M	10	Rural	BA	BEd, ELTIP
Belal	58	M	14	Rural	BA	BEd
Bashar	47	M	20	Rural	BA	BEd, CEC
Kabir	43	M	18	Rural	MA	ELTIP, ELT
Ramia	40	F	10	Urban	MA	BEd, SBA
Asif	45	M	15	Urban	MA	BEd, BELT, ELTIP
Sharif	42	M	10	Urban	MA	BEd,ELTIP, ELT
Wadud	43	M	15	Urban	MA	BEd, ELTIP
Sajjad	40	M	12	Urban	BA, Graduate Di	BEd, MEd
Hafiz	42	M	13	Urban	BA, MA	BEd, SBA
Monowar	62	M	41	Urban	BA	BEd
Jalal	53	M	27	Urban	BA, MA	BEd, ELTIP
Hanif	56	M	29	Urban	BA	BEd
Rahman	30	M	3	Rural	BA, MA	BEd
Rahela	56	F	24	Rural	MA	BEd, CEC
Aref	31	M	4	Rural	MA	ELTIP

Note: *Pseudonyms are used throughout the article.

** CEC= Communicative English Course, SBA= School Based Assessment.

BEd (Bachelor in Education) and MEd (Master in Education) are one-year training programs in Bangladesh and are considered as more of a 'training degree' rather than an 'academic degree'.

Appendix A: Classroom Observation Instrument

Name of the institution :
 Teacher's name :
 Number of students in class :
 Date :
 Time :

Observational Criteria	Medium of Instruction			Remark (If any)
	Fully in English	English- Bangla Mixed	Fully in Bangla	
Warm-up session Activities: 1. 2. 3.				
Main topic Activities: 1. 2. 3.				
Follow-up activity Activities: 1. 2. 3.				

Appendix B: Sample interview questions

Background Information

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. How long have you been teaching in this school?
3. May I know about your educational qualification?

New English Curriculum

1. What idea do you have about the new English curriculum?
2. What is your perception of the new textbook?
3. Have you got the teachers' guide?
4. What is your perception of the teachers' guide?
5. What type of professional development opportunities have been provided to you as a result of the reform?

Classroom Activities

1. What are you going to teach in class today?
2. How are you planning to teach the lesson?
3. What language will you use while teaching?
4. What are reasons behind the planning?

Appendix C: Sample of a Lesson in the Textbook

English For Today 159

Lesson 7

Exam fitness

Objectives: By the end of the lesson you will have

- looked at an exam schedule and asked questions about it
- read a text and written down expressions
- made a list of tips that are mentioned in the text
- listed the tips you follow and matched with your partner's
- designed a poster

A Look at the exam schedule and ask your partner the following questions.

Days and Dates	Subject	Time
21 July Monday	Bangla	8-10:30
22 July Tuesday	history	8-10:30
23 July Wednesday	English language	11-1:30
24 July Thursday	English Literature	11-1:30
27 July Sunday	maths	8-10:30

What is the exam before the English Language exam?

How long is the English exam?

When is the Maths exam?

B Read the following text and guess the meanings of the underlined words.

Exam strategies

Strategy is an appropriate word to use for your approach to the examination on the day. It has been said that about 50 percent of your chances of success relate to your examination skill rather than to your subject knowledge.


So check and double-check your exam dates and times. Check what you are allowed and what you are not allowed to take in with you and have these ready the day before.

Budget your time. Do not waste time elaborating adequate answers if you ought to be moving to the next question. Always attempt to answer all the questions.

Follow the instructions. It is a good idea to double-check this before the exam. Read through the whole question paper before starting to write. Take each question as you come to it and think how you might cope with it. Then move on to the next question and do the same again.

By the time you get to the last question, you will have found the questions easier than they seemed at first glance. Spend at least five minutes per question thinking about and planning your answer. This is never a waste of time.

Underline the key words in the questions that indicate what you are required to do. Again, it is useful half way through writing the answer, to check back that you are doing what you should. Make your answer legible. You can't change your handwriting but if it is very tiny or very large use double spacing to make it easy on the eye for the reader.



English For Today 160

C Use the underlined expressions in the appropriate blank.

- 1 This is a new _____ to language teaching.
- 2 One should _____ one's writing before submitting it.
- 3 The place looked beautiful _____.
- 4 You don't need to _____ your cause in an application.
- 5 You are _____ to submit your certificates.
- 6 He has to _____ the document before signing it.
- 7 Once you are _____ the exam you should recheck your timing.

D Read the text on exam strategies again and make a list of the tips that are mentioned. One is done for you.

Tip 1

Use your time wisely in the exam. Plan how much time you will spend on each question you are answering.

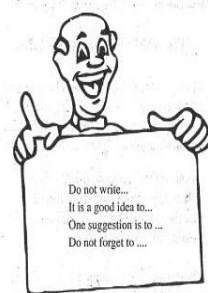
Tip 2

Tip 3

E Now write down which of the above tips you follow when you are taking an exam. Then ask your partner which of the above tips s/he follows. Match your answers. For example,

1 I read all the questions before I start writing but my partner doesn't.

2 My partner always keeps extra pens but I don't.



Do not write...

It is a good idea to...

One suggestion is to ...

Do not forget to ...

F Design a poster mentioning some of the exam tips you think your friends should follow. You can use the given expressions.