

A Comparative Analysis between Rural and Urban Students’ Performance in Speaking English at the SSC level in Bangladesh

**[A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Philosophy]**

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Performance in Speaking English at the SSC level in Bangladesh**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this M.Phil thesis entitled ‘**A Comparative Analysis between Rural and Urban Students’ Performance in Speaking English at the SSC level in Bangladesh**’ is submitted to the Department of English, University of Dhaka in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Philosophy. I have completed this research work under the supervision of Dr. Tazin Aziz Chaudhury, Professor, Department of English, University of Dhaka. This research report is based on original research findings.

I also state that I have not submitted this thesis either in full or in part in any other form to any university or institution for any degree or any other purpose.

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Certification

This is to certify that the thesis entitled ‘A Comparative Analysis between Rural and Urban Students’ Performance in Speaking English at the SSC level in Bangladesh’ is submitted to the Department of English, University of Dhaka in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Philosophy. This is an original research work done by Fatema Akter, registration number-111, session 2016-2017, under my guidance and supervision. I hereby certify that the research work has not been used for any other purpose or the thesis has not been submitted to any other university or institute for any degree.

I further certify that this original research work is worth submitting to fulfill the requirements of the above-mentioned degree.

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Abstract

English has achieved the status of most learned and studied language in the world. In Bangladesh, English is taught as a subject from primary to higher secondary level and the objective of the curriculum in secondary level is to develop learners' communicative competence. Among the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), speaking is one of the most fundamental skills for achieving communicative competence. The development of learners' speaking skill is influenced by several factors. This study aims at finding out the institutional, socio-economic, affective and linguistic factors that impact the development of speaking skill at the SSC level in Bangladesh. Besides, it makes a comparative analysis between rural and urban students' performance in speaking English as well as determines the reasons behind the difference in speaking performance. The study was conducted in mixed method approach by following convergent parallel design. The data were collected from 10 ELT classroom, 200 students and 20 teachers of secondary schools in Noakhali district and Dhaka city. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using questionnaires, speaking test, semi-structured interview and classroom observation checklist. The quantitative data was analyzed by using Microsoft Excel, SPSS 25 Version, and AMOS 26. Besides, simple statistics like frequency, mean, and percentage have been employed throughout the study. The qualitative data was analyzed using both content analysis and thematic analysis approach. The findings from the data analysis reveal that though socio-economic, affective and linguistic factors have influence in the development of speaking skill, institutional factors play the most influential role in developing learners' English speaking skill at the SSC level in Bangladesh. Besides, the findings also affirm that the urban students do better than the rural ones in speaking performance. The main reasons of the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance are differences in teachers' qualification, training, and English language proficiency; learners' own linguistic knowledge and psychological issues; parents' education and income; and institutional facilities. The study concludes with some recommendations for the teachers, students, administrators and parents considering the findings of the study and some suggestions for further studies based on the limitations and findings of the study.

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List of Abbreviations

BA: Bachelor of Arts

B. Com: Bachelor of Commerce

B.Ed.: Bachelor of Education

BIAM: Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management

CPD: Centre for Policy Dialogue

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ELTIP: English Language Teaching Improvement Project

ESL: English as a Second language

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

MA: Master of Arts M.B.A: Master of Business Administration

M.Ed.: Master of Education

M.Sc.: Master of Science

MSS: Masters in Social Science

NAEM: National Academy for Education Management

NAPE: National Academy for Primary Education

NAPE: National Academy for Primary Education

SEQAEP: Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project

SSC: Secondary School Certificate

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

As an international language, English is used for global affairs and is learnt worldwide by a great number of people. In many countries, English is considered a second language and in some countries, English is learnt as a foreign language. According to Farooque (2007), English is still considered as a foreign language in Bangladesh and used for various internal trades and global business. 95% of people in Bangladesh speak Bangla for daily communication. At the same time, it is expected to have proficiency in the English language as students learn English from class I to XII. The communicative Language Teaching method was initiated in Bangladesh in the year 1998-1999 so that the learners from classes one to twelve could develop communicative competence in English. All the language skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) are supposed to receive equal importance in the classroom according to the goal of the curriculum but the reality in Bangladeshi classrooms is different. In the English class, speaking activities are rarely practised, especially in rural schools. As a result, most of the learners cannot communicate in English.

Proficiency in English is essential in every field like science, technology and business in the modern world. That is why the importance of spoken English is not limited to communication with the outside world. Besides, candidates having higher command over the English language are the top priority in different job markets inside Bangladesh. Adequate knowledge of English is also essential for pursuing higher education inside or outside the country. “It is universally acknowledged that English is the lingua franca of the world. English proficiency is the key to ensuring access to education, business and technology. The more than 150 public and private universities in Bangladesh do use English as the medium of instruction at the tertiary level” (Naik, 2018). However, it is a matter of great regret that most of the learners are not able to communicate in English even after completing the higher secondary level. To develop English communicative skill, learners face different challenges in Bangladesh. According to Mridha & Muniruzzaman (2020), ‘Students’ phobia for English speaking, interference of mother tongue, the negligence and inefficiency of teachers in the classroom, students’ fear and shyness, absence of natural and contextual conversation in the classroom, no test of speaking and listening in the public examination etc. are the main barriers to develop speaking skill in

Bangladesh. Besides, students' callousness to the practice of conversation in different contexts, learners' failure to internalize the necessary amount of vocabulary during speaking, unfavourable environment, learners' fear and hesitation, teachers' authoritative rules etc. also contribute to the lack of competency in speaking skills.'

There are also some factors which affect learners' speaking performance. Some factors are related to learners themselves; some are related to the social-economic contexts and some others are related to the educational institutions. "Due to resource constraints and poor socio-economic conditions, the overall standard of the education system of Bangladesh is not up to the mark. In contrast to the city areas, the rural areas are much more lagging behind, though the majority of the students are studying at rural schools" (Alam, 2018). Like in other subjects, most of the rural learners are also weak in English. They cannot achieve the English Proficiency that is required in the curriculum. Learners from urban areas have comparatively better knowledge of English than those from rural areas. Urban students are ahead of rural students in proficiency in all subjects including Mathematics and English, and the lack of qualified teachers for these subjects is the key reason behind this (Abdullah, 2023). This study has dealt with the factors that influence learners' English-speaking skill development. It has also found the difference between rural and urban students speaking performance and the reasons behind the difference.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

One of the major purposes of learning a language is to be able to communicate by using the learned language. That is why speaking and listening are the most important skills to achieve communicative competence. Besides, to achieve communicative competence, a learner should have adequate knowledge of vocabulary and its use in appropriate situations, correct pronunciation and accurate sentence structure. However, most of the secondary-level students in Bangladesh cannot speak accurately because they do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge. Students face different linguistic problems such as lack of vocabulary, confusion about the appropriate use of words, lack of grammar knowledge, poor listening ability and poor pronunciation. Ur (1996) found that learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts. Juhana (2012) revealed in a study that psychological factors such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and lack of motivation hinder students from speaking in English classes. In Bangladesh, the

learners' speaking performance is also influenced by similar types of linguistic and affective factors. Chawdhury and Shaila (2013) found that the SSC and HSC level students feel shy, less confident, stressed and afraid of peer criticism in speaking English. Besides, learners' speaking performance is influenced by factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015). Moreover, learners' speaking skill can be influenced by their socio-economic and institutional factors.

Previous studies suggest that students from both rural and urban areas face different problems while developing English speaking skills. English is widely used for communication but following the study of the literature, it was identified that most of the teachers and learners of rural areas do not know about the importance of learning to speak English. Learners do not want to learn spoken English as it is not tested in their examination and there are no marks on speaking practice. Besides, they do not feel the necessity of achieving English-speaking skills as there is no demand for using English as a means of communication in their social context. Besides, most of the parents from rural areas are not aware of their children's education and they cannot provide extra tuition facilities to their children. Moreover, most of the teachers of rural schools are not skilled and trained enough to apply the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in the classroom to develop learners' communicative competence. Teachers use their mother tongue (Bangla) to teach English in most of the rural schools. Even some English teachers cannot speak English fluently and accurately. In that case, these teachers can't teach the English language effectively. According to Islam (2020), to achieve the goals, objectives, and outcomes of English courses at all levels, authorities should recruit experts who possess subjective knowledge, target language proficiency, the ability to design lessons and the capability to develop effective methods of assessment. In addition, the rural schools cannot provide the logistic support and infrastructural facilities that are required to teach speaking English. According to Ahmad et al., (2005), 'costs of education and quality of education vary widely between urban and rural areas'. Similarly, the students from rural schools are not as adroit in the English Language as the students from urban schools are because the urban students get more opportunities to learn English in a supportive environment. According to Rahman (2015), 'the majority of students who have passed SSC have not enough proficiency in the English language. The curriculum emphasizes English language teaching extensively but the achievement of English by the learners is not standard, especially in rural areas.' There are several factors which are responsible for the difference in speaking performance between the students of rural and urban areas. As about 61.05% of people of Bangladesh live in rural areas,

the objective of the English curriculum which is to make learners communicatively competent will remain unfulfilled if more than half of the total students lagged. Therefore, the study is entitled “A Comparative Analysis between Rural and Urban Students’ Performance in Speaking English at the SSC level in Bangladesh’.

1.3 Objective of the study

The general objective of the study is to develop SSC-level learners’ English speaking skills indiscriminately find out the reasons behind the difference in spoken English performance between rural and urban students and finally minimize this difference. The specific purposes of the study are:

- To identify the linguistic, affective, socio-economic as well as educational institution-related factors that affect the development of English speaking skills of the SSC level students in Bangladesh
- To compare between rural and urban students’ spoken English performance at the SSC level
- To find out the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students’ performance in spoken English

1.4 Rationale of the study

Though the position of English as an official language has declined, its actual importance and number of speakers have increased rapidly after World War II (Baugh and Cable, 2005). Now it is not used as the official language of many countries but it is one of the most common lingua franca which is taught as a second or foreign language in many countries of the world. In Bangladesh, English is also taught as a compulsory subject from primary to higher secondary level. According to the National Education Policy 2010, one of the objectives of secondary education is ‘to develop a learner with competencies so that s/he can compete in the job market, especially in the economic sector of the country’. Among other competencies, communicative competence is one of the most important priorities in the job field. Most multinational companies, business institutions, and even government offices recruit candidates who possess communicative competence both in Bangla and English. So, being able to communicate in English is the main objective of learning English. That is why, the book for secondary education ‘English for Today’ is designed based on the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method that focuses on all four basic skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

At the secondary level, English reading and writing skills are more or less practised in the classroom. But the problem is that speaking and listening skills receive little or sometimes no attention in the classroom. The researcher has chosen one skill in this study and that is English speaking skill. Most of the students at the SSC level in Bangladesh cannot speak English accurately and fluently because they face different linguistic problems. These linguistic problems create difficulties in achieving students' accuracy and fluency in speaking English. Though most of the previous research focus on non-linguistic or affective factors like, learners' fear, anxiety, low motivation, etc. that influence learners' development of speaking skill, linguistic factors related to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are often ignored in the case of the speaking skill. So, besides the affective factors, the researcher has decided to find out the linguistic factors that influence the development of learners' speaking skills at the SSC level in Bangladesh. Moreover, the socio-economic status of the learners and educational institutional factors that influence the development of speaking English will also be identified in this study. Alrasheedi (2020) identified that different psychological, linguistic, and sociocultural factors impact the speaking performance of university-level English language learners in Saudi Arabia. Rani (2020) discussed the significant factors, e.g. lack of systematic support, anxiety, learners' ineptness, the impact of mother tongue, rural background, social class, and paucity of interesting methods for speaking skills by teachers in the tertiary level of Bangladesh. Very little research has been done on the factors influencing the speaking skills of SSC-level learners in Bangladesh. This research has also tried to find out the difference in speaking performance by the SSC level rural and urban students and the reasons behind the difference. According to Mou (2008), almost 80% students of in rural areas have a low proficiency level in speaking. Many students have good expertise in reading and writing but cannot speak accurately and fluently. Few researches have been conducted on the differences between rural and urban students' academic performance and their overall English proficiency. However, from the review of the literature, no research has been found specifically on the differences between rural and urban students' speaking performance at the SSC level. Therefore, this study has attempted to address these unexplored issues.

1.5 Significance of the study

Speaking is the most important skill among the four skills as the main purpose of learning a language is to communicate through it. In Bangladesh, the subject of English has the highest importance in teaching as a foreign language (Sadek et al., 2006). As English is a foreign language in Bangladesh, it is not easy for the learners to develop English-speaking skills.

Learners face different problems during developing the skill as different factors influence their speaking skill development. Although numerous studies have been done abroad on speaking skills, only a few studies have been conducted in the context of Bangladesh. However, these studies do not make any comparison between the rural and urban students' performance in speaking English at the SSC level. Besides, most of them focused only on the urban schools. This study focuses on both urban and rural learners' speaking performance, and it will make a comparative analysis of their performances in speaking. As both students' and teachers' opinions are explored in this study and classrooms of both rural and urban areas are observed for the study, it reveals the real scenario of English teaching at the SSC level in rural and urban schools of Bangladesh. The findings of this mixed method study will help the English teachers and students to take necessary steps to improve students' English-speaking performance. From this study, the school authority will be able to know about the shortcomings of logistic supports and infrastructural facilities in their institutions and take necessary initiatives. Through factor analysis, parents will also be able to know their roles and influences to develop their children's English speaking skills. This study will provide some suggestions for the teachers as well as for the students to improve their speaking skills. So it will guide the English teachers in using proper techniques and activities for developing learners' speaking skills. The findings from the classroom observation will help the teachers to understand their strengths and weaknesses and also the importance of teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions in developing a supportive and friendly environment which is essential to motivate students to speak in English. Furthermore, the study will help planners and education managers in policy formulation on how they can mitigate the differences in facilities between rural and urban schools. In conclusion, it is expected that the findings of the study will be helpful to the curriculum committee, textbook writers, English language teachers, teacher trainers, head teachers and students in general.

1.6 Research questions

The central research questions of the study are:

1. What are the factors that affect secondary-level students' English-speaking skill development?
2. Is there any difference between rural and urban students' performance in speaking English at the secondary level? What are the reasons behind the difference?

1.7 Scope and limitations

In the globalization and communication era of the 21st century, the learners must have English language proficiency, especially in Spoken English. As English is a foreign language in Bangladesh, both students and teachers face different challenges in developing English-speaking skills in the classroom. That is why, the factors that affect the development of learners' speaking skills are needed to be addressed. This study also hoped to shed light on the difference between rural and urban students' performance in speaking English and also the reasons behind the difference. As speaking is one of the most important skills of language learning and the objective of the English curriculum at the secondary level is to make the students communicatively competent, this study will create a lot of scopes to explore in the area of spoken English in Bangladesh. In addition, this study hoped to contribute to the field of research on teaching English speaking in rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. The study was conducted in five rural schools in Noakhali district and five urban schools in Dhaka City in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, all the secondary schools have the same English curriculum, and similar institutional rules and regulations but there are also variations among the secondary schools based on the regions, schools' positions, infrastructural and logistic support, and number of students, qualifications of the teachers as well as training of the English teachers. As this study was conducted only in two districts, the results of the research cannot describe the entire picture of English language teaching in Bangladesh. Besides, only the students of SSC level (IX-X) have been included in this study, and therefore it cannot provide the full picture of secondary schools. Moreover, the researcher has focused only on speaking skill but to achieve communicative competence learners also need to learn listening skill which is not included in the study. In addition, data were collected from both teachers and students during class time so sometimes teachers were too busy to provide necessary information for the research. Though the students were interested in taking part in the data collection process through the questionnaire, they were not willing to participate in the English-speaking test which was mandatory for the objective of the research. The researcher had to spend time with them to make them comfortable and motivated to participate in the speaking test. Finally, when the students got to know about the objectives and ethics of this study, they willingly participated in the speaking test.

1.8 Ethical consideration

A researcher should consider the ethical issues in every step of the research process from the beginning to its completion and dissemination. Compared to any other steps of research, data collecting, reporting, and report distribution are more intimately tied to ethical considerations.

(Creswell, 2008). The researcher obtained permission from the headmasters of the schools and the English teachers. The names of the schools and participants were confidential and pen names were used instead of the real names. For collecting data from classroom observation, the researcher obtained permission from the respective class teachers and students and discussed about the purpose of the study, the ways data would be used and the positive consequences of the study. The participants were ensured about their ability to be withdrawn from the study at any point if they felt unsafe thereafter. Besides, the findings of the study were not altered during reporting. Moreover, proper citations were maintained by the researcher and data were not used from another study without reference. The researcher has also decided to publish the findings of the study in a recognized journal so that educators and future researchers can utilize the existing knowledge related to the field.

1.9 Definitions of terms used in the thesis

Communicative Language Teaching: Communicative Language Teaching is one of the popular methods of language teaching which aims to develop learners' communicative competence. It focuses on learners' ability to communicate outside of the classroom, and teachers use different techniques and tools like role-playing, pair work, and group work to develop the ability.

Communicative competence: Communicative competence means the ability to communicate and it includes learners' linguistic competence, strategic competence, socio-linguistic competence and discourse competence.

Curriculum: A curriculum is designed for any level of education and it is a written document that contains the entire plan of teaching-learning including the objectives, topics, teaching techniques, and assessment procedures.

Foreign Language: A language which is not normally used for communication in a particular society. English is a foreign language in Bangladesh, and Spanish is a foreign language in Germany.

Learning: Learning is a deliberate attempt to internalize the rules and formulas which are used to communicate in the second language. Krashen uses this term for formal learning in the classroom.

National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB): NCTB is the autonomous organization which is responsible as the highest authority for developing and revising curriculum, textbooks, and other teaching-learning materials for all levels of education in Bangladesh.

Performance: Performance is the ability to do something practically, using the achieved knowledge. Here, it refers to learners' ability to speak correctly and fluently.

Rural Students: In this study, Rural students are those students who study in schools which are situated outside of the City Corporations, Municipalities (Paurashavas), Upazila Headquarters, Cantonment and the entire Mauza of the Growth Centers.

Second Language: A second language is used for certain communicative functions in a society though it is not the mother tongue of the society. Thus, English is a second language in India.

Speaking skill: Speaking skill is defined theoretically as an interactional process of building meaning that constitutes producing, receiving and processing meaning. In this study, speaking skills indicate the SSC-level students' ability to convey information and express feelings successfully by maintaining both fluency and accuracy in pronunciation, grammar and word choice.

SSC level: SSC means Secondary School Certificate. In this study, SSC level students indicate the students of grades 9 and 10 as the SSC exam takes place based on these two grades.

Syllabus: A syllabus is a plan showing the contents to be studied in a particular course, especially a course that leads to an exam.

Urban Students: Rural students refer to those students who study in schools within the City Corporations, Municipalities (Paurashavas), Upazila Headquarters, Cantonment and the entire Mauza areas of the Growth Centers.

1.10 Research Framework

This study consists of five chapters. An overview of the chapters is given below:

Chapter One: The first chapter describes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, rationale of the study, significance of the study, research questions of the study, ethical consideration of the study, scope and limitations of the study and definitions of the terms used in the study. Besides, the research framework has also been presented in this chapter.

Chapter Two: This chapter starts with an introduction to the chapter and then follows with the history of the English language in Bangladesh including the present status of English. Then it describes the National Education Policy, the secondary level of education and the English Curriculum the secondary education as well as the present scenario of English-speaking skill at the SSC level in Bangladesh. The background of the speaking skill which includes the definition, characteristics, functions, components and micro-skills of speaking and the principles of teaching the speaking skill and speaking activities are also described. This chapter then presents the rural and urban concepts including the rural and urban disparity and difference in the performance of speaking English. Finally, this chapter reviews the related studies and presents the conceptual framework of this study.

Chapter Three: This chapter begins with the introduction of the chapter and describes the methodologies of the study in terms of the design of the study, population, sample size and sampling technique, instruments of the study, the pilot testing of the instruments, the validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures, the data analysis technique, as well as the triangulation of the findings of the study.

Chapter Four: This chapter presents the analysis of data according to the responses of teachers, students and observations of classrooms. This chapter first presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the learners, then the analysis of the quantitative data from questionnaires and finally the analysis of qualitative data which are collected through classroom observations and teachers' interviews.

Chapter Five: This chapter includes an introduction that is followed by the major findings from the study. Then it presents the discussion of the study concerning the previous studies of a similar nature carried out inside or outside Bangladesh.

Chapter Six: This chapter presents the conclusion of the study based on the analysis, findings, and interpretation of the data that were collected. At the end of the chapter, it offers some recommendations for the teachers and students as well as some suggestions for further studies.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the related literature within the area of the study. The researcher has reviewed the previous research in the area of the present study thoroughly. Besides, the researcher has gone through different sources of information such as books, articles, thesis papers, reports, the national education policy of Bangladesh (2010), the national curriculum (2012), the national curriculum framework (2021), etc. and has reviewed the issues which are related to the objective of the study. The history of the English language in Bangladesh and the status of English in Bangladesh are presented at the beginning of the chapter., this chapter includes the appraisal of Bangladesh Education Policy-2010, English Curriculum-2012, English Curriculum framework-2021 and English Language teaching at the secondary level of education in Bangladesh. Then different issues of the speaking skill are presented, such as characteristics of speaking, functions of speaking, major components and micro-skills of speaking, principles of teaching the speaking skill, challenges of the speaking skill, factors influencing the speaking skill development, etc. Moreover, the study focuses on the rural and urban concepts including the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students in students' performance in speaking English. In addition, previous studies on English-speaking skills in the Bangladeshi context and the context of other countries were reviewed. Finally, the conceptual framework of the study is presented in this chapter. The researcher examined the relevance, credibility and reliability of the sources before reviewing them. The main areas of the literature review were the factors that influence speaking skill development, the difference between rural and urban students' performance in English-speaking skills and the reasons behind the difference.

2.2 The history of the English language in Bangladesh

2.2.1 English in the Colonial Period (1857-1947)

The journey of the English language in the Indian subcontinent began with the presence of the British East India Company. Christian Missionaries also played a significant role in expanding the English language in India. During the rule of the East India Company, different English medium schools, colleges and universities were established. According to Islam and Hashim (2019), Thomas Macaulay justified the cause of English teaching and learning in 1835 and intended to reshape policy on the medium and declared English as the language ‘best worth knowing’ and ‘most useful to our native subjects’. After that, English became the medium of higher education in the universities that required a knowledge of English. Consequently, new secondary education was applied to anglicize themselves. As Macaulay’s policy of selective English for higher education had achieved great success, English occupied an important position in the curriculums of schools, colleges and universities of the subcontinent till the end of British rule. Later the medium of both secondary and higher education was English. According to Vijayalakshmi and Babu (2013), Macaulay’s purposes were to create the dominance of British culture over the Indians and to have control over the minds of the Indians through English as well as to train Indians and make them fit for employment. The British Government gave preference in jobs to the Indians who knew English. According to Awal (2021), the dominance of English in public lives in Bangladesh was seen vividly at that time. There were many varieties of English like Anglo-Indian English, Babu English, Burgher English, Bearer English, Boxwallah English, and Butler English. Due to the necessity of imposing Standard English in Bengal, English language teaching at the university level started. The teaching of the English language began in 1857 in all degree colleges under Calcutta University. In East Bengal (present Bangladesh), ‘Dacca University’ (present University of Dhaka) was established in 1921 and this university followed English as the medium of instruction in education and thus facilitated English education in East Bengal.

2.2.2 English in the Post-colonial Pakistan Period (1947-1971)

In 1947, the Indian subcontinent was divided into two independent nations named India and Pakistan. Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan named East Pakistan at that time. The English language was not welcomed warmly by the Muslim community living in West Pakistan and East Pakistan. According to Rahman (2020), at the time of the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, English was available only in a few elitist schools or in institutions of higher education in the areas now called Pakistan.’ However English lost its primary place in the post-colonial period as Urdu was considered to be the state language in Pakistan. After partition, the position of English was suppressed in favour of Urdu in Pakistan (Banu & Sussex, 2001). However,

English was still important for maintaining the communication between East Pakistan and West Pakistan as their languages were not the same. Hamid and Erling (2016) mentioned that ‘English served as the link language between East and West Pakistan, which was separated not only by languages and cultures but also by hostile Indian territories.’ English was used as the second language for official functions in both East Pakistan and West Pakistan. Rahman & Pandian, (2018a, 2018b) cited in Rahman et al., (2019) stated that ‘during the Pakistani regime, English continued to be widely used as a recognised state language with the status of second language’. Azam & Kusakabe (2018), cited in Arafat & Mehnaaz (2020), mentioned that for academic curriculum, English was being taught as a subject in Bengali medium schools from grade 3 to grade 10. Then in the higher secondary level, the medium of instruction switched to English. But after the independence, it was also necessary to decide on the national language in Pakistan. Besides, as a single state, a common language was important for both West Pakistan and East Pakistan. Urdu which was only spoken by 5% of the total population, was selected to be the state language by the Pakistani leaders. However, the people of East Pakistan did not agree and protested against the decision. First Mohammad Ali Jinnah on 21 March 1948 and then Khawaja Nazimuddin on 27 January 1952 declared Urdu to be the only national language in Pakistan. As a result, mass rising occurred in East Pakistan demanding Bangla to be one of the state languages of Pakistan. Some students lost their lives for the language as police attacked the gatherings. At the cost of their lives, Bangla achieved the status of being one of the state languages of Pakistan. From that inspiration of the language movement, in 1971 they became successful in building a sovereign nation called Bangladesh, which was separated from Pakistan.

2.2.3 English in Bangladesh (1971- onwards)

After the independence in 1971, the English language has gone through many ups and downs in Bangladesh. Extreme nationalism and anti-colonialism favoured Bangla to become the only official language. Bangla was declared to be the national and official language of Bangladesh (Banu & Sussex, 2001). The development of language policy and planning in the early periods after independence was influenced by language-based nationalism and sentimentalism. The position of English also changed from a second language to a foreign language. After independence, to glorify Bangla, the English language was neglected severely for a few years. In 1972, Bangla was introduced as the language of communication and instruction in all educational institutions including public universities. However, within a very short time, educators realized the importance of learning English to cope with the outside world. The

Quodrat-e-Khuda Education Commission (1974) exempted students from class one to five from learning English but the 1976 National Curriculum Committee made English compulsory from class three (Podder, 2013). Later English was introduced as a compulsory subject from class one in 1992. After that English was introduced again in higher education in Bangladesh. Based on the world context, the Government of Bangladesh passed an act in 1992 for the reintroduction of English at the tertiary level. The purpose was to enhance the quality of the graduates for employment and to maintain the academic standard. Now, in all institutions at the tertiary level in Bangladesh, in one way or the other, the English language is being taught (Hossain, 2013). Nowadays, most universities, including both private and public universities, use English as the medium of instruction. Students and teachers are also interested and comfortable in using English instead of Bangla as the medium of learning.

2.3 Present status of English in Bangladesh

Though English has not yet been declared as the second language in Bangladesh, it is used in every field like education, trade and commerce, official correspondence, press and media, entertainment, communication and interaction, etc. Earlier people were not encouraged to learn English because of the post-colonial anti-English sentiment, but English never disappeared. English has always been used in different sectors, alongside Bangla. Banu and Sussex (2001), reported in Kabir and Mohiuddin (2016-2017), states that ‘the use of English in business and shop names in Bangladesh, which goes back to the era of British imperial rule, has survived the strongly nationalist movements of the 60s and 70s, and is now showing a resurgence under the more global and internationalizing forces of the 90s’. If the socio-cultural context of present Bangladesh is considered, English has been a part and parcel of the social and national life of people. According to Begum (2015), English is now merged into the language, identity and culture of Bangladeshis. The global essence of English is a rising need for modern, sophisticated and comprehensible media, press and education. The competent use of English now determines the social status and prestige, and signifies the socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-educational identity of the speakers.’ Besides, the knowledge of English is also essential for international communication and business. Roy (2017) has identified an increasing awareness of the need for English communication skills because of the entrance of Bangladesh into the garment industry and free trade world. For the phenomenal growth of the IT industry as well as for economic purposes, English has become essential as a language of

communication. Now, people understand that English is a language for business, technology, employment, education and so on, but there is still confusion and tensions regarding the use of Bangla and English in various domains. The government has yet to introduce a suitable and practical language policy that will truly work for the people (Begum & Islam, 2018). The following figure describes how English teaching and learning in Bangladesh has been influenced in different stages.

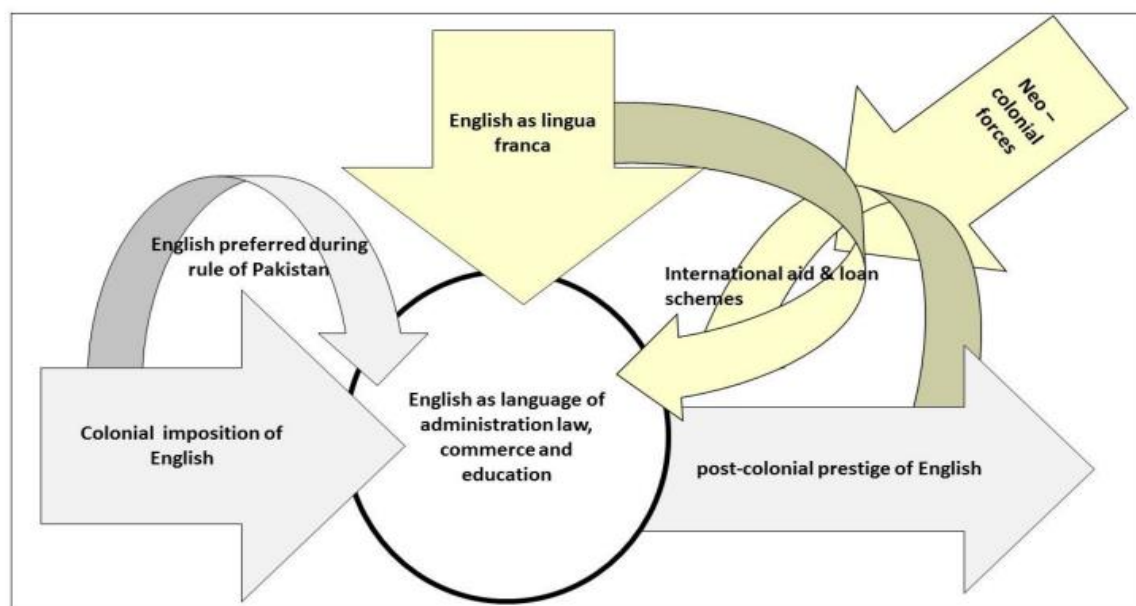


Figure 1: International influences on English language teaching and learning in Bangladesh (adapted from Amin, 2017, P.261)

2.3.1 English in the National Education Policies in Bangladesh

A suitable language teaching policy is essential for developing foreign language skills. In Bangladesh, English is taught as a subject from the primary level to the higher secondary level. Most of the universities in Bangladesh teach English language and literature in Honors and Masters Programs. However, the position of English in Bangladesh cannot be properly defined because of the inconsistencies in the National Education Policies. Rahman and Pandian (2018) stated that a total of eight education commissions were formed for education policy after the independence but the position of English has been inconsistent all the way. However, according to Chowdhury and Kabir (2014), the National Education Policy 2010 has provided a specific and consistent English language policy which includes a straightforward and coherent strategy for using the English language at various education levels. The National Education Policy 2010 emphasizes education equipping learners with knowledge and skills to pace with the world of

the twenty-first century. That is why the traditional Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was replaced by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The following table shows a brief chronology of the changing shifts of emphasis on English and English education:

Education policies and commission reports	The position of English and English education
1974 Bangladesh Education Commission	English given priority as foreign language, to be taught from Class 6 General emphasis on English language
1976 English Teaching Taskforce Commission	English to be taught either in Class 3 or Class 6, subject to availability of English teachers
1988 Bangladesh National Education Commission	Grade 3 suggested as recommended starting point for English education Grade 6 suggested as uniform starting point for English education
1991 National Curriculum Committee	English education introduced in Class 3 English introduced as compulsory subject in Class 1 (1992)
2000 National Education Policy	English set as medium of instruction for kindergartens Curriculum and all text material used in kindergarten translated into English Introduction of English as extra subject from Class 1 and 2 and as compulsory subject from Class 3 Along with Bengali, English could be medium of instruction from the secondary level (Class 7) Emphasis on English as medium of instruction at the tertiary level
2003 National Education Commission	Reemphasis on English learning from the primary level One objective of primary education to acquaint learners to English language skills as a foreign language Emphasis on rebuilding overall English curriculum Emphasis on organising foreign training for trainers of PTI and NAPE and local training for all secondary school teachers to improve English education Emphasis on introducing a six-month English language course at the tertiary level
2010 National Education Policy	English recognised as essential tool to building knowledge-based society Emphasis on English writing and speaking from the very beginning of primary education English to be set as compulsory subject adopted in all streams from the secondary level English as medium of instruction could be introduced from the secondary level Emphasis on appointing adequate number of English teachers at secondary level English to be a compulsory subject in all colleges and universities English (along with Bengali) to be the mediums of instruction at the tertiary level Emphasis on the need to translate books written in English to Bengali

Table 1: English and English education in policy: A chronological summary [Adapted from Chowdhury and Kabir (2014)]

The National Education Policy 2010 has introduced different issues for the development of learners' language skills. The national policy suggests that the media of instruction in the

classroom at the secondary level will be Bangla but it can also be English if the competencies of the institutions demand. Subject-related teachers including English will be appointed according to the policy and the teacher-student ratio is supposed to be progressively raised in phases to 1:30 by 2018. It also focuses on the infrastructure development of the educational institutions, availability of educational materials and training of the teachers. In the case of Higher Education, English will be taught as a compulsory subject at the degree level of all colleges and universities as well and it will remain as a medium of instruction in higher education along with Bangla. Though policy formulations reflect all the good intentions of the policymakers at the macro level, all those good intentions might get spoiled by the conspicuous absence of a mechanism for implementation at the micro level (Rouf, 2022).

2.4 Secondary level of education in Bangladesh

According to the National Education Policy- 2010, students will go for secondary education after completing primary education and the duration of primary education will be extended from Class V [now in practice] to Class VIII and the secondary level of education will include Classes IX to XII. At the end of this level, students will choose different streams of higher studies. According to the National Curriculum Framework 2021, there will be several stages of education pre-primary, Primary (from Grade 1 to Grade 5), Secondary (from Grade 6 to Grade 10), Higher Secondary (from Grade 11 to Grade 12) and Higher Education. At the secondary level, learners will continue to acquire knowledge and skills by strengthening the basic skills they achieved in earlier stages. Besides they will also acquire different social skills and attitudes by giving more importance to the process of socialization which will help them become active in society. In the 'Smart Education Festival' arranged by The Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Dipu Moni (2023) states, that the new curriculum was first introduced in Grade I of the primary level and Grades VI and VII of the secondary level in 2023. It will then be implemented in Grades VIII and IX in 2024 and finally in Grade X in 2025. The stages of education according to the new curriculum are described in the following figure:

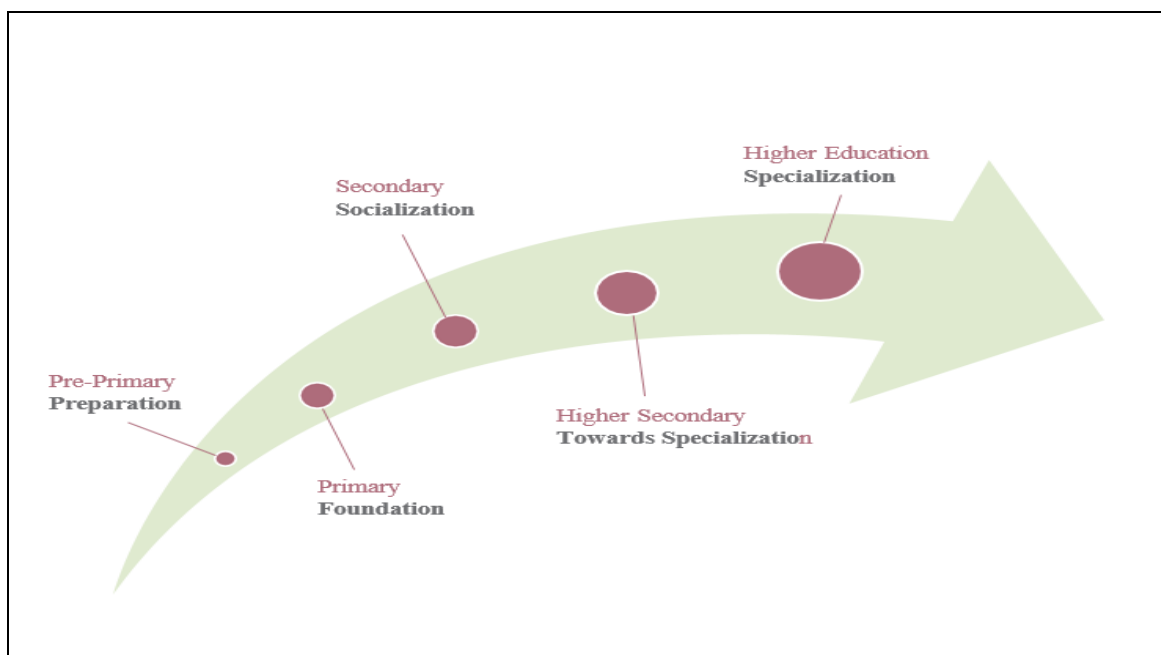


Figure 2: Stages of education in Bangladesh [Adapted from National Curriculum Framework 2021]

2.4.1 English curriculum at the secondary education (class 9-10)

Though the new National Curriculum Framework-2021 has been developed, the secondary level of education is still following the National Curriculum-2012. In the case of teaching and learning Bangla and English, the National Curriculum- 2012 emphasizes the four basic language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing instead of content memorization. The objectives of the English Curriculum for classes 9-10 are:

1. To acquire competence in all four skills, i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.
2. To use the competence for effective communication in real-life situations.
3. To acquire necessary grammar competence in the English language.
4. To develop creativity and critical thinking through the English language.
5. To become independent learners of English by using reference skills.
6. To use language skills for utilizing information technology.
7. To use literary pieces in English for enjoyment and language learning.
8. To be skilled in human resources by using English language skills.

It is a matter of sorrow that most of the objectives of the English curriculum-2012 are unfulfilled even in 2023. In most of the English classrooms at the secondary level, teachers focus on reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar. Speaking and listening are rarely practised in the class and therefore most of the students fail to achieve communicative competence. Though formative assessment and summative assessment both are present in the curriculum, no schools conduct formative assessments on speaking and listening. 20 marks are assigned for continuous assessment which includes 10 marks for English speaking skills and 10 marks for English listening skills and the obtained marks are added to the result of summative assessment. Learners' reading and writing skills are assessed in the final examinations on the remaining 80 marks (40 for reading and 40 for writing). But most secondary schools do not follow the pattern rather they focus on testing reading, writing and grammar skills. Rouf and Mohamed (2018) have conducted a study on curricula directions and classroom practices and found that there is a lack of alignment between them as a result of teacher-centred pedagogy, a lack of focus on learners' development of target language skills, the teaching of English as a knowledge-based subject, insufficient target language practices, an ineffective ten-year national education policy, a lack of ICT use, and teachers' low oral proficiency.

The National Curriculum Framework-2021 also focuses on competencies and skills rather than contents. Competency is the ability to adapt to changing contexts based on a combination of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, and is driven by the spirit of the Liberation War. Among the area of competencies, language and communication is the first competence that the students will achieve. Besides, language education includes not only basic skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing but also alternative communication skills. The learner will master the ability to use the English language's skills effectively for everyday communication as well as academic and other specialized applications. They will be able to use critical thinking and creative expression to appreciate English literature, support democratic principles in communication at the individual, societal, national, and international levels, and aesthetically express themselves. According to the curriculum, learners need to possess some core knowledge and skills for effective communication. First, students will understand linguistic norms and be able to use them appropriately in national and international settings. Additionally, they will be endowed with the ability to interpret and comprehend both the literal and intended meaning of a given verbal or non-verbal communication. Additionally, they will get the capacity to express themselves clearly, succinctly, distinctively, and correctly to communicate effectively. Along with knowledge and skills, learners will develop contextual understanding,

cultural awareness and a democratic attitude which will lead them to develop Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). The following figure shows how intercultural communicative competence is related to creative expression, real-life application and sense of identity.

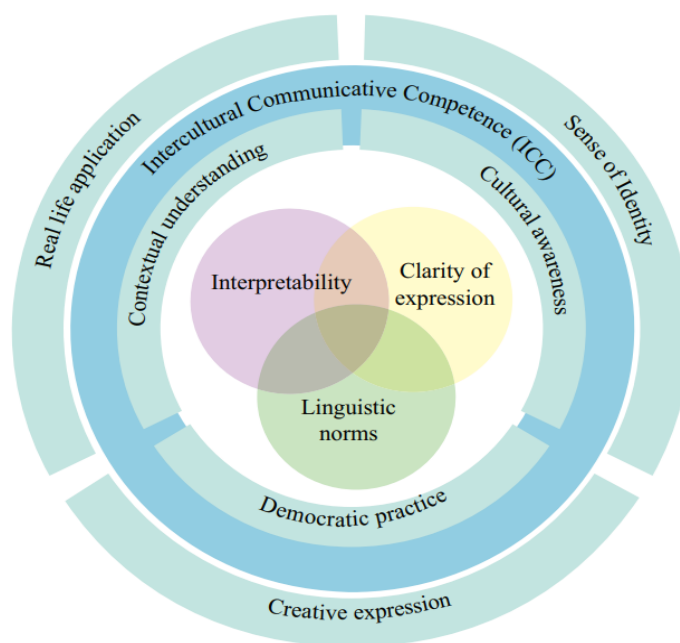


Figure 3: Concept of English as a subject (adapted from the National Curriculum Framework-2021)

At the secondary level, different teaching materials besides the textbooks will be developed and introduced such as supporting books, supplementary reading materials, charts, cards audio-visual materials, etc. Besides, the learners will take part in both summative assessment and real-time assessment in all ten subjects. In classes 9 and 10, 50% of marks will be on summative assessment and 50% on formative assessment. The public examinations will take place at the end of Grade 10 to assess Grade 10 competencies only and the marks distribution will also follow the mentioned pattern.

2.4.2 English speaking skills at the SSC level in Bangladesh

Speaking is one of the fundamental skills of language and it is considered the most important skill which is required for communication in any language. According to the English curriculum of 2012, the main purpose of teaching English is to make learners achieve communicative competence by following the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

approach. Teachers should make the students practise all basic four skills in an integrated way so that they can learn to communicate effectively through interaction. Though the English textbook for classes 9-10 includes different speaking activities, most of them are ignored by the teachers. The classrooms are still teacher-centred which cannot create a friendly and motivating environment for the learners to speak. Besides most of the English teachers do not have proficiency in speaking English and not all of them are trained even to follow the techniques of teaching the speaking skill in the classroom. Moreover, there are also some issues like a large number of students in a classroom, limited class time, lack of teaching aids and technological supports, etc. which impede the speaking practice in the classroom. In addition, students are not interested in English speaking as they do not have enough proficiency in English and they have also some affective factors like shyness, anxiety, low motivation, etc. Listening and speaking skills are ignored in classrooms as they are not assessed in high-stakes examinations like SSC. Not assessing learners' listening and speaking competence in examinations also contributes to the negligence of these two skills by both teachers and learners (Rouf and Mohamed, 2018). Though sometimes CLT approaches are implemented in the classrooms, speaking and listening skill development is not addressed in the formative or summative examinations. According to Ivan & Jony (2016), the problems of implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in high schools in Bangladesh are mainly created because of the lack of suitable textbooks, trained teachers and insufficient classroom facilities.

2.5 Background of speaking skill

2.5.1 Definition of speaking skill

Speaking is one of the major skills of language and it is the main medium of human communication. In the case of learning a foreign language/second language, speaking skill is supposed to be the highest priority. According to Penny Ur (1996), speaking seems intuitively the most important skill among the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are referred to as the speakers of that language. Speaking is a productive aural/oral skill that entails producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning, according to Nunan (2003). Nunan (2003) also claims that for two reasons, many people can find speaking in a foreign language more difficult than other skills because speaking takes place in real-time since there is normally someone else waiting for the prompt response, and speaking cannot be edited or revised while it is being said. According to McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (1993), speaking is not the oral production of written language. Speaking entails learning a variety of subskills that, when combined, give a student

a general competency in the spoken language. Speaking is frequently the attribute that determines a person's face value in a variety of situations.

2.5.2 Characteristics of speaking skill

Brown and Yule (1983) pointed out that the spoken language is simpler and the vocabulary used in the spoken language is normally less specific and unstructured. Besides, the speaker also uses pausing, rhythm, intonation, paratactic (unsubordinated) phrases and incomplete sentences in speaking. According to McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (1993), spoken interaction often shows the following features:

- Ellipsis (i.e. incomplete utterances)
- Use of conjunctions (e.g. and, so) to add information and achieve continuity; very little subordination (subordinate clause etc.)
- Very few passives
- Not many explicit logical connectors (moreover, however)
- Use of topic head and/or tail (e.g., that restaurant yeah the food was great that restaurant');
- Replacing/ refining expressions (e.g., this fellow/ this chap I was supposed to meet)
- The use of vague language (e.g., thing, nice stuff, whatsit)
- Repetition of the same syntactic form
- The use of pauses, 'fillers' and lexical phrases (e.g., 'erm', 'well', 'uhuh', 'if you see what I mean') to not only help oneself organize what to say but also to strengthen interpersonal relationships.

2.5.3 Function of speaking

Brown and Yule (1983) made a distinction between two functions of spoken language. The first one is interactional which focuses on the function of language for maintaining social relationships, and the second one is transactional which performs the information-transferring function of language. Interactional language is primarily *listener-oriented* whereas transactional language is primarily *message-oriented*. Later, Richards (2009) expanded the functions of speaking into three-part functions. They are: talk as interaction; talk as transaction; and talk as performance. Each of these speech types is quite distinct in terms of form and function. Firstly, talk as interaction refers to a conversation related to a social function which intends to make and maintain relationships. Secondly, talk as transaction is a type of

conversation which is used for delivering or receiving content or information. Lastly, talk as performance is one way communication and it is used in formal speech, lecture or presentation.

2.5.4 Components of speaking skill

To learn the speaking skill, the components of the speaking skill need to be explored. According to Heaton (1998), the basic elements of oral ability are fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility. The three aspects of speaking—accuracy, fluency and comprehensibility—were also discussed by Brown (2007). Accuracy is attained by concentrating on the phonology, grammar, and discourse components of the spoken output. Fluency is produced by allowing the "stream" of speech to "flow"; while some of this speech overflows into unintelligible speech, the "riverbanks" of instruction on specific phonological, grammatical, or discourse details can direct the speech on a more purposeful course. According to Hadijah (2014), the components of speaking skills are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Bashir et al., (2011) mentioned that speaking skill includes the following three areas of knowledge:

- **Mechanics:** Speakers should have the ability to choose the correct words in the right order and speak with the correct pronunciation.
- **Functions:** Successful communication depends on learners' knowledge about the functions of language which can be transactional for exchanging information and interactional for building and maintaining relationships.
- **Social and cultural rules and norms:** An efficient speaker knows about the social and cultural rules and norms about turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses, relative roles of participants, etc.

2.5.5 Micro skills of speaking

The micro-skills of speaking refer to the smaller issues of language such as phonemes, morphemes, vocabulary, pronunciation, collocations, and phrasal units. The micro-skills of oral communication are mentioned in the following table:

1. Produce chunks of language of different lengths. 2. Orally produce differences among the English phonemes and allophonic variants. 3. Produce English patterns, words in stressed and unstressed positions rhythmic structure, and into national contours. 4. Produce reduced forms if words and phrases. 5. Use an adequate number of lexical units (words) in order to accomplish pragmatic purposes. 6. Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery. 7. Monitor your own oral production and use various strategic devices like pauses, fillers, self-corrections, backtracking- to enhance the clarity of the message. 8. Use grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), system (e.g., tense, agreement, and pluralization), word order, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms. 9. Produce speech in natural constituent in appropriate phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentences express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms. 10. Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms. 11. Use cohesive devices in spoken discourse. 12. Accomplish appropriately communicative functions according to the situation, participants and goals. 13. Use appropriate registers, implicative and pragmatic conventions, and other sociolinguistic features in face to face conversations. 14. Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification. 15. Use facial features, kinesics, body language and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language to convey meanings. 16. Develop and use a battery of speaking strategies, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, providing a context for interpreting the meaning of words, appealing for help, and accurately assessing how well your interlocutor is understanding you.

Table 2: Micro skills of speaking skill [adopted from Brown (2001: 271)]

2.6 Teaching speaking skill

The main purpose of teaching the speaking skill is to develop learners' communicative efficiency. According to Richards (2009), learners' evaluation about their success in language

learning and the effectiveness of the course mostly depends on the development of their speaking proficiency. According to Nunan (2003), speaking a second or foreign language is not easy. In fact, speaking is quite a complex undertaking which involves using all the different levels of language. So, teachers should be careful and helpful to develop learners' speaking skill.

2.6.1 Principles of teaching speaking skill

In order to teach second or foreign language speaking skill, teachers need to follow some principles. Nunan (2003) has mentioned about some principles for the teachers in teaching the speaking skill:

1. Teachers need to be aware of the differences between second language and foreign language learning contexts. In Foreign Language (FL) context, the target language is not used for communication in the society. It is more challenging to develop speaking skills in FL context because students cannot practise the target language outside the classroom. In second language (SL) context, the target language is the language of communication in the society. That's why, it is comparatively easier to learn speaking skills in SL context. So, teachers have to take appropriate steps to teach the speaking skill considering the context.
2. Teachers make students practise with both fluency and accuracy. Accuracy is the ability to speak correctly without making any mistakes. Fluency is the ability to speak quickly and confidently, with few hesitations or unnatural pauses, false starts, word searches, etc. Both are important components of speaking and teachers should put emphasis on both of them in the classroom.
3. Teachers provide opportunities for students to talk by using group work or pair work, and limiting teacher talk. As developing the speaking skill is a complex process, students in collaboration will learn better. Teachers will give them the chance to speak most of the time in the classroom by limiting his talk and teachers will act like facilitators.
4. Teachers plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning. Teachers make sure that a student develops the ability to check whether s/he understands what someone has said, clarifies her/his understanding, and confirms that someone has understood her/his meaning too.
5. Teachers design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking. Interactional speech is communicating with someone for establishing and maintaining social relationships and transactional speech

involves communicating to get something done, including the exchange of goods and/or services. So, teachers design classroom activities considering the two functions of speaking.

Teachers have to analyze the needs of students and they should take necessary steps considering the learners' contexts. If teachers try to get students to speak fluently, they have to play three different roles such as, prompter, participant and feedback provider in the classroom (Harmer, 2001).

2.6.2. Speaking activities in the classroom

Teachers can use different activities to promote the development of learners' speaking skill. McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (1993) suggested to use communication games, problem solving activities, simulation/role play for teaching speaking in the classroom. Nunan (2003) added information gap and jigsaw activities besides simulation and role play. According to Harmer, (2003), the speaking activities can be:

1. Acting from a script (play scripts, acting out dialogues);
2. Communication games (information gap games, television and radio games);
3. Discussion (buzz group, instant comment, formal debates, unplanned discussion, reaching a consensus);
4. Prepared talks (presentation);
5. Questionnaires;
6. Simulation and role-play.

Though different researchers have mentioned about different types of speaking activities, the respective teacher has to select the speaking activities based on the needs of the students and the context of her/his classroom. According to Penny Ur (1991), the teacher has to select the speaking activities considering the following characteristics of a successful speaking activity.

1. A successful speaking activity gives learners more opportunity to talk. Most of the allotted time for the activity is occupied by learner talk with less teacher talk and interference.
2. During the speaking activity, all the students get equal opportunity to participate. The classroom discussion will not be dominated by a minority of talkative participants.
3. In a successful speaking activity, the topic/task should be interesting so that the students become eager and motivated to speak.

4. Learners will use relevant and easily comprehensible utterances and their utterances should have an acceptable level of accuracy.

2.6.2.1 Speaking activities in the textbook of class IX-X in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, most of the speaking activities practised in the classroom cannot fulfill the mentioned criteria. As the purpose of teaching English in the secondary level of Bangladesh is to achieve communicative competence, the textbook of class 9-10 includes different speaking activities that are expected to be practised in the classroom. There are 14 chapters in the book and each of the chapter includes different speaking activities. The activities involve telling a story, asking and answering questions, narrating incidents and events, arguing on given topics, participating in discussions and debates, talking about pictures, asking and talking about problems, seeking and giving suggestions, participating in role play and conversations, lecturing on given topics, talking about travel advertisements, describing a place, taking and giving interviews, exchanging personal information, presenting own ideas, giving and asking for information, recognizing and using English sounds, stress, intonation, etc. Though there are variety of speaking activities, most of them are not practised in the classroom. Teachers of secondary schools just follow the previous method of teaching reading, writing and grammar. Many teachers are not proficient and trained enough to conduct the speaking activities in the classroom. Besides they do not focus on the speaking activities because the speaking skill is not tested in the public examination. Moreover, most of the students do not want to participate in the speaking activities and they usually remain silent. According to Uddin (2021), instead of ‘pedagogic’ activities, the book could include more tasks on real language functions, such as booking bus tickets over the phone, making hotel room reservations, ordering food in the restaurant, opening bank accounts etc. Through these kinds of functions of language, the students would learn about the real life applications of English speaking outside of the classroom.

2.7 Challenges in developing Speaking skill

2.7.1 Challenges faced by teachers in teaching speaking skill

Teaching speaking skill is one of the most difficult tasks in EFL context. As the learners do not get any opportunity to speak in the target language outside of the classroom, the total responsibility goes on teachers. Teachers play the most significant role in such situations. But they also face different challenges to teach the speaking skill in the classroom. The challenges the teachers face are more or less similar in EFL context. According to Seraj et al (2021), the

problems in teaching speaking skill in the class are the use of traditional teacher-centered teaching method, extensive use of mother tongue both inside and outside the classroom , the lack of an oral practice environment, the large class size, the lack of supporting tools, students' lack of motivation and their passiveness and the lack of authentic materials like audio-visual recordings for teaching the patterns of speech productions and communication behaviors in that language. Though CLT has introduced learner centered classroom to facilitate learners' communicative competence, teachers often play the authoritative role in the classroom. Teachers cannot be blamed for this situation because each class consists of 50-80 students in the secondary level. In such large size classes, it is not possible to pay attention to each of the students. Besides, class time is also limited and insufficient to teach each of the skills in the classroom. Another severe problem teachers face is the learners' tendency of using their mother tongue. Teachers also often use mother tongue in the classroom as the students do not understand English well because of their poor proficiency in English. Teachers also feel the necessity of proper supporting environment for developing speaking skill because supporting materials and tools are not available in most of the schools. Teaching speaking and listening without any supporting materials becomes very difficult for the teachers as they have to depend on the textbook solely for speaking practice in the classroom. Teachers' task of teaching the speaking skill becomes easier if students are interested to speak. But most of the students feel shy and hesitated to speak in front of the teachers and friends because of fear of making mistakes and criticism from friends. Only few students participate in speaking activities where most of them remain silent. Their inactiveness and lack of motivations pose a great challenge for the teachers. In addition, teachers do not have proper training on the updated techniques and methods and therefore they cannot make the speaking activities interesting and attractive. Even some of the English teachers do not have proficiency in English because of their academic background. According to Farooqui (2014), some teachers are unable to speak in English and therefore they cannot use English as a medium of instruction in the English classroom. Desta (2009) conducted a study on the challenges of teaching the speaking skill in large classes at the secondary schools in Ethiopia and has identified that the classroom conditions, large number of students, nature of chairs and tables which are not moveable, students linguistic background, students' interest towards learning and participating in speaking activity, lack of commitment in both teachers and students, large coverage of contents, and the interference of other bodies in the teaching and learning process are the major constraints for teaching the speaking skill in the class.

2.7.2 Challenges faced by students in developing speaking skill

Like teachers, students also face different challenges in developing the speaking skill. In most of the EFL situations, students do not get proper opportunity to practise speaking conversation in natural context. Even when speaking is practised in the classroom, all the students do not get equal chance to speak because of large number of students and dominance of few talkative students in the class. Some students feel shy to speak and some other are afraid of making mistakes because the learning environment is not congenial to develop the speaking skill. The students who try to speak in English in the classroom are not appreciated rather criticized by the classmates. Besides, most of the students do not have the opportunity to practise English speaking with their family and friends outside the classroom. That is why teachers have to play the vital role for making the learners overcome their challenges. But it is a matter of sorrow that most of the teachers are not aware of their roles and stay inactive and uncooperative. Teachers do not make the classroom environment friendly which is required for learners' practicing speaking in the classroom without fear and hesitation. Moreover, students do not have enough linguistic and lexical knowledge to develop the speaking skill. Many students learn different grammatical rules but cannot apply them accurately in making sentences. Besides, they memorize vocabulary separately without contexts and therefore cannot use them properly during speaking. According to Ur (1996), the problems in getting learners to talk in the classroom are following:

1. **Inhibition:** Learners are often inhibited to speak in a foreign language in the classroom because of their fear of making mistakes, losing face, getting criticism or feeling shy.
2. **Nothing to say:** Some learners are not inhibited but they do not feel the motive to speak and sometimes they cannot think about the contents they need to speak.
3. **Low or uneven participation:** In large classroom, all students do not have the scope to speak. Some learners dominate the speaking activities in the classroom and rest of them often speak very little or not at all.
4. **Mother-tongue use:** In EFL classes, most of the students share a common native language and they often tend to switch back to their mother tongue because it is easier or more natural to express themselves in their native language.

In the secondary schools of Bangladesh, speaking skill gets the least importance because it is not tested in the examination and no mark is allotted for it. So, most of the teachers and students

are indifferent to develop speaking skill. According to Chowdhury and Shaila (2011), the Bangladeshi students have not the opportunity to practise English speaking in the classroom or outside of the classroom. Mridha & Muniruzzaman (2020), also found different problems like lack of natural and contextual practice, limited knowledge of vocabulary, unfavorable environment, learners' fear and hesitation, and irresponsibility and non-cooperation of the teachers that are responsible for the incompetency in speaking English. The following figure describes the challenges that Bangladesh students face in speaking class:

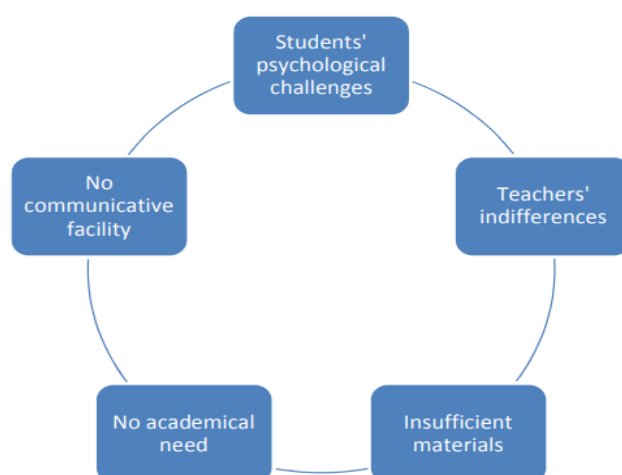


Figure 4: Students' challenges in classroom in speaking English (adapted from Kabir, 2014)

2.8 Factors affecting learners' speaking skill development

Speaking is one of the most complex skills, which needs a gradual process for development. The journey of the development of the speaking skill is influenced by so many factors. Shumin (1997), cited in Rahman et al. (2015), pointed out that speaking effectiveness depends on listening skills, sociocultural factors, affective factors, and other linguistic and sociolinguistic competences such as grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. Alrasheedi (2020) found out that most of the factors influencing the learners' speaking performance are linguistic and psychological and some are socio-cultural. The linguistic factors are like lack of a solid stock of vocabulary, lack of knowledge about the use of appropriate and correct lexical words, problems in comprehending other speakers during the conversation. Students forget or cannot come up with ideas during the speaking activity and therefore depend on translation for speaking in English. The psychological factors like learners' shyness, anxiety, fear of making errors and confronting criticism also affect their performance. Finally, the sociocultural factors involve peer pressure, teachers' expectations, lack of knowledge about target language culture, less exposure to the target language in the classroom and no exposure

in the outside environment, mother tongue use etc. So, the factors can be divided into four broad categories such as learners' linguistic factors, affective factors, socio-economic factors and factors related to the educational institutions.

2.8.1 Linguistic factors

The factors that influence learners' speaking skill development can be two types. Firstly, non-linguistic factors that are related to learners' personality, attitude, motivation, learning environment, availability of learning materials and influence of the peers, teachers and family members. Secondly, linguistic factors which are related to learners' linguistic competence in the target language. The linguistic competence of speaking includes generally the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening ability. Besides, knowledge of discourse, communicative strategies and socio-linguistic appropriacy are also related to the linguistic competence. Chomsky (1965), cited in Canale and Swain (1980), had made a distinction between competence (knowledge of language) and performance (using the knowledge in speaking and writing). Newby (2011) stated that the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language in 2001 defines competences as "the sum of knowledge, skills and characteristics that allow a person to perform actions. Learners need to achieve the competence to perform accurately. Bachmann (1990) provided the following tree-diagram of "linguistic competence" which is divided into two types: Organizational competence which is subdivided into grammatical and textual competence, and Pragmatic competence which is subdivided into illocutionary and sociological competence. Organizational competence indicates the abilities which are involved in controlling the formal structure of language for producing or recognizing grammatically correct sentences, comprehending their propositional content, and ordering them to form texts. One of the organizational competences is grammatical competence which includes a number of independent competencies such as the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology/ graphology. Another one is textual competence which means the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text following the rules of cohesion and rhetorical organization. Pragmatic Competence refers to the abilities of organization of the linguistic signals to refer to persons, objects, ideas, and feelings in communication. Illocutionary competence refers to the ability to control the functional features of language and sociolinguistic competence means the abilities to speak effectively considering the surrounding contexts, purposes of interactions, and the norms of interaction.

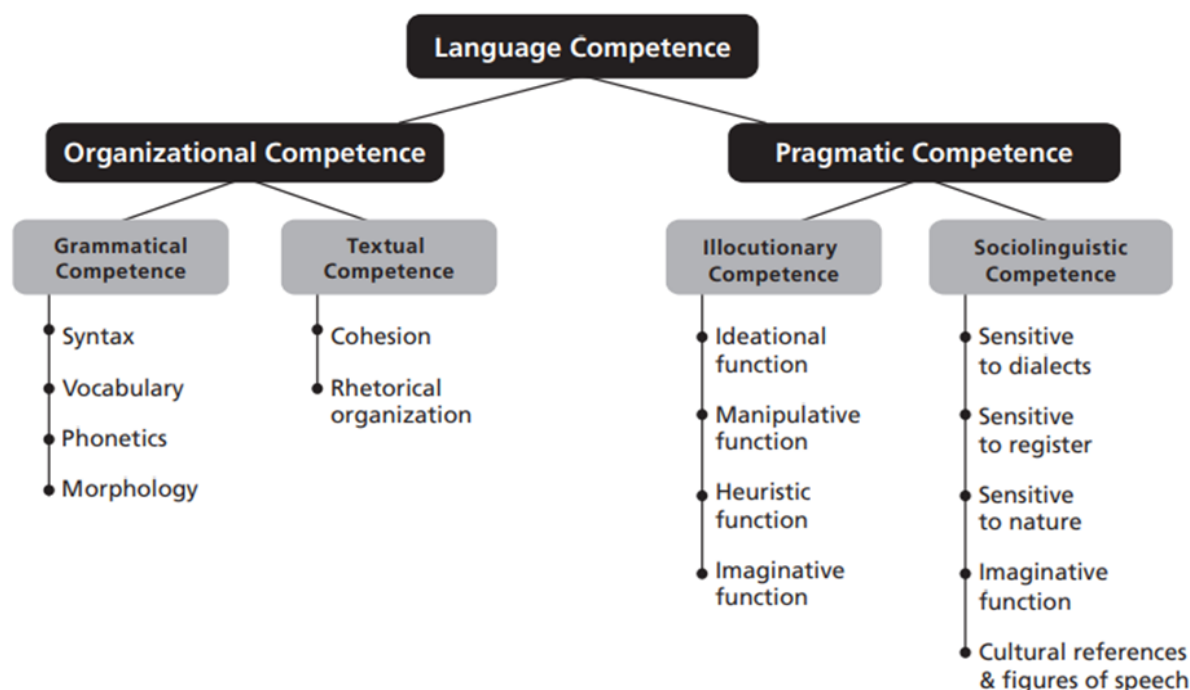


Figure 5: Sub-skills of Language competence [Adapted from Bachmann (1990: 87) cited in Losada, Insuasty & Osorio (2017.p.91)]

Learners' linguistic competence can affect the development of their speaking skill. First of all, accuracy in speaking depends on learners' knowledge of the rules and patterns of the target language. Sometimes students have the grammatical knowledge but cannot apply the rules when they speak fast. Besides, proper knowledge of vocabulary is an important factor in developing the speaking skill. Sometimes, students want to speak but cannot because they lack words and phrases to express their ideas in English. Besides, students cannot speak fluently because they cannot think in English and they search for words during speaking. Moreover, pronunciation is another important aspect of linguistic knowledge because often EFL students face problems regarding the correct pronunciation of the words including stress and intonation. Fulcher (2003), cited in Riyaz and Mullick (2016), states that anyone who wishes to speak a second language must learn the grammar and vocabulary of the language and master its sounds. As English is not a phonetic language, it creates a lot of confusions and leads to pronunciation problems for the EFL learners. In effective oral communication, learners face problem in using proper rhetorical organization and cohesive ties for making the speech intelligible and logical. In addition, sociolinguistic competence influences developing the speaking skill in the target language because students become confused about the different functions and uses of language in different social-contexts. Finally, learners' listening ability is another important factor that

has influences over speaking skill development. Learners do not only speak but also listen to the conversation partners during communication. If they cannot understand what another speaker has said, they cannot continue the conversation. According to Doff (1998), without developing listening ability, it is impossible for learners to bring improvement in their speaking ability. So, poor listening ability is a big problem for the students who want to develop their speaking skill. Brown (2001) points out that clustering, redundancy, reduced forms, performance variables, colloquial language, rate of delivery, stress, rhythm, intonation and interaction are the factors that can make speaking difficult for a learner. According to Adhikari (2011) speaking is a very complex skill that calls for a constant interaction between linguistic and non-linguistic elements and that's why the students should be given enough opportunity to relate syntax (rules of grammar) and morphology (vocabulary) to semantics (meaning) and pragmatics (language use) by using interactive activities in the classroom. Nunan (2003) stated that speaking seems difficult for the beginning and intermediate level learners because they cannot manage time for planning and editing speech during conversation and they face difficulties in managing the components of language that must work together in speaking.

2.8.2 Affective factors

Affective factors are supported by Krashen (1982) who stated that affective factors like anxiety, motivation and self-confidence influence the acquisition of second language. Learners with high motivation and self-confidence and with low anxiety receive a lot of input and intake them to achieve the language proficiency but students with low motivation and little self-confidence with high anxiety cannot learn the language easily. The following figure explains how affective factors influence the intake of input which later determines the acquisition of the language. According to Illyin et al. (2019), the affective factors that influence students' speaking ability are motivation and self-confidence. If students are more confident and motivated, the speaking abilities of students will also be higher. Their result shows that anxiety does not influence students' speaking ability. Another important factor is learners' attitudes towards the target language. Learners who have positive attitudes learn more, but also learners who learn well acquire positive attitudes (Khasinah, 2014). If students do not feel the necessity of learning the target language, they will be less motivated and build up a negative attitude towards the language and it will affect learners' speaking skill development.

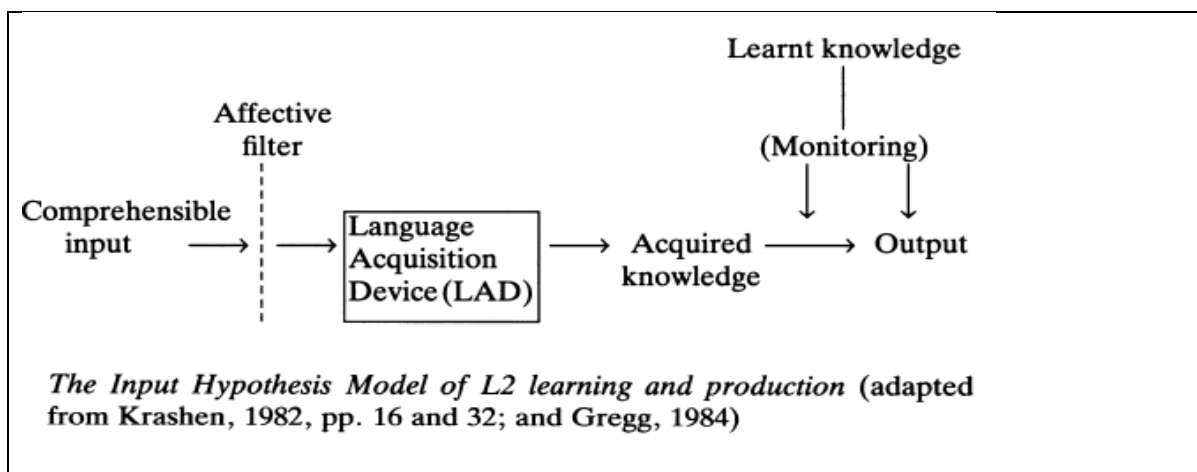


Figure 6: Role of affective factor mentioned in Input Hypothesis Model (Adapted from Cook, 1993, P.54)

2.8.3 Socio-economic factors

Socio-economic factors involve the factors which are developed from the learners' surrounding environment. They put emphasis on the roles of family, friends, relatives, social culture, and economic situations of the learners. Students' financial issues can impact education and sociocultural factors have influence on English speaking abilities (Kakita et al., 2020). Students having a solvent family can go for extra tuition for learning better. They can also enjoy technological supports for developing the speaking skill. According to Wang (2009), although they learn a foreign language, learners are unable to communicate effectively because they learn in a linguistic environment rather than a communicative one. Wang (2009) quoted Gardner and Clement (1990) who identified two contextual factors that might be significant in language teaching settings. The first is the educational environment in the classroom, and the second is the level of parental support for the foreign or second language program. Learners benefit greatly from their parents' motivation and positive attitude while learning a new language. The learning process becomes easier if the parents are educated and the children are able to communicate with them in the target language. According the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky (1978), learners can learn better when they make social interaction with a knowledgeable person and they are guided and encouraged by him. The social culture also has a great influence on learners' speaking skill development. If the culture of the society demands the target language, learners will be more interested to learn the language. On the contrary, if they cannot use the language in the social context, they will not feel the importance of learning the language. Through scaffolding, the influence of socio-cultural factors has been reflected in the following figure:

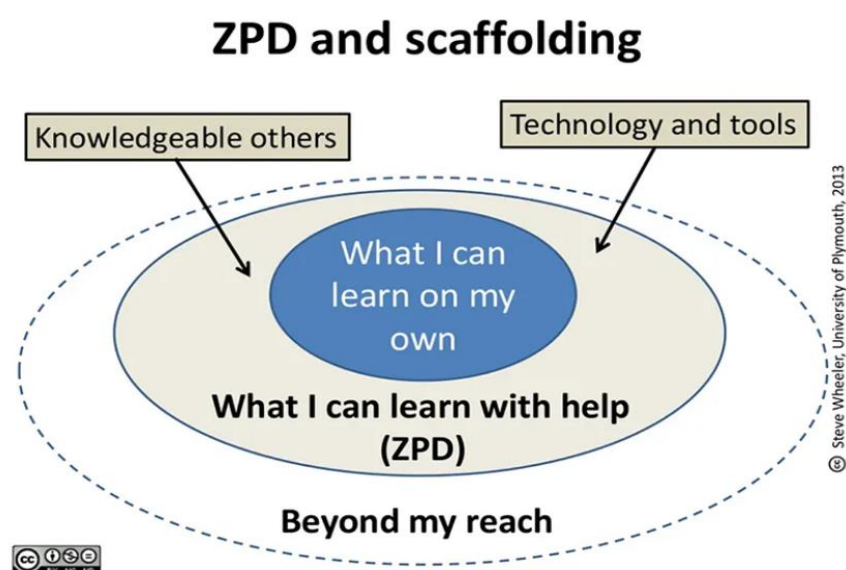


Figure 7: Vygotsky (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Photo credit: Steve Wheeler, 2013, Adapted from McLeod, 2020)

2.8.4 Factors related to the educational institutions

An educational institution is the institution which aims to educate the learners in a formal way. The educational institution may be school, college, university, madrasah, or training center. The factors that have the highest influence in learners' development of speaking skills are related to the institutions where they are studying. The human resources of an educational institution are the students, teachers, administrators and other staffs. In the learning process, the most significant components are the students and the teachers. So, teachers play the most vital role after students in developing their speaking skill. Teachers' competency in the target language including the knowledge of teaching methods and techniques is essential for developing learners' speaking skill. If teachers use the target language in the classroom and inspire students to speak in the target language inside and outside of the classroom, learners will be motivated. Besides, learners' speaking skills can be developed if different speaking activities are practised in the classroom. Moreover, teachers' positive feedback and co-operative nature affect the development of learners' speaking skill. Harmer (1991) asked the teachers to be tactful in providing appropriate feedback because gentle correction may help them but interruption or over-correction during speaking may inhibit them and spoil the continuity of the speaking. Besides teachers, some other factors also influence the development of the speaking skill. Bahanshal (2013) affirms that in the large classes, English teachers cannot develop oral activities or other essential activities and they cannot pay attention to all the students or communicate with them as well as cannot control the mother tongue use. So, the

size of the class matters in speaking skill development as teachers cannot make all the students practise speaking skill in the classroom and cannot provide individual feedback. Moreover, teaching materials including the technological benefits affect learners speaking development. Beside textbook, teachers' use of authentic materials (songs, movies, news, blogs, cartoons etc.) motivates students to engage in different speaking activities. Teachers may prepare or select the materials according to the needs and interests of the learners and also according to the socio-cultural necessity. According to Rahman et al. (2015), the language class needs the full use of audio-visual aids and electronic equipment for creating a foreign language environment which is essential for developing the speaking skill. So, all of the factors related to the educational institutional can influence learners' speaking skill development.

2.9 Rural and urban concepts

Many researchers have identified relationships between geographical locations and learners' performance, especially differences in performance based on rural and urban settings. According to the Population & Housing Census 2022 in Bangladesh, rural area means the areas outside of the City Corporations, Municipalities (Paurashavas), Upazila Headquarters, Cantonment and of the entire Mauza of the Growth Centers. The five types of areas within the jurisdictions of the City Corporations, Municipalities (Paurashavas), Upazila Headquarters, Cantonment and the entire Mauza areas of the Growth Centers are considered as the urban areas. In Bangladesh, 31.66% people live in urban areas and 68.35% in rural areas.

2.9.1 Urban-rural difference in English proficiency in Bangladesh

Urban students usually tend to achieve better academic results and language proficiency than the rural students. According to Farooqui (2014), students from rural areas have low language proficiency than the urban students and the main reasons are the poor socio-economic status of the rural students and teachers' own low proficiency in English language. According to Khattri et al. (1997), rural schools are located in remote areas, have smaller budgets, fewer technology resources, and offer fewer courses, special programs, and extracurricular activities than urban schools. Although the Ministry of Education provides books, audios, or videos to teachers as well, the majority of rural institutions lack labs or the necessary tools to utilize these resources. Tayyaba (2012), cited in Sumi et al. (2021), states that urban students have a better home environment, often enrolled in schools with a competitive academic environment with sufficient human and infrastructural resources and can reach out to well-trained teachers. So,

the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance can also be related to teachers, parents and academic institutions as urban students receive better opportunities and facilities from the teachers, parents and also from the institutions than the rural students.

2.10 Review of previous studies

As speaking is a complex productive skill, several studies have been conducted regarding the problems that students face in developing English speaking skill and the factors influencing the speaking development. In a study on students' low proficiency in spoken English in Bangladesh, Islam and Stapa (2021) found that factors such as the complex nature of speaking, inappropriate application of instructional methods, teachers' limited spoken English proficiency, students' psychological and sociocultural factors, students' insufficient linguistic resources, L1 interference, and large class sizes contributed to students' low proficiency in speaking.

Mridha & Muniruzzaman (2020) also investigated the barriers for developing English speaking skills in Bangladesh found out that the lack of natural and contextual practice, limited vocabulary, students' phobia for speaking, students' fear or shyness, unfavorable environment, mother tongue interference, the negligence and inefficiency of teachers in the classroom, less effective syllabus, faulty examination system, etc. collectively contribute to the lacking of competency in speaking skills.

Besides, Rani (2020) also discovered similar challenges such as issues with systematic support, learners' incompetency, and influence of mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, learners' inhibition, anxiety, rural background, social class, lack of proper listening skill, etc. which the learners need to face in developing the speaking skill in Bangladesh.

Moreover, Haider & Chowdhury (2012) have conducted a study on the implementation of CLT in the classroom practice in order to develop communicative competence and have found that lack of trained and competent teachers, faulty assessment system, and shortage of supplementary and bridging materials have made the whole process hard to reach. They also suggest that sustainable teacher development, reform of examination system, defining the entry and exit level competencies need to be ensured in order to achieve the maximum benefits from the current curriculum and textbooks.

Shweiki (2018) studied about the difficulties in English speaking skill by secondary level students in Jerusalem- Palestine and the result showed that different challenges affects students' performance such as the lack of using grammar accurately, limited store vocabulary and synonyms, incorrect pronunciation of long words, afraid of making mistakes and criticism, lack of practicing in real situations, no practice time for overcrowded classes etc. The study suggested to improve teachers teaching style of grammar and vocabulary using different tasks and activities.

Al-Lawati (1995) also investigated problems faced by Omani students and found out that the students face most difficulty in linguistic areas such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and discourse because of insufficient knowledge of the language. Lack of the opportunity to learn new and varied vocabulary and grammar through a variety of tasks and activities is responsible for this situation. Besides, in the large class, students don not get enough opportunities to practise the speaking skill.

Cabaltica and Arcalathe (2021) conducted a study in Philippines on the factor that affects students' speaking performance in the classroom and discovered that learners' time for preparation, pressure to perform well, listeners' support, motivation to speak, confidence, anxiety, topical knowledge, listening ability, feedback during speaking activities, time allowed to perform a speaking task, lack of expertise on grammar etc. are the major factors.

Besides, a study was conducted by Ariyanti (2016) in Indonesia on psychological factors affecting EFL students' speaking performance and found that there are several psychological factors which act as barriers for the students in performing their speaking and they are anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, lack of motivation, and lack of self-esteem.

Tuan & Mai (2015) conducted a study on two hundred and three students and ten teachers in Vietnam on the factors that affect students' speaking performance. The results indicated that there were a variety of factors that affect the students' speaking performance. First factor that influenced speaking was learners' topical knowledge. The next two important factors mentioned were listening ability and motivation to speak. Confidence was considered to be a factor that had influence on students' performance. Teachers' feedback during speaking activities and the pressure to perform well as well as the given time for preparation affected the speaking performance.

In a study of the factors affecting undergraduate students in Kuwait, Al Fadley & Qasem (2020) found that institutional factors, such as the preference for native speakers as teachers, English

language proficiency, and teaching methodologies, have a greater impact on students' English-speaking abilities than do personal factors, such as environmental and emotional influences from the individual. Asri & Eva (2018) studied on the effect of using authentic materials in developing speaking skill and found that by using authentic materials, students not only enjoy learning speaking but also improve their speaking skill. Authentic Materials method has great effect on developing students' speaking skill.

Several studies also have been conducted on the difference between rural and urban students' academic performance and language performance in Bangladesh. Chowdhury (2020) made a comparative study on the secondary students' English learning outcomes in the Rural and Urban Area of Bangladesh through CLT Approach. The finding shows that the rural students face more obstacles in achieving proficiency in English comparing to the urban students because of poor economic status of parents, less technological and online accessibility and no extra tuition facilities. The study has also observed no use of English as the medium of instruction and no student-student interaction in rural class. Though there is no difference in the grammatical competence of rural and urban students, urban students show better development of communicative competence.

Hossain (2016) studied on English language teaching in Rural Areas in Bangladesh. The results shows that urban students are comparatively adroit in English than the rural students because urban school teachers are skilled in English language teaching and they get support from parents and house tutors. On the contrary, many parents of rural students are not well educated and solvent enough to spend money for private tutor. He suggests to recruit skilled and qualified English teachers who will be conscious to teach effectively to remove the students' fear of English and to achieve the curriculum goals and objectives.

Sumi et al. (2021) aimed at identifying the determinants of academic disparity between secondary students of rural and urban areas which show that urban students performed better in public examinations than their rural counterparts. The academic achievement is influenced by personal traits which are the focal point to explain the rural-urban variations in academic performance. Other factors are parental education, occupation, and income which influence learners' academic achievement. Besides, large size of the class and lack of enough logistic support and resources, including teachers, officials, books, library, laboratory etc. are also responsible behind the poor academic performance of the rural students.

Comparative studies between rural and urban students' performance also have been conducted in different countries. Banu and Nishanthi (2017) conducted study in Tamil Nadu, India on the difficulties in speaking English by the college students. The findings showed that although students are not encouraged to use English outside of class, they do use it occasionally while in it. In addition, issues were worse for rural students than for urban students. Due to the lack of English language proficiency among pupils in rural regions, teachers there only taught in Tamil. Teachers in urban areas employed both Tamil and English as the medium of instruction. Additionally, most parents in rural areas were ignorant and impoverished, so they were unable to support their children academically or financially for additional tuition. On the other hand, parents in urban areas are educated and solvent to spent money for private tuition besides school.

Sun & Du (2021) examined the relationship between teacher training and student performance and its impact on the urban-rural gap in student performance in China. In comparison to rural pupils, they discovered that urban students were performing better academically and linguistically. Additionally, teacher training programs enhanced urban students' overall performance, but they only benefited rural students with middle and above levels, not those with middle and below. Additionally, the discrepancy in student performance between urban and rural areas was explained partially by the current teacher training program. In order to reduce the development gap between urban and rural students, they recommended developing educational policies that give rural teachers access to more high-quality training opportunities, increase parental involvement to improve resource conversion rates, and implement differentiated teacher training intervention programs for student groups with various characteristics.

Kainuwa et al., (2017) attempted to examine the relationship between parental economic factors and student's dropouts from government secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. The result shows that students who drop out of the secondary schools are affected by low parental economic factors. This drop out tendency is common in rural areas than the urban areas. But Alokun & Arijesuyo (2013) also conducted a study on rural and urban differential in student's academic performance among secondary school students in Ondo State, Nigeria. The results demonstrated that there is no difference in academic performance between rural and urban students due to geographical location. Their living in a rural location or attending a rural school cannot be the only factors affecting their academic progress; they also need the support of their

parents. The report advises parents and kids not to feel that attending urban schools is necessary for success.

Rahimpour & Kiani (2015) conducted a study in Iran on the suitability of pedagogical task and real world task in rural and urban areas. The result shows that rural language learners and urban language learners have no difference in their performance in pedagogical task but they differ in real-world task. Urban students feel comfortable in real world task where the rural face difficulties in accomplishing the task as they are not unfamiliar with this kind of task in their daily life. The researchers advise the teachers to create tasks based on the context, and if the logistics and financial condition allow, different course books for rural and urban locations can be established.

2.11. Conceptual framework of the study

In order to outline the logical proceedings of the research study, the researchers usually developed a conceptual framework based on prior studies to describe how the issues indicated in the research problem will be investigated and how the variables are related to one another. (Adom et al., 2018). The conceptual framework of this research consists of some major points which are related to each other. Firstly, the research analyzes the factors (linguistic, affective, socio-economic and institutional) that influence the development of learners' speaking skill based on the results of the questionnaires and interviews. Then the researcher examines the differences between rural and urban students' speaking performance through speaking test and illustrates the reasons behind the difference based on the results of the questionnaire, observation and interviews. In this case, the reasons can be related to teachers, students, parents and institutions.

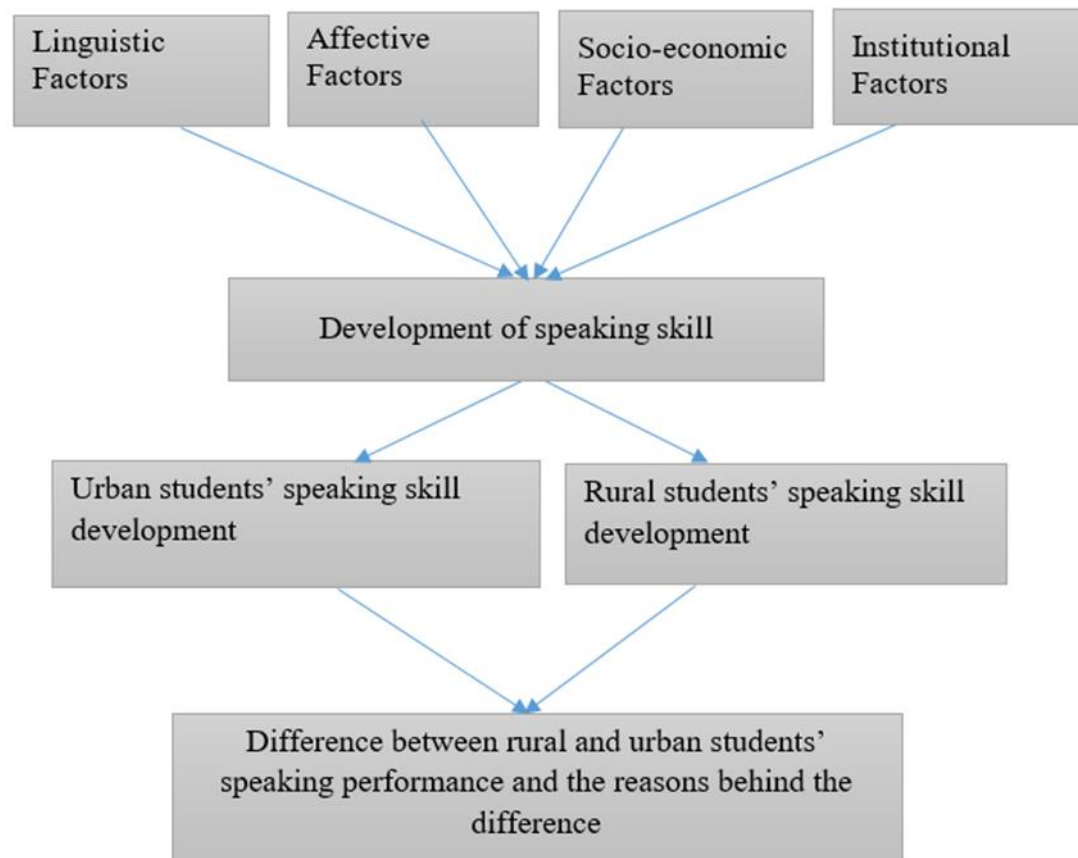


Figure 8: Conceptual framework of the study

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methods of conducting the study have been described in detail in the chapter. First of all, this chapter presents the design of the research including the sources of data. Then the target population, samples size and sampling techniques have been presented. This chapter also includes the research instruments that were used to collect data, piloting of the instruments as well as validity and reliability of the instruments. Finally, it describes the procedures of collecting data, methods of analyzing data and the scaffolding of this study.

3.2 Research design

To conduct this study, the researcher used mixed method approach based on the reviewed literature. Creswell and Clark (2011) stated that mixed method approach can collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data together to conduct a single study in order to provide better understanding of the research problem and questions. Different types of research designs are used in mixed method research but convergent parallel design has been followed in this study.

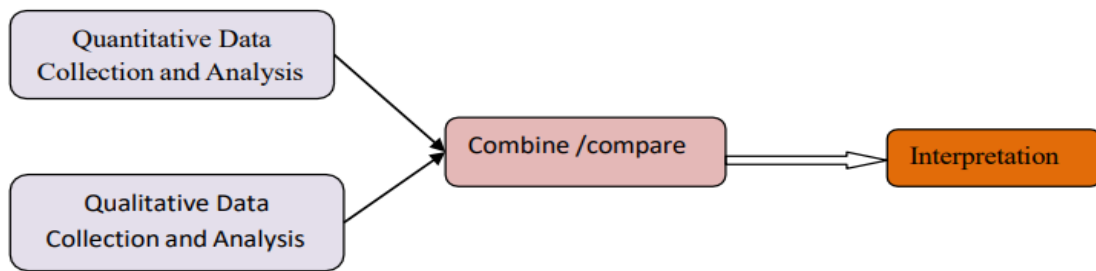


Figure 9: Convergent Parallel design (Adapted from Creswell, 2018)

Figure 9 reveals how the researcher has used convergent parallel design in this study to understand the research problem. According to Creswell (2012), the convergent parallel design puts emphasis on both quantitative and qualitative data which are collected simultaneously or concurrently and compares the results from quantitative and qualitative analysis to determine if both datasets of data follow similar or dissimilar results.

3.3 Sources of data

One of the major objectives of the study are to identify the factors that affect learners' speaking skill development. Besides, the study will find out the difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance and the causes of the difference. Therefore, the researcher collected data from both primary and secondary sources.

Sources of Data	Primary Sources	English teachers, EFL learners of class IX-X, English classroom
	Secondary Sources	research articles, journals, research reports, books, academic thesis, newspapers, English textbooks, English curriculum, Education policy

Table 3: Sources of Data

The primary sources of data were English teachers from the secondary schools, grade IX-X EFL learners and English classroom. The primary data was collected from the sources using different instruments. The secondary data was collected from different research articles, journals, research reports, books, academic thesis, newspapers, English textbooks, English Curriculum and so on.

3.4 Location of the study

The study is conducted in Dhaka city and Noakhali district. As the main purpose of this study is to find out the difference between rural and urban students' performance in English speaking skill at the secondary level, the researcher selected the rural schools from Noakhali district and urban schools from Dhaka city. Although, all the secondary level learners and teachers of Bangladesh are the concern of the study, the study area includes only Noakhali district and Dhaka city because of some limitations.

3.5 Population, sample size and sampling

A population is a group of people who possess similar characteristics. Target population is the group of individuals with some common defining characteristics from where the researchers collect the information for study (Creswell, 2018). Therefore, the target population of this study consists of English teachers of having at least two years of teaching experience and secondary level students (grade IX & X) from Noakhali district and Dhaka city in Bangladesh. A sample is a sub-group of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about

the target population (Creswell, 2018). In sampling procedure, the researcher tried to ensure representative sample selection.

No.	Sampling Units	Sample size			Sampling Method	Data
		Rural	Urban	Total		
1.	Secondary schools	5 (all non-govt.)	5 (3 non-govt. & 2 govt.)	10	Convenience sampling	
2.	English teachers	2 x 5= 10 (2 from each school)	2 x 5= 10 (2 from each school)	20	Purposive sampling	Qualitative & Quantitative
3.	Students of grade IX & X	20 x 5=100 (20 from each school)	20 x 5=100 (20 from each school)	200	Systematic random sampling & Convenience sampling	Qualitative & Quantitative
4.	Classrooms (Grade-X English)	5	5	10	Purposive sampling	Qualitative & Quantitative

Table 4: Sample size and sampling techniques

3.5.1 Secondary schools

Since it is difficult to collect data from each school of Noakhali district and Dhaka city, ten secondary schools from Noakhali district and Dhaka city were selected for data collection. As the purpose of this study is to make a comparative analysis between rural and urban students' speaking performance, 5 rural schools from Noakhali district and 5 urban schools from Dhaka city were selected. Among the rural schools, all are non-government schools because all the government schools are situated within the municipalities. Among the selected urban schools, 2 schools were government (one boys' school and one girls' school) and three were non-government.

3.5.2 English teachers

In order to collect data from the teachers, the researcher selected 2 English teachers from each sampled school by using purposive sampling method. So, total 20 teachers participated in this study to provide the primary data. All the teachers participated in this study had taught in the secondary level for more than two years. From the 20 teachers, 10 were selected purposively for interview in order to get an in-depth idea about the factors affecting English speaking skill

as well as the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance.

3.5.3 EFL Learners

100 students from 5 rural schools of Noakhali and 100 students from 5 urban schools of Dhaka city were selected to collect the quantitative data. 20 students were chosen from each of the selected school by using systematic random sampling procedure. In this systematic sampling procedure, the researcher chose every 2nd learner sitting in the classroom until the desired 20 learners from each school were found. From the selected 20 learners, 4 learners were then selected for speaking test by using convenience sampling. In convenience sampling, the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied. Thus, total 20 students were selected from the five rural schools and 20 learners from the five urban schools for participating in the speaking test.

3.5.4 English classrooms

All the English classrooms of SSC level have been selected as the population of this study. But only the English classes of grade X on 'English for Today' were used as the sample of the study. To see the real scenario of English speaking practices at the secondary level, the researcher observed total 10 English classes. 5 classes from the five rural schools and 5 classes from the five urban schools were observed by the researcher.

3.6 Instruments

The researcher has reviewed related literature before developing the instruments of this study. The researcher had gone through several research articles, journals, research reports, books, thesis, newspapers, textbooks, etc. to develop the idea. After completing the first draft, the instruments were reviewed by the supervisor. The instruments were modified according to the feedback of the supervisor and submitted again for the review. After receiving the feedback from the supervisor, the following instruments were finalized for collecting data. The researcher used several instruments in this study such as questionnaire, observation, interview and oral test.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is the most effective instrument to address issues like: a) the prevalence of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior; b) changes in them over time; c) differences in attitudes, beliefs, and behavior between groups of people; d) causal propositions about these attitudes,

beliefs, and behavior (Weisberg et al., 1996). Since one of the main purposes of this study are to compare between the rural and urban students' speaking performance, questionnaire will be an effective tool to conduct this study. So, the researcher developed two different sets of questionnaire for students and teachers. The first questionnaire which was used for the students had 26 closed ended questions. In the questionnaire, the participants had to rate their agreement based on the Likert Scale offering five response options (strongly agree: 5, agree: 4, neutral: 3, disagree: 2 and strongly disagree: 1). This questionnaires consisted of two sections. The first section includes the personal information of the participants and the second section was the five-scaled questions which had four parts:

- a) The linguistic factors affecting students' speaking skill development (7 questions)
- b) The affective factors influencing students' speaking skill development (5 questions)
- c) The socio-economic factors affecting students' speaking skill development (6 questions)
- d) The educational institutional factors influencing students' speaking skill development (8 questions)

The second questionnaire was developed for the teachers and it had total 13 questions. Teachers' questionnaire had also two sections. The first section was related to the personal information of the participants. The second section had two types of questions such as closed ended (5 questions) and open ended questions (8 questions). The open ended questions were related to teachers' attitudes to English speaking, use of materials and speaking activities to develop learners' speaking skill. Besides, the purpose of the open ended questions was to investigate teachers' efforts as well as their suggestions to make the speaking class better. On the other hand, closed ended questions which were analyzed by using frequency and percentage were related to the teachers' influence in developing learners' speaking skill. The questionnaire for students has been included in appendix I and the questionnaire for teachers in appendix II.

3.6.2 Classroom observation

The major objective of observation is to convey the intricate aspects of what is occurring by going into the scene, observing, and summarizing what is noticed (Patton, 2015). The researcher observed 10 classes from the 10 selected schools for the study. After receiving the permission from headmaster/ principal and the respective class teacher, the researcher visited the class with a classroom observation checklist where the observation notes were preserved. While observing the class, the researcher tried to note down the teacher's methods, strategies of

teaching English, teacher's and students' use of oral English, speaking activities used in the classroom, resources to develop English speaking skill, teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction, language of interaction, sitting arrangement, the classroom infrastructures and so on. The class time varied from 45 to 55 minutes and the number of students in the classroom varied from 42 to 63. The classroom observation sheet has been added in appendix III.

3.6.3 Speaking test

In order to obtain data about the students' speaking performance as well as to find out the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance, the researcher conducted speaking performance test in both rural and urban setting. 4 learners were chosen from each selected school to participate in the speaking test. At first, the researcher explained the purpose of this test and then provided them with the opportunity to select any one of the topics for speaking:

- a) The most memorable event of your life
- b) The things you like and dislike

Students were given 5 minutes for taking preparation. During the performance, the researcher recorded students' performance after receiving their permission. The researcher focused on vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall fluency in order to measure the students' speaking performance. The rubric for the speaking test has been added in Appendix V.

3.6.4 Interview

An interview is a planned conversation between two or more persons with the primary goal of one person trying to get information from the other (Gay & Airasian, 2003). In this current study, interviews were conducted with 10 teachers where 5 were from rural schools and 5 from urban schools. The researcher conducted semi-structured and face to face interviews. The current study used semi-structured interviews since they provide flexibility for conducting an in-depth interview (Creswell, 2008). As the selected teachers for interviews participated in the questionnaire before, they were aware of the purpose of the study and took part in the interview without any stress or hesitation. The researcher asked the following questions in the interview:

1. What are the linguistic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
2. What are the affective factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
3. What are the socio-economic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?

4. What are the institutional factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
5. Which factor does influence the learners' speaking skill development most? Explain.
6. Do you think that urban students perform better in speaking English than the rural students? If yes, what are the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance?

The interviewing session was recorded with the permission of the participant. This instrument enabled the researcher to have a vivid idea of the validity of the results attained through the questionnaire and observation.

3.7 Piloting of Instruments

The instruments were developed based on the knowledge gathered from previous studies and the feedback of the supervisor. But before collecting the data from the actual primary sources, the instruments were tested in one secondary school of Mymensingh district. The participants were not included as sample in the final data collection process. During the field test, the appropriateness of the language of the contents, ways of inquiry, ethical issues and the relevance of the study were properly evaluated with the teachers and learners. It was discovered from the pilot test that some modifications were required in questionnaires and in classroom observation checklist and they were modified accordingly.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The strength of a good research depends on the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study. Validity of the data collection instruments is determined by the relevance of the contents of instrument to the objectives of the study. In developing the instruments of this study, the researcher reviewed related literature and consulted with some other experts and followed their guidelines. According to Borg and Gall (1999), expert judgment is necessary to improve the validity of an instrument. Therefore, the researcher sought the feedback from the supervisor and after the modification according to the feedback, the instruments were finalized to collect data. Besides, a pilot test was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. In order to ascertain the reliability of the study, data triangulation (employing multiple sources of data), and triangulation of research instruments (using different data collection tools) and triangulation of research findings (using multiple methods of data analysis) have been utilized. Data triangulation is important to validate the outcomes in order to ascertain validity and reliability of the study (Barua, 2022). Besides, Cronbach's alpha method has been used to assess the reliability of the measurement as the reliability of any measurement relates to the

degree to which it is a consistent measure of a phenomenon. The value of Cronbach's alpha = 0.81 which is greater than 0.8 is a very good level of reliability. Therefore, the measurements used in this study were reliable and reasonable.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.81	27

Table 5: Reliability Statistics

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher collected data from the primary sources by using the following procedure:

- i. At first, the researcher developed the questionnaires, observation checklist and interview questions for collecting the data.
- ii. Then the researcher collected recommendation letter from the supervisor and obtained permission letter from the head of the institutions in order to collect the data by showing that recommendation letter.
- iii. The researcher consulted with English teachers and requested the teachers to help in research by providing information through questionnaire and interview. So, two sets of questionnaire were distributed to two English teachers of each sampled school and they were collected after being filled up by the teachers.
- iv. The researcher requested the teachers take part in an interview and to allow the researcher to observe their English classes and then collected data from the classroom observation and interview.
- v. The researcher consulted with students and requested them to help in research by responding to the questionnaire. The researcher distributed twenty sets of questionnaires to the sample group of each school. Then the researcher collected questionnaires after the allocated time.
- vi. The researcher also requested the students to participate in the speaking test. Though, some students were not comfortable to take part in the speaking test, they became convinced after listening the confidentiality of the data. The speaking performance were recorded only in audio mode to make them feel more comfortable and secured.

- vii. Finally, the researcher checked the returned questionnaires from both students and teachers for accuracy and completeness for analyzing data and thanked the respondents and other school authorities for their cooperation.

3.10 Scaffolding of the study

The interrelationship among the research objectives, the sources of relevant data, the data collection instruments as well as the data analysis techniques are explained in the following table:

Objectives of the study	Sources of data	Instruments	Data analysis techniques
To find out learners' linguistic, affective, socio-economic and institutional factors that affect the development of speaking English	EFL learners of class X	Closed ended questionnaire	Statistical
	English teachers	Interview	Content analysis
To compare between rural and urban students' spoken English performance	EFL learners of class X	Speaking test	Statistical
To find out the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' performance in spoken English	English teachers	Interview	Thematic analysis
		Closed ended questionnaire	Statistical & speaking test rubric
		Open ended questionnaire	Content Analysis
		Classroom observation checklist	Thematic & Statistical
	EFL learners of class X	Classroom observation checklist	Thematic & Statistical

Table 6: Scaffolding of the study

3.11 Data Analysis Procedure

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed using a triangulation mixed-method design in this mixed method study. The findings from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data were merged in order to interpret the study. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data that were collected from various primary and secondary sources, the appropriate descriptive information was added in addition to the statistical findings.

3.11.1 Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed and interpreted by using statistical tool. At first, the participants' personal data was analyzed by using the percentage and frequency in each question. Later, the quantitative data gathered from the closed-ended questionnaire about different factors impacting the development of speaking skill was analyzed by using computer software. SPSS 25 Version, Microsoft Excel, AMOS 26 were used to analyze statistical data, and Microsoft Word was used to explain and present data. The data from speaking test was analyzed by using a speaking test rubric which focuses on 4 main areas: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall fluency. Based on the overall score of the learners in the speaking test and using paired t-test, the results of rural and urban students' speaking performance were analyzed.

3.11.2 Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative data from the open ended questionnaires, classroom observation and interview was subjected to a thematic and content analysis. The research objectives were taken into account when the qualitative data from the open-ended questionnaire, interviews and classroom observations were first accurately transcribed, followed by appropriate coding and possible theme classification. The report was then generated following proper analysis.

3.12 Data Triangulation

Triangulation is important for confirming the validity and reliability of the study when few methods of data collection and data analysis are used in a single study. According to Salahuddin (2018), data triangulation can be useful to examine and justify the consistency among the collected data from different sources in a single study. As the researcher has used different sources and instruments for collecting data and different techniques of analyzing the collected data, data triangulation is also important for this study.

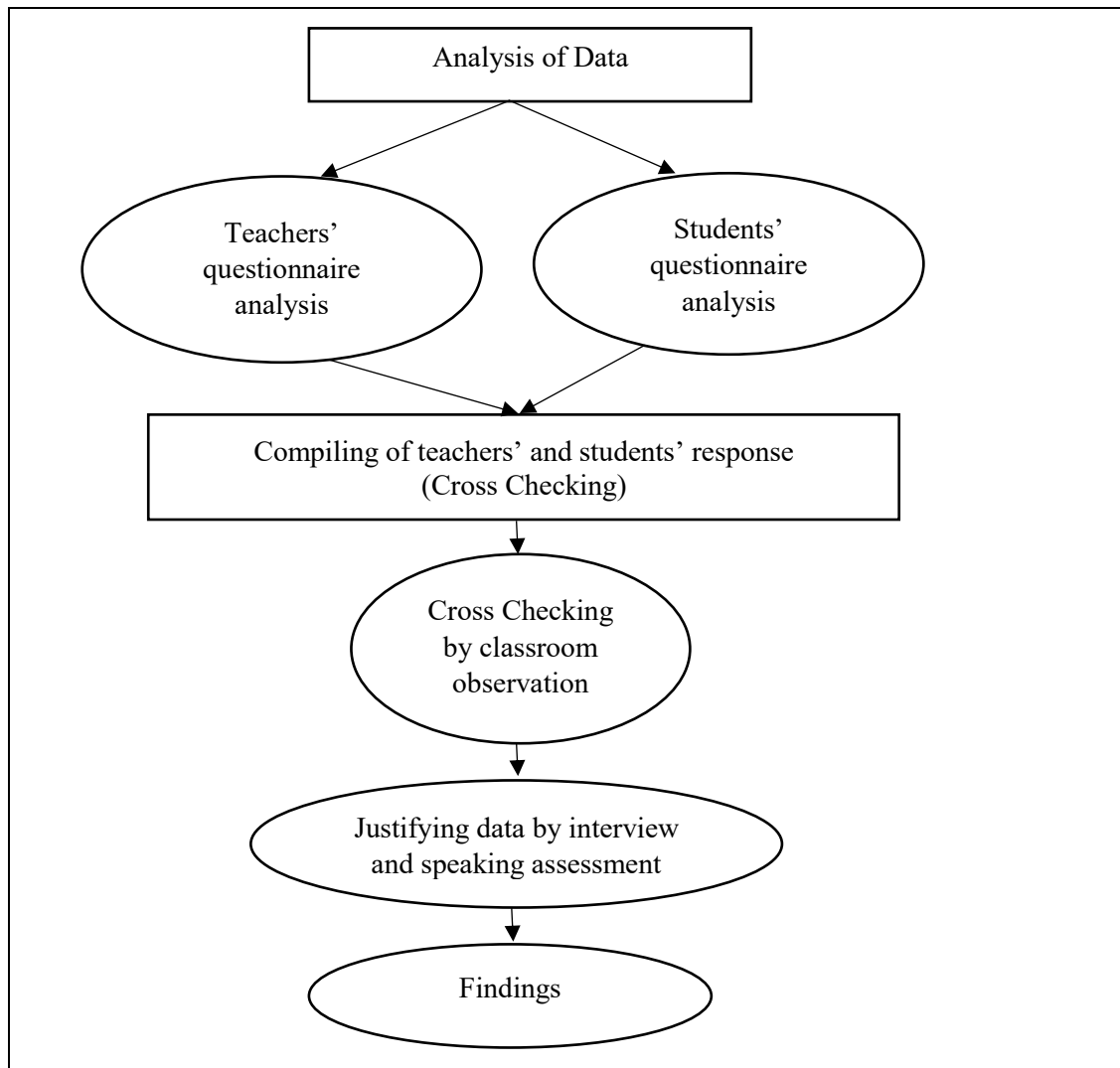


Figure 10: Triangulation of research finding

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of data analysis is to attain the expected results of any study that has been prescribed as the objectives or questions of the study (Hossain, 2022). At first, the socio-demographic features of the respondents has been presented in the chapter. The statistical data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel, SPSS 25 Version, AMOS 26 and the data were explained and presented using Microsoft Word. Simple statistics like percentage, mean, and frequency have been employed throughout the study. Open ended questions, classroom observation, and teachers' interviews were used to collect the qualitative data. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using content and thematic analysis approach. The opinions of the responders have occasionally also been added for clarification.

4.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics of participants

The questionnaire designed for teachers and students has two sections where the first section is about the demographics of the participants and the second section is about the primary questions' statements in order to collect their opinions on the research problems. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that impact the learners' speaking English skill in both rural and urban areas as well as to make a comparative analysis between rural and urban students' performance in English speaking at the SSC level in Bangladesh.

4.2.1 Students' socio-demographic Characteristics

The socio-demographic data of students includes gender, age, school's name, school's location, and group of the students. Table 7 shows that both Males and Females make up 50.0% of respondents, implying that, Males and Females represent equally in the study. Moreover, the age of 16 years stands for 36.0% of all respondents (students) which is the highest. The second-highest age, which accounts for 28.5% of all respondents (students), is 17 years old. The survey was carried out in 10 different schools where 5 schools were urban and 5 rural. 20 students participated in the survey questionnaire from each school. In urban areas, the major number of students belong to the science group which is 51% but most of the students in rural areas belongs to the Humanities group which is 46%. Performance in speaking English is one of the dependent variables and there are more than two independent variables in the current study. All of these items were rated on a five-point rating scale in the study, ranging from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5 points).

Demographics		Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		Female	100	50.0
		Male	100	50.0
Age		14	15	7.5
		15	54	27.0
		16	72	36.0
		17	57	28.5
		18	2	1.0
School		A High School (Govt.)	20	10.0
		B High School & College (Govt.)	20	10.0
		C High School (Non-govt.)	20	10.0
		G High School	20	10.0
		D School & College (Non-govt.)	20	10.0
		E High School (Non-govt.)	20	10.0
		F High School	20	10.0
		H High School	20	10.0
		I High School	20	10.0
		J High School	20	10.0
Location		Rural	100	50.0
		Urban	100	50.0
Group	Urban	Business Studies	28	28
		Humanities	21	21
		Science	51	51
	Rural	Business Studies	16	16
		Humanities	46	46
		Science	37	38

Table 7: Demographics of Respondents (Students)

Histogram of the age of students

From the following graph, we may conclude that the age of students is normally distributed with a mean of 15.89 years and a standard deviation of 0.941.

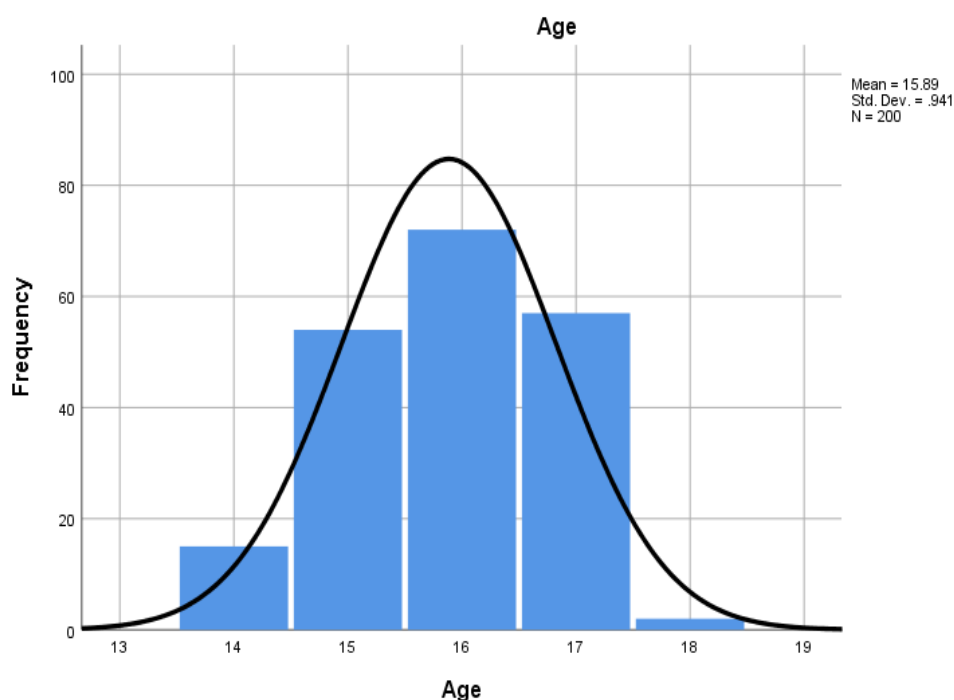


Figure 11: Histogram of the age of students

4.2.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants (Teachers)

English teachers are mostly graduates from various colleges or universities in secondary schools. The socio-demographic features of the teachers who participated in the study are displayed in the following table. Among the participants, 55% were male and 45% females. Besides, 85% were working as assistant teacher. In this study, 50% teachers were selected from urban schools and 50% from rural schools. The table shows that majority of rural teachers hold a B.Com, BA, MA, M.S.S., M.Sc., and M.B.A degree and most of them also held B. Ed degrees in addition to the bachelor and/or master degree. On the other hand, most of the urban teachers hold MA degree with M.Ed. The table also displays that only 10% of English teachers in rural areas have completed Masters in English where 90% teachers in urban schools have MA degree in English. The majority of urban teachers have engaged in different training programs like BIAM, SEQAEP, and NAEM in addition to CPD, CLT, and ELTIP, whereas the majority of rural teachers have participated only in CLT, ELTIP, and CPD training. During analyzing the collected data, teachers' educational qualification and teaching experience have been considered as an independent variable in this study.

Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	9	45.0
	Male	11	55.0
Designation	Assistant Head Teacher & Senior Teacher	1	5.0
	Assistant Teacher	17	85.0
	Lecturer	1	5.0
	Senior Teacher	1	5.0
School	A High School (Govt.)	2	10.0
	B High School & College (Govt.)	2	10.0
	C High School (Non-govt.)	2	10.0
	D School & College (Non-govt.)	2	10.0
	E High School (Non-govt.)	2	10.0
	F High School	2	10.0
	G High School	2	10.0
	H High School	2	10.0
	I High School	2	10.0
	J High School	2	10.0
Location	Rural	10	50.0
	Urban	10	50.0
Educational Qualification (Rural)	B.Com, B.Ed.	1	10.0
	BA, B. Ed.	2	20.0
	MA in English	1	10.0
	BA, B.Ed	1	10.0
	M.S.S., B. Ed.	1	10.0
	M.Sc, B.Ed.	2	20.0
	M.Sc.	1	10.0
	M.Sc. & M.B.A.	1	10.0
Educational Qualification (Urban)	MA in English	3	30.0
	M.S.S. (B. Ed.)	1	10.0
	MA in English, M. Ed.	6	60.0
graduation/ post-graduation in English (Rural)	Yes	1	10.0
	No	9	90.0
graduation/ post-graduation in English (Urban)	Yes	9	90.0
	No	1	10.0
Professional training (Rural)	NIL	2	20.0
	CLT, ELTIP, CPD	2	20.0
	ELTIP, CPD	6	60.0
Professional training (Urban)	NIL	1	10.0
	BIAM, SEQAEP	1	10.0
	CLT, ELTIP	1	10.0
	CLT, ELTIP, CPD	1	10.0
	CLT, NAEM, CPD	1	10.0
	CLT, NAEM, ELTIP, CPD	2	20.0
	ELTIP	1	10.0
	ELTIP, CPD, BIAM, SEQAEP	1	10.0
	NAEM	1	10.0

Table 8: Demographics of the participants (English teachers)

The following table shows the teaching experiences of the participants of the study. According to the table, 20% have more than 30 years of teaching experiences. Most of teachers (45%) have 11-20 years of experiences and 20% have 0-5 years' experiences.

Teaching experiences (in years)	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	30 years above
Percentage of teachers' numbers	20%	0%	20%	25%	10%	5%	20%

Table 9: Teaching experiences of the surveyed English teachers

4.3 Questionnaire analysis

Two sets of questionnaires were given to English teachers and students separately since the study intends to determine the factors that impact learners' English speaking development. The students' questionnaire included 27 closed ended questions and the questionnaire for teachers involved 8 open ended and 5 closed ended questions. The data from students' questionnaire were analyzed statistically where data from teachers' questionnaire were analyzed using both statistical and content analysis.

4.3.1 Analysis of students' questionnaire

Two sections made up the students' questionnaire (See Appendix I); the first piece dealt with participant information, while the second component comprised four tables of organized questions pertaining to various factors. 7 statements in Table A were intended to elicit participant opinions regarding the linguistic factors that impact the development of students' speaking skill. 5 questions in Table B asked the students to share their opinions about the affective factors which influence the development of their speaking abilities. Table C includes 6 questions which were intended to elicit students' opinions about socioeconomic issues influencing the growth of their speaking abilities. The constructed questions (a total of 8 questions) in Table D were designed to elicit feedback from students regarding the institutional variables that have influence in the development of their speaking abilities. To analyze the data from students' questionnaire, the statistical techniques Confirmatory Factor Analysis has been used.

4.3.1.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

4.3.1.1.1 Path Analysis

The framework for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) at the initial stage was prepared by AMOS 26.

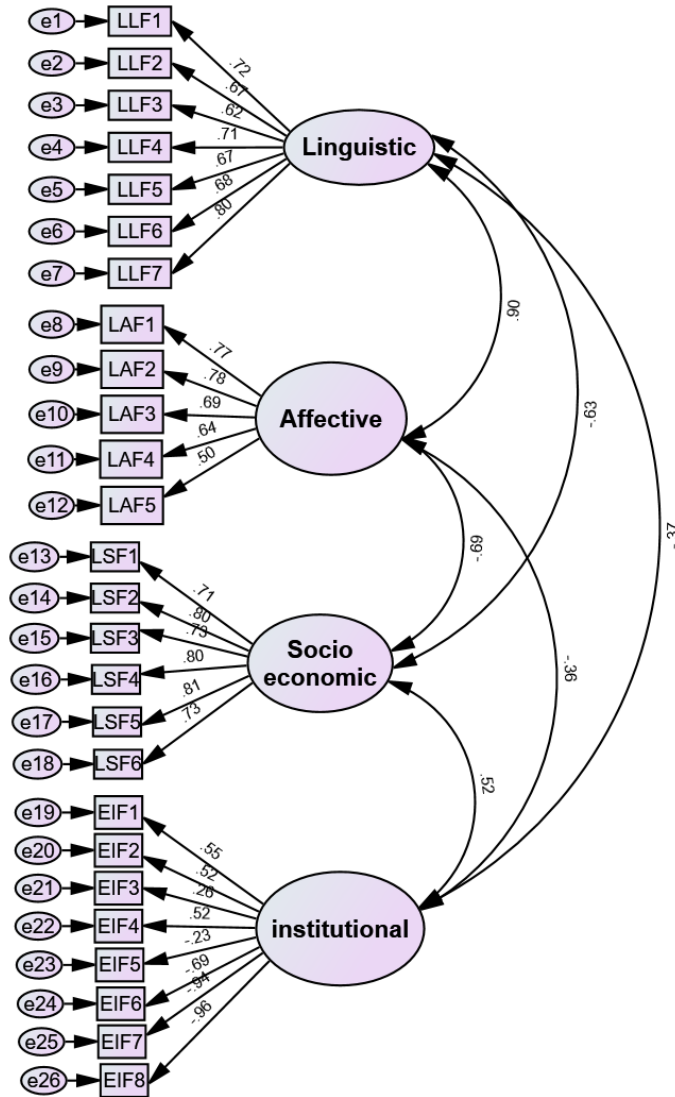


Figure 12: Path Analysis for CFA

In this study, 26 observed variables help to identify the latent variables of the study. The analysis runs on 200 samples of both urban and rural secondary-level students. The latent variables are learners' linguistic competence, learners' affective factors, learners' socio-economic factors, and also factors related to the institution respectively. From the path view, it can be concluded that learners' affective factors and learners' linguistic competence are strongly co-related with a significant correlation coefficient of positive 0.69. Besides, learners' affective factors and learners' socio-economic factors are moderately correlated with a significant coefficient of negative 0.69. The observed variable LLF7 which is 'students cannot express their thoughts and ideas in English' has the highest impact on learners' linguistic competence with a strength of 0.80. LLF1, LLF6, LLF5, and LLF2 also have an impact with

strengths of 0.71, 0.68, 0.67, and 0.67 respectively on learners' linguistic factors and so on. However, learners' affective factors are mostly impacted by LAF2 observed variable with a coefficient value of 0.78. LAF1, LAF3, LAF4, and LAF5 also have an impact with coefficients of 0.77, 0.69, 0.64, and 0.50 respectively on learners' Affective factors. Besides, the most influential observed variable to socio-economic factors is LSF5 which is 'students have access to the internet to learn English speaking'. LSF4, LSF2, LSF3, LSF6, and LAF1 also have an impact with coefficients of 0.80, 0.80, 0.73, 0.73, and 0.71 respectively on learners' socioeconomic factors. Similarly, the observed variable EIF8 which is 'students do not have any online facilities in the classroom' has the highest impact (-0.96) on the factors related to the institution. EIF7, EIF6, EIF1, EIF2, and EIF4 also have an impact with coefficients of -0.94, -0.69, 0.55, 0.52, and 0.52 respectively on the factors related to the institutions.

4.3.1.1.2 Regression Estimates using MLE Approach

The estimated values of regression estimates are obtained by the Maximum likelihood estimation procedure.

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
LLF1	<---	Linguistic	1			
LLF2	<---	Linguistic	0.89	0.099	8.984	***
LLF3	<---	Linguistic	0.699	0.084	8.307	***
LLF4	<---	Linguistic	0.977	0.101	9.641	***
LLF5	<---	Linguistic	0.919	0.102	9.029	***
LLF6	<---	Linguistic	0.786	0.086	9.169	***
LLF7	<---	Linguistic	1.185	0.11	10.765	***
LAF1	<---	Affective	1			
LAF2	<---	Affective	1.037	0.093	11.205	***
LAF3	<---	Affective	0.907	0.093	9.742	***
LAF4	<---	Affective	0.665	0.074	8.973	***
LAF5	<---	Affective	0.696	0.101	6.856	***
LSF1	<---	Socioeconomic	1			
LSF2	<---	Socioeconomic	1.108	0.105	10.544	***
LSF3	<---	Socioeconomic	1.102	0.114	9.648	***
LSF4	<---	Socioeconomic	1.208	0.113	10.655	***
LSF5	<---	Socioeconomic	1.242	0.116	10.692	***
LSF6	<---	Socioeconomic	1.131	0.117	9.692	***
EIF1	<---	Institutional	1			
EIF2	<---	Institutional	0.858	0.139	6.186	***
EIF3	<---	Institutional	0.406	0.119	3.402	***
EIF4	<---	Institutional	0.806	0.13	6.176	***
EIF5	<---	Institutional	-0.319	0.106	-3.009	***
EIF6	<---	Institutional	-1.462	0.196	-7.445	***
EIF7	<---	Institutional	-2.17	0.247	-8.797	***
EIF8	<---	Institutional	-2.227	0.251	-8.859	***

***indicates significance at a 5% level of significance.

Table 10: Regression weights by maximum likelihood estimation.

Table 10 shows the regression estimate beta values along with the corresponding standard error and P-value. The statistical significance of a particular estimate is indicated by P-value <0.05. All the variables under learners' affective factors have a significant impact on the speaking English performance at the SSC level. But the most influential variable is LAF-2 (Beta= 1.037, S.E. = 0.093, P-value<0.05). Other variables also have a significant impact on the study. i.e., LAF3 (Beta= 0.907, S.E. = 0.093, P-value<0.05), LAF5 (Beta= 0.696, S.E. = 0.101, P-value<0.05), LAF4 (Beta= 0.665, S.E. = 0.074, P-value<0.05). Similarly, all the variables under the learner's socio-economic factors have a significant effect on performance in speaking English at the SSC level. The most influential variable is LSF-5 (Beta= 1.242, S.E. = 0.116, P-value<0.05). LSF4 (Beta= 1.208, S.E. = 0.113, P-value<0.05), LSF2 (Beta= 1.108, S.E. = 0.105, P-value<0.05), LSF3 (Beta= 1.102, S.E. = .114, P-value<0.05) also have significant impact on the study. Again, we can say Factors related to learners' educational institution also have a significant impact on performance in speaking English with EIF-8 (Beta= -2.227, S.E. = 0.251, P-value<0.05), EIF7 (Beta= -2.170, S.E. = 0.247, P-value<0.05), EIF6 (Beta= -1.462, S.E. = 0.196, P-value<0.05). Similarly, learner's linguistic competence also influences the adverse effect on the study with LLF7 (Beta= 1.185, S.E. = 0.11, P-value<0.05).

4.3.1.2. Model Summary

In this model the number of distinct sample moments is 351 and, the number of distinct parameters to be estimated is 58, So that, Degrees of freedom are $(351 - 58) = 293$. Because minimum Chi-square = 973.959 was achieved with 293 degrees of freedom and P-value = 0.000. So, the model fits reasonably well and all the mechanism is statistically significant.

4.3.1.3 Comparative Analysis between Rural and Urban students' influential factors

Table 11 shows the estimated beta values of regression estimates, which are run on the similar CFA module but for rural and urban school students separately whereas the previous model shows the overall scenario.

			Rural School			Urban School		
			Estimate	S.E.	P	Estimate	S.E.	P
LLF1	<---	Linguistic	1			1		
LLF2	<---	Linguistic	0.833	0.127	***	0.859	0.096	***
LLF3	<---	Linguistic	0.408	0.074	***	0.519	0.113	***
LLF4	<---	Linguistic	0.694	0.11	***	0.808	0.109	***
LLF5	<---	Linguistic	0.262	0.078	***	0.88	0.129	***
LLF6	<---	Linguistic	0.268	0.066	***	0.691	0.112	***
LLF7	<---	Linguistic	0.773	0.115	***	0.987	0.104	***
LAF1	<---	Affective	1			1		
LAF2	<---	Affective	1.375	0.189	***	0.722	0.127	***
LAF3	<---	Affective	1.265	0.182	***	0.742	0.143	***
LAF4	<---	Affective	0.47	0.109	***	0.721	0.126	***
LAF5	<---	Affective	0.449	0.182	***	0.779	0.161	***
LSF1	<---	Socioeconomic	1			1		
LSF2	<---	Socioeconomic	1.026	0.25	***	0.951	0.221	***
LSF3	<---	Socioeconomic	2.187	0.379	***	0.241	0.173	0.163
LSF4	<---	Socioeconomic	1.875	0.34	***	0.637	0.188	***
LSF5	<---	Socioeconomic	1.761	0.351	***	0.241	0.12	***
LSF6	<---	Socioeconomic	0.915	0.218	***	1.027	0.274	***
EIF1	<---	institutional	1			1		
EIF2	<---	institutional	0.347	0.321	0.281	1.247	0.35	***
EIF3	<---	institutional	-1.203	0.481	***	0.524	0.241	***
EIF4	<---	institutional	0.958	0.406	***	0.938	0.302	***
EIF5	<---	institutional	-0.307	0.293	0.294	-0.558	0.258	***
EIF6	<---	institutional	-1.431	0.511	***	-1.626	0.459	***
EIF7	<---	institutional	-3.523	1.152	***	-3.038	0.704	***
EIF8	<---	institutional	-3.259	1.067	***	-3.139	0.724	***

***indicates significance at a 5% level of significance.

Table 11: Regression weights by maximum likelihood estimation (urban vs. rural school)

All the variables under learners' linguistic factors have more or less effects on both rural and urban learners' performance in speaking English. Among the linguistic variables, the most influential variable among the linguistic variables in rural schools is LLF 2 (Beta= 0.833, S.E. = 0.127, P-value<0.05), and in urban schools is LLF7 (Beta= 0.987, S.E. = 0.104, P-value<0.05). Among the variables under linguistic factors, the rural students differ from urban students highly in LLF5 (Beta= 0.262 in rural areas and Beta= 0.88 in urban areas) and LLF6 (Beta= 0.268 in rural areas and Beta= 0.691 in urban areas). Similarly, all the variables under learners' affective factors influence their performance of speaking English at the SSC level. The most influential variable under affective factors is LAF-2 (Beta= 1.375, S.E. = 0.189, P-

value<0.05) among rural students and LAF-5 (Beta= 0.779, S.E. = 0.161, P-value<0.05) among urban students. The rural and urban learners provide different opinions regarding variable LAF-2 where Estimate Beta 1.375 for rural students and Estimate Beta 0.722 for urban students. Along with learners' linguistic and affective factors, the variables under socio-economic factors also play an important role in the performance of speaking English. Here the most influential variable is LSF3 (Beta=2.187) in rural areas and LSF6 (Beta=1.027) in urban areas with statistical significance. Among the variables under socio-economic factors, the rural students differ significantly from urban students highly in LSF3 (Beta= 2.187 in rural areas and Beta= 0.241 in urban areas), LSF4 (Beta= 1.875 in rural areas and Beta =0.637 urban areas) and LSF5 (Beta=1.761 in rural areas and Beta= 0.241 in urban areas). Again, from the analysis, we can say that factors related to learners' educational institutions also have a significant impact on learners' performance in speaking English. The most influential variable in rural schools is EIF4 (Beta= 0.958) and in urban schools the most significant variable is EIF2 (Beta=1.247) which differs highly from the rural school (Beta=0.347). Finally, we may conclude that among the factors the most influencing factor both for urban and rural areas is the institutional factors having higher absolute estimated beta values compared to other factors.

4.3.1.4 Ranking of different influential factors

The following table was constructed based on the average of the absolute beta estimate value to obtain the most and least influential factor in both rural and urban areas.

Area	Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Rural	Institutional	1.504	0.604	1
	Socioeconomic	1.461	0.308	2
	Affective	0.912	0.166	3
	Linguistic	0.605	0.095	4
Urban	Institutional	1.509	0.434	1
	Linguistic	0.821	0.111	2
	Affective	0.793	0.139	3
	Socioeconomic	0.683	0.195	4

Table 12: Ranking of factors

According to the analysis, both rural and urban students agreed that institutional factor is the most influential factor including a mean of (1.504) and a standard deviation of (0.604) in rural

school and a mean of (1.509) and standard deviation of (0.434) in urban school. According to the rural students, socio-economic factor is the second dominant factor where urban students ranked it as the least dominant factor. Both rural and urban students ranked affective factor in the third position.

4.3.2 Analysis of teachers' questionnaire

The second questionnaire was developed for the teachers which had also two sections. The first section was related to the personal information of the participants. The second section had two types of questions such as closed ended and open ended questions. Closed ended questions (See in Appendix II) concerned how much the teachers enjoyed teaching speaking English, whether the speaking exercises described in the textbook are simple to carry out in the classroom, whether they inspire students to speak English in the classroom and also outside of the classroom, and how they respond when students make mistakes while speaking English. The open ended questions (See Appendix II) focused on the teachers' perspectives on the value of speaking English, the amount of time they allotted for it in class, the speaking activities they carried out, the use of additional materials and back-up support, the significance of testing speaking ability, and their recommendations for improving the speaking class.

4.3.2.1 Analysis of close ended questions: The close ended questionnaires were analyzed by using frequency and percentage. The following table shows that all the urban teachers and 90% rural teachers agreed that they 'like to teach speaking skill'. Where 90% urban teachers agreed that 'the speaking activities mentioned in the textbook are easy to conduct' only 30% teachers of rural areas agreed, 30% disagreed and 40% teachers remained neutral. All the teachers of urban schools inspire students to speak English inside and outside the classroom. Though all the teachers of rural areas inspire students to speak in English inside the classroom, 80% teachers inspire them to speak English outside of the classroom. Most of the teachers do not become irritated if students make mistakes.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Like to teach speaking English (Rural)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	1	10.0
	Agree	9	90.0
Like to teach speaking English (Urban)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	10	100.0
speaking activities mentioned in the textbook are easy to conduct in the classroom (Rural)	Disagree	3	30.0
	Neutral	4	40.0
	Agree	3	30.0
speaking activities mentioned in the textbook are easy to conduct in the classroom (Urban)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	1	10.0
	Agree	9	90.0
inspire students to speak in English inside the classroom (Rural)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	10	100.0
inspire students to speak in English inside the classroom (Urban)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	10	100.0
motivate students to speak in English outside the classroom (Rural)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	2	20.0
	Agree	8	80.0
motivate students to speak in English outside the classroom (Urban)	Disagree	-	-
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	10	100.0
get irritated if students make mistakes during speaking (Rural)	Disagree	10	100.0
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	-	-
get irritated if students make mistakes during speaking (Urban)	Disagree	9	90.0
	Neutral	-	-
	Agree	1	10.0

Table13: Variable responses (Teachers)

4.3.2.2 Analysis of open-ended questions

The first question was whether the teachers use Bangla in the English class or not. 80% teachers use Bangla in the class where 20% urban teachers do not use Bangla. Among the teachers who use Bangla in the class, 47.1% teachers use half of the time, 41.2% use in one-third of the time and 11.8% teachers from rural areas always use Bangla in the English class.

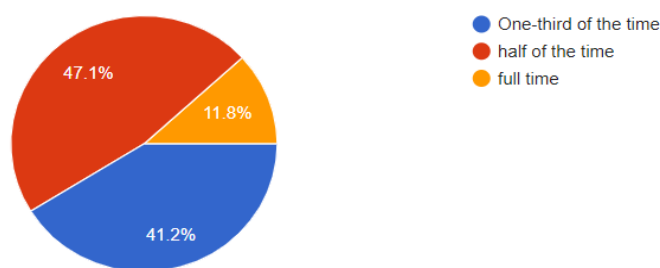


Figure 13: Time spent using Bangla in the English Classroom

The second question was about the importance of extra materials besides textbook in order to teach speaking skill. 75% participants agreed that they need extra materials and according to the 25% teachers, textbook is enough to develop learners' speaking skill.

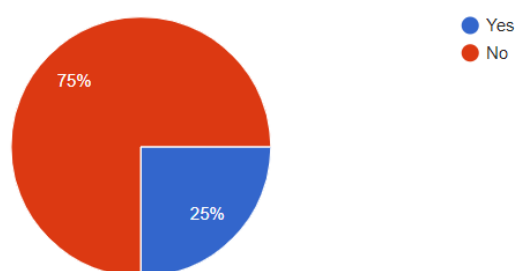


Figure 14: Importance of extra materials besides textbook in speaking class

Teachers were also asked about the types of extra materials they want to use in speaking class. Most of the teachers mentioned different audio-visual materials, English news including BBC news, songs, poems, movies, conversation, blog, documentaries, reports, speech, audio book, English educational videos, speaking skill related books etc. They also mentioned about the importance of multimedia classroom having projector, speaker, recorder and online facilities as well as English language club or debating club in order to develop speaking skill.

The third question was about their opinion regarding the importance of learning Speaking English. All the participant agreed that learners need to develop the speaking skill and they mentioned different reasons. According to the participants, the reasons are following:

- English is an international language. So, students need to learn English for communication with other countries.
- They need to learn English in order to get a good job.

- They need to learn English for being a competent and skilled citizen.
- Students need to learn speaking English for going outside.
- Students need to learn English for doing business with outside world
- Students need to develop speaking skill if they want to go abroad for higher education.
- Speaking English will increase learners' social status and prestige
- By learning English, they can establish them as world citizen.

The fourth question was that if electricity gets disconnected, they have back up support to use audio visual materials or not. No rural schools have the support where 80% urban schools have the back up support though electricity is not interrupted in urban areas. In the urban schools, they have generator or IPS which supports from 3 hours to all day long. The following chart shows the scenario.

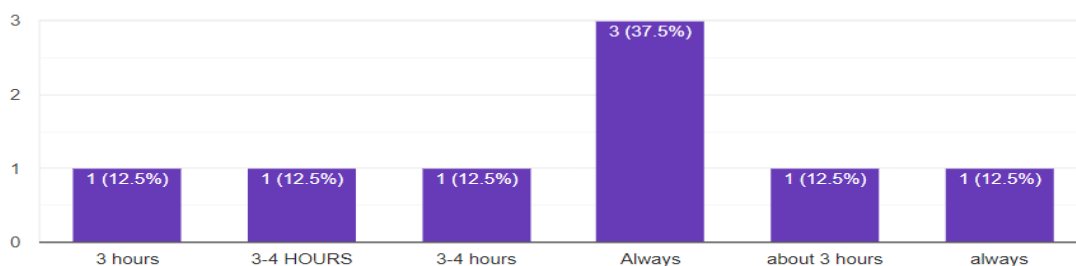


Figure 15: Ability of back-up support in urban schools if electricity interrupts.

The fifth question was about the importance of testing speaking skill and all the participant agreed about its importance. When they were asked the reasons, they replied the following:

- If speaking skill is tested, students will be more focused to learn it.
- If mark is allotted on speaking skill, the teacher will be bound to teach the skill and the students will also be serious to achieve the skill.
- Testing speaking skill is important to put emphasis on speaking skill
- Both teachers and students will be motivated to do speaking activities in the classroom.
- Parents will also be more aware of developing learners' English speaking skill.
- Testing of speaking is necessary to check how much students are able to use the learnt language in real life.

- Communicative competence involves four skills where two skills (reading and writing) are tested. The aim of curriculum to make students competent communicatively. For achieving the aim, the assessment procedure should involve the testing of speaking skill.

The sixth question was on how much time the teachers spend in a week for teaching English speaking and it was discovered that most of the teachers from rural areas does not teach speaking skill separately. They have no allotted time for teaching speaking skill. But in a week, they spent 10 to 50 minutes that helps the learners to learn English speaking. On the contrary, the urban teachers speak in English and engage students in speaking activities from 1 hour to 2.5 hours in a week.

The seventh question was about the challenges that teachers have to face in teaching speaking English. The challenges mentioned by the participants are discussed here:

- Most of the students cannot understand if teachers speak in English
- There is no supportive environment for teaching English speaking skill
- Many students not attentive the class and they have no interest in speaking English. So, only a few students participate in speaking activities.
- Besides, there is extra class load on the teachers and they cannot get enough time to take preparation for speaking class.
- Students have linguistic problems and even some rural students cannot read English accurately.
- As a classroom consists of many students, teachers cannot concentrate on each of the students.
- The class time is insufficient and therefore teachers cannot teach all the language skills.
- The parents are not aware, especially in rural areas. Only class time is not enough for developing speaking skill. Parents support is important.
- Congested classroom with no modern facilities, no audio/video facilities, and no projector.
- Students' mocking approach to other students who speak in English and their tendency to use Bangla instead of English.
- Teachers do not get the environment of practising English speaking, therefore they are not comfortable and confident in teaching speaking skill.

The last question was about teachers suggestions on how to make the speaking class better. The suggestions from the teachers were more or less similar. They are discussed following.

- The number of students in speaking class should be limited so that teachers can manage the class easily without being authoritative and ensure each students' participation in the speaking activities.
- Different audio-visual material should be arranged by the authority so that teachers can make the speaking class more interesting and enjoyable to the learners.
- Supportive 'English environment' should be created in the institution so that students can practise speaking English freely without any anxiety and hesitation.
- The parents should be more aware about the importance of speaking English and they need to be involved in the overall teaching-learning process.
- All the teachers should get proper training to implement the objective of the curriculum which is to develop students' communicative competence.

4.4 Findings from classroom observations

One of the main methods that the researcher used for collecting data in the study was classroom observation. The researcher went to the selected ten schools to collect data through classroom observation. Ten classes on 'English for Today' had been observed. Among them, 5 classes were from rural schools and another 5 from urban schools. During observation, the field notes were recorded by the observer to investigate the speaking activities and interactions between English teachers and students in the classroom. The participants' names are not mentioned and they are named as T1 to T10 in accordance with the study's ethical standards. The average duration of a class is 49.50 minutes with a standard deviation of 3.689 having a range from 45 to 55 minutes. The graphical representation of the class duration variable is shown in a histogram.

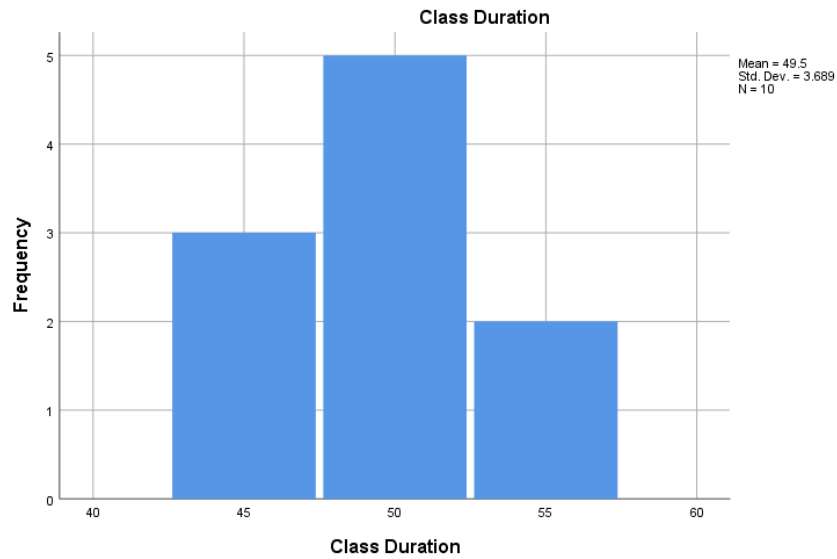


Figure 16: Histogram of class duration

The average number of students present in the classes was approximately 53 with a standard deviation of 2.625 having a range from 38 to 63. The graphical representation of the student's attendance variable is shown in the following histogram:

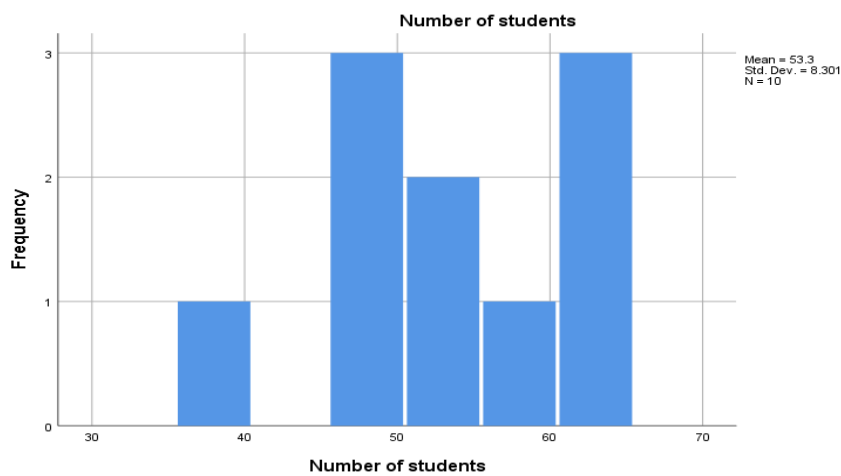


Figure 17: Histogram of number of students in the observed classes

4.4.1 Findings from classroom observations in rural areas

At first the researcher observed five English classrooms of grade X from 5 rural schools of Noakhali District. In the five observed classes, the speaking activities mentioned in the textbook were not practised in the classroom. As there were no speaking activities in the class, students did not speak in English. Teachers just read the English text from the book and translated them into Bangla. Sometimes, they asked the students to write down the complex vocabularies with Bangla meaning. The teachers from rural areas used Bangla most of the time. Besides, there were limited interaction between teacher and students and they mostly used Bangla during communication. But in the English classes of School G and School I from rural areas, teachers asked students some questions from the textbook and students answered the questions orally from the text in English. When students committed mistakes during replying to the questions, the teacher provided immediate feedback. The learner-learner interaction for the purpose of learning was absent in most of the classes in rural areas. There was no group work or pair work in the classroom. But when teachers provided individual work, students were communicating with each other but they used Bangla for interaction. Though the speaking activities were not practised formally in the rural schools, some teachers used English to instruct students sometimes. So, the average time they spent in speaking English varied from 3-5 minutes in a class. The problems that were found in most of the classroom of rural areas are large number of students in a single classroom, inattentive students, poor linguistic proficiency of the students, students' high affective factors, no supportive environment, dominating nature of few students, teachers' authoritative attitude etc. But the most important thing observed by the researcher is teachers' own English proficiency. Most of the teachers in rural schools did not speak in English in the class. Though sometimes few teachers tried to speak in English, they could not speak correctly and confidently. While teaching in the classroom at F high school, the teacher (T 6) made numerous pronunciation errors. In addition, he read the passage from Unit 5's lesson 1 (See the Appendix VI) literally, emphasizing the denotative meaning without paying attention to the connotative one. For example, by 'whispering wind' he explained in Bangla 'batas kanakani karche' (the wind which is whispering) and by 'dancing flames' he meant 'aguna naciteche' (the fire is dancing). The researchers found a number of issues, but teachers own level of expertise was appeared to be the biggest barrier to students' speaking skill development in rural areas. Additionally, the

learners' inadequate linguistic knowledge and affective characteristics acted as barriers to the development of their speaking skill.

4.4.2 Findings from classroom observations in urban areas

The researcher visited five urban schools in Dhaka city and observed five English classes of grade X. Two classes were observed from govt. high schools and three from non-govt. high schools. The speaking exercises described in the textbook were not practiced in three classrooms from where two were govt. high school (School A & School B) and one was non-govt. high school (C). In these three schools, the classroom was teacher-centered and there were more than 45 students in each of the classes. The teachers read the text with Bangla meaning and asked the students answer the questions mentioned in the book. Teachers interacted with students for giving instructions and asking about their problems in understanding the text. Though there was limited interaction between the learners, they used Bangla mostly. In these three schools, the total amount of time spent on speaking English ranged from 4 to 7 minutes. The other two observed classes from non-govt. high schools (School D and School E) conducted some speaking activities in their classrooms. In the English class of school D, the students engaged in speaking activities at the beginning of the class. The teachers asked the students to discuss about the picture (See Appendix VII) from the lesson 1 (Unit Eight) of the English textbook and to answer the questions. Students were discussing in English mostly and finally answered the questions in English too. In school E, the teacher started the class with speaking activities from lesson 2 of Unit Eleven (See Appendix VII) where two pictures were given in the text and the students were asked to discuss about the relationship between the pictures with the partner. Then they were asked to present in front of the classroom. There were interactions between the learners in the class though they sometimes used Bangla too. Teacher-students interaction were also available where English was used mostly. The overall time used in speaking activities varied from 8 to 10 minutes in these two schools. Compared to non-govt. schools, there were greater issues in the govt. schools. In addition to the lack of seating arrangements for communicative tasks, use of mother tongue, and the absence of multimedia classroom, which are also available in non-govt. schools, large class size, less participation of students, authoritative teachers controlling the large class, disgraceful behavior of a few students, etc. were the problems observed in government schools. Urban teachers were found to be more skilled in the English language and better trained in using a variety of activities in the classroom as compared to the teachers from rural areas. The

students were also found to be more competent in English language than the rural students though they have some affective issues too which influence the speaking skill.

4.5 Results of the speaking test

Initially, the speaking test was conducted with 40 students from different schools. Among the 40 student, half of them represented urban area and the rest were from rural area. After computing the obtained scores by rural and urban students, it was tested whether there is any significant difference between urban and rural students' performance in speaking English at the SSC level.

4.5.1 Speaking test scores of students from urban schools

In the speaking test conducted in urban schools, the highest score was 12 (out of 12) and the obtained scores of nine participants were more than 10. The average score obtained by the students of urban schools in speaking tests is 8.75.

School Name	Number of the students	Speaking time (out of 3 minutes)	Obtained scores in different categories of speaking				Total Score	Grade
			Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Fluency		
A (Govt. Boys')	1 (M)	2.53	2	2	2	2	8	C
	2 (M)	1.47	2	2	2	1	7	C
	3 (M)	2.48	3	2	3	3	11	B
	4 (M)	2.25	2	2	2	2	8	C
B (Govt. Girls')	1(F)	2.15	2	2	2	1	7	C
	2(F)	2.35	2	2	2	2	8	C
	3(F)	1.38	2	2	1	1	6	D
	4(F)	3.15	3	2	2	3	10	B
C (Non-govt.)	1(M)	2.43	1	1	2	2	6	D
	2(M)	2.17	1	1	2	3	7	C
	3(F)	1.57	2	2	2	1	7	C
	4(F)	2.33	2	2	3	3	10	B
D (Non-govt.)	1(M)	3.13	3	3	3	3	12	A
	2(M)	2.48	2	2	3	3	10	B
	3(F)	2.36	2	2	3	3	10	B
	4(F)	2.53	3	2	3	3	11	B
E (Non-govt.)	1(M)	2.14	2	1	2	3	8	C
	2(M)	2.38	2	2	3	3	10	B
	3(F)	2.43	2	2	2	3	9	C
	4(F)	2.29	3	2	2	3	10	B

Table 14: Speaking test scores of students from urban schools: (2 govt. and 3 non-govt. schools)

4.5.2 Speaking test scores of students from rural schools

The highest score obtained in rural schools in 8 and 12 participant (out of 20) obtained less than 5. Whereas the average score obtained by the students of urban schools is 8.75, in rural schools it is 3.85 which is quite lower than urban schools. Besides, Paired t-test has been used to find out whether there is any significant difference between urban and rural students' performance in Speaking English at the SSC level.

School Name	Number of the students	Speaking time (out of 3 minutes)	Obtained scores in different categories of speaking				Total Score	Grade
			Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Fluency		
F	1 (M)	2.56	2	1	1	2	6	D
	2 (M)	1.15	1	1	1	1	4	E
	3 (F)	1.00	0	0	0	0	0	F
	4 (F)	1.04	0	0	1	0	1	F
G	1(M)	1.05	1	1	1	1	4	E
	2(M)	2.20	2	2	1	2	7	C
	3(F)	.25	0	0	0	0	0	F
	4(F)	.55	1	1	1	1	4	E
H	1(M)	2.34	2	2	2	2	8	C
	2(M)	1.12	1	1	0	0	2	F
	3(F)	.34	0	0	0	0	0	F
	4(F)	1.55	2	2	1	1	6	D
I	1(M)	1.50	2	2	1	2	7	C
	2(M)	1.35	1	0	1	0	2	F
	3(F)	1.33	2	1	1	2	6	D
	4(F)	1.16	1	1	1	1	4	E
J	1(M)	1.26	1	1	0	0	2	F
	2(M)	1.08	0	0	0	0	0	F
	3(F)	1.39	2	2	2	2	8	C
	4(F)	1.47	2	1	2	1	6	D

M= male; F= Female

Table 15: Speaking test scores of students from rural schools (all non-govt. schools)

4.5.3 Paired t-test:

Let us consider the following hypothesis for paired t-test:

H₀: There is no significant difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance.

H₁: There is a significant difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance.

At a 5% level of significance, we will conduct the test.

Paired Samples Test								
Paired Differences						T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
USS - RSS	4.900	3.127	0.699	3.436	6.364	7.008	19	0.000

Table 16: t-Test

So, the test statistics $t = 7.008$ with 19 df indicate that we may reject the null hypothesis. So there is significant difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance.

4.6 Findings from the interview:

Ten teachers from rural and urban schools were interviewed in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing learners' speaking skill development and to determine the causes of the differences in speaking performance between rural and urban students. In accordance with the interview questions, the findings are discussed below:

1. What are the linguistic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?

Most of the interviewees have mentioned about linguistic factors that influence the speaking skill development. Knowledge of grammatical rules and adequate amount of vocabulary are required to speak in English according to them. T7 said, "The learners of rural areas do not possess enough linguistic proficiency. Without proper knowledge of the language it becomes difficult to develop speaking skill". T8 also added, "We get the students who cannot read English and cannot write even a single sentence correctly in English. How will you expect to develop their English speaking skill without linguistic knowledge?" Besides, pronunciation is also an important issues in developing speaking skill. Most of learners in both rural areas and urban areas do not get the enough exposure to the English language and therefore their listening ability and pronunciation skill which influence overall speaking skill are not developed. According to T6, "The foundation of a language is its grammar and vocabulary. A learner must

first understand the foundations of language before mastering any other ability, be it speaking, reading, or writing". T2 added, "Students know many vocabularies but most of them are unable to construct complete sentences using them and speak them out loud. Although some students have strong grammatical skills and receive high scores in exam, they struggle to create the correct tenses and use correct gender while speaking. So, the linguistic factors include grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening ability which influence learners' speaking skill development.

2. What are the affective/ psychological factors that affect students' speaking skill development?

All the participants agreed on the point that affective factors influence a lot in developing learners' speaking skill. The participant from rural areas emphasized that most of learners have shyness, lower confidence and higher anxiety. They are not motivated enough to learn speaking English. "Learners feel shy to speak in English in front of others and they are afraid of being mocked at by the fellow classmates," T8 remarked. T4 continued, "Learners frequently worry that if they make mistakes, other students will make fun of them." Additionally, according to T3, "the majority of learners do not have linguistic difficulties, but they do have some psychological issues that prevent them from participating in speaking activities in the classroom". According to the participants, the affective characteristics that have the biggest impact on learners' speaking skill performance are mainly their shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, confidence, and motivation.

3. What are the socio-economic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?

The social and economic position of learners have the most significant role in developing learners' speaking skill, according to the participants. Parents' education, parents jobs, family income, social status also have great influence on learners English speaking skill. The educated parents understand the importance of learning English and they inspire their children to develop English speaking skill from the beginning. Their children also get the opportunity to practise English with them. T8 said, "Most of the parents are uneducated in rural areas and cannot assist their children to learn English. Even they are not aware of the importance of learning English language". Besides education, parent's job and income also affect the development of language skill. Parents who have a good job and better financial ability can manage the cost of extra coaching center or house tutor in order to develop their children' English language skills.

The job holder parents also get the opportunity to observe the use of English in their job fields and therefore they become more conscious about the language skills of their children. Moreover, social status also influence the English skill development. "Some upper class families travel abroad with their kids to visit different countries where they get real exposure to the English language and they use English for communication in real situations," T4 stated. In addition, some students remain in environments where speaking English is a requirement, and if they are unable to do so, it could harm their prestige. According to the participants, the socio-economic aspects that affect learners' ability to speak in English are their parents' education, employment, financial ability, social status, and surrounding environment.

4. What are the institutional factors that affect students' speaking skill development?

The most common scenario in the secondary level institutions is its huge classroom with inadequate technical assistance. Most of the class consist of more than 50 students and the class time is usually around 50 minutes. According to T9, "There are more than 50 students in a classroom. I cannot focus on each of the students during any activities. Some students are genius and extrovert and they always try to respond if I ask any question. Most of teachers think that they get insufficient time to conduct speaking activities in the classroom. Despite the teachers' efforts to ensure student participation, they cannot manage the enormous class within the limited time. T7 said, "We feel pressure always to complete the syllabus for the exam and we do not get enough time to do speaking activities in the class. For example, the textbook includes common speaking activities like 'debate' or 'role play'. But how will you conduct a debate in 50 minutes when you have to teach other skills which will be tested in the exam"? So, testing has also great influence on learning. 'If speaking skill were tested in the exam, all the students, teachers and guardians would be sincere to develop English speaking skill. As there is no mark allotted on speaking, no one takes it seriously" said T5. Besides, Language speaking classroom should be a multimedia classroom with microphones, projector, recorder and other modern equipment which help to develop speaking skill smoothly. Additionally, teacher training affects student speaking ability since it can give teachers a good understanding of contemporary methods for leading speaking exercises in the classroom. Because many teachers must also teach other subjects in addition to English, the work load of the teachers is another significant consideration. As, they do not get enough time to think about students' needs and contexts, they cannot design useful and engaging speaking activities for the classroom. The size of the classroom, the amount of time given for each class, technical

support, work pressure, the pressure to complete the syllabus, teacher training programs, etc. were therefore the institutional factors that the participants recognized.

5. Among the factors (linguistic, affective, socio-economical and institutional), which factor does influence learners' speaking skill development most? Provide the reasons too.

Participants reported that socioeconomic and institutional factors had the greatest impact on learners' speaking skill development. The learners can resolve linguistic issues and overcome psychological difficulties if the institution and socioeconomic position help them. Four of the teachers thought that the institutional factor had the greatest influence. 2 teachers came from rural schools, and 2 teachers came from rural schools. Participants from rural schools talked about how institutional factors like large class, short class time, no technical support as well as untrained teachers impact negatively on the learners' speaking skill development. On the other hand, the other two participants from urban non-govt. schools discussed about how the institution can impact positively. One of the participant explained that because English is a second language in Bangladesh, it is harder for pupils to practice speaking outside the classroom. Therefore, the institution can have a major impact on developing learners' speaking skill. Another participant explained that institutions might affect the development of speaking ability by assuring teachers' competence, encouraging environments, and logistical support.

The teachers who selected socio-economic factor explained that they could pass only 50 minutes a day with the students and they had to teach all the language skills in the classroom. So, it became very difficult for them to develop learners' speaking skill within that short time. As students spend most of the time with parents and friends, they have higher impact on the learners. Besides, as speaking skill is not practised that much in the classroom, the educated family can support the learner academically and the solvent family can manage a tutor for them to develop speaking skill.

One participant (T6) selected linguistic factor who think that linguistic competency is the primary requirement for developing any skills.

Another participant (T3) selected affective factor that influences the speaking skill development. He explained that he had seen many students having higher score in grammar, reading or writing test but they did not want to participate in the speaking activities. Even

though sometimes they participated, they made many mistakes because of their affective factors. The following table shows the opinion of the participant about the factors.

Factors	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	TOTAL	Percentage
Linguistic competence						✓					1	10%
Affective factors			✓								1	10%
Socio-economic factors	✓		✓					✓		✓	4	40%
Institutional factors				✓	✓		✓		✓		4	40%

Table 17: The most influential factor affecting speaking skill development

6. Do you think that urban students perform better in speaking English than the rural students? If yes, what are the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance?

All 10 individuals who responded to this question agreed that urban students perform better in speaking English than the rural students and they each provided justifications for their conclusions. Three key themes had emerged when the interview data had been coded. They included quality of students and teachers, students' family background and institutional facilities. Findings on the themes covered in the interviews are discussed below:

I. The quality of students and teachers was discovered as one of major reasons behind the difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance in English. Most of the students do not possess enough language proficiency and they have lack of confidence and lack of motivation to speak in English. The students also suffers from anxiety and shyness during speaking. Most rural participants claimed that their schools have lower-quality students than the metropolitan ones. Without taking any form of test, students are accepted into rural schools. However, most institutions in urban regions require students to take an exam before they may be admitted. As a result, urban schools attract naturally talented kids as opposed to rural schools. Additionally, if parents have the financial means, some pupils who perform well in

rural areas are also sent to urban areas. On the contrary, the participants of urban areas asserted that there is a difference between the speaking performance of students in rural and urban areas because of the quality of both students and teachers. In addition to having better quality students overall, urban teachers are also more qualified and trained than those in rural areas.

II. Besides the quality of students and teachers, parents' education and economic status also create disparity between rural and urban schools. Most of the parents of rural students are not well educated like urban ones. The parent are not aware of the children's education at all. One of the participants (T7) from rural school stated, "There are also some parents who are not even aware of the class their child is enrolled in. What can you expect from them?" Besides, most of the urban parents are more stabled financially than the rural parents. Therefore the urban parents can afford extra tuition or coaching for their child in order to develop language proficiency. But one of the urban participants (T4) did not agreed to the point completely and stated, "It's not about how much you earn or you have, it's about how much you want to spend for your children's education". He added that most of urban parents are not from elite family but they spend a good portion of their monthly income for their children's educational expenditure. All the parents from rural areas are not impoverished but they do not have that much tendency to spend for their children's education. But both rural and urban participants agreed on the point that parents' education is one of the major reason behind the difference.

III. The difference between the rural and urban students' performance in speaking skill is also created because of the facilities provided by the institutions. The urban institution usually provides better facilities than the rural institutions do. There are typically 50 or fewer pupils in most urban classrooms, whereas there are typically more than 80 students in a rural classroom, even if not all of them are present at once. One of the rural participant (T8) claimed, "The urban teachers get more opportunity to attend different training programs and learn new methods and techniques to develop language skills. Besides, some of the urban institutions have multimedia classroom and language lab where they can make students practise speaking skill. Some of them also have other alternative facilities to use audio visual materials. Some teachers from urban areas engage students in different group work or pair work activities from textbooks but the rural teachers did not assign any group work or pair work in order to avoid chaotic situation in the large classroom. So, the overall facilities provided by the institution create a major difference between the speaking performance of students in rural and urban areas.

Chapter Five

Major Findings and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The researcher has presented major findings and discussion in this chapter. The findings of the two research questions of the study have been presented individually. Then the discussion of the research provides further explanation of the findings by comparing with those of other research of a similar nature.

5.2 Major findings of the study

The study was conducted based on two research questions. The first question was about the factors influencing the development of English speaking skill. More specifically, the first question sought to determine the linguistic, affective, socio-economic as well as institutional factors that affect the development of English speaking skill of the SSC level students in Bangladesh. The second question was about comparing rural and urban students' speaking performance and also identifying the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' performance in spoken English. After conducting the study, the answers of the research questions have been found. The findings are discussed in line with the research questions and the presentation of results in chapter four.

5.2.1 Findings of the first research question of the study

The first research question was-

What are the factors that affect secondary level students' English speaking skill development?

In order to find out the factors, data were collected from both teachers and students using questionnaire and interview. The collected data from students' questionnaire were analyzed statistically and the data from teachers' interview were analyzed using content analysis approach. The statistical analysis of the data showed that all the variables under linguistic, affective, socio-economic and institutional factors have significant influence in the development of learners' speaking skill. According to the results of the students' questionnaire, institutional factor is the most influential one with a mean of (1.504) and a standard deviation of (0.604) in rural schools and with a mean of (1.509) and standard deviation of (0.434) in

urban schools. While urban students identified socioeconomic factor as the least significant with a mean of (0.683) and standard deviation of (0.195), rural students ranked it as the second most dominant factor with a mean of (1.461) and standard deviation of (0.308). On the other hand, linguistic competence was identified as the second most important factor for speaking skill development by students from urban schools, but it was viewed as the least important factor by students from rural schools. Students from rural schools placed socio-economic position as second most influential factor and linguistic competence as the least influential factor because in spite of having linguistic competence, many rural students faced difficulties to develop speaking skill due to the socio-economic position. On the other hand, most of the urban students were comparatively from better socio-economic position. However, students from both urban and rural areas placed the affective factor in the third rank with a mean of (0.793) and standard deviation of (0.139) in urban schools and with a mean of (0.912) and standard deviation of (0.166) in rural schools. Though both urban and rural students provided similar opinions regarding the influences of institutional and affective factors, they gave different views about the influences of socio-economic and linguistic factors.

The result from the teachers' interview also revealed how all the mentioned factors influence the development of learners' English speaking skill. According to the teachers' opinions, different factors have influence in developing learners' speaking skill but institutional and socio-economic factors play the most dominant roles. As the most influential factor, 40% teachers selected institutional, 40% socio-economic, 10% linguistic and 10% affective factors. According to the teachers, if the learners are supported by the institution and the socio-economic position, they can solve the linguistic problems as well as overcome the psychological challenges. That is why, institutional and socio-economic factors are more influential.

5.2.2 Findings of the second research question of the study

The second research question was-

Is there any difference between rural and urban students' performance in speaking English at the secondary level? What are the reasons behind the difference?

The second question of the study was about the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance at the secondary level as well as the causes of the difference. In order to collect data about speaking performance, a speaking test was conducted in both rural and urban schools. According to the score of the speaking test, there is significant difference between

rural and urban students' speaking performance. Out of 12, the average score in urban schools was 8.75 where in rural schools, the average was 3.85. In urban school, the highest score was 12 and almost 50% participants obtained more than 10. On the other hand, the highest score in rural schools was 8 and 60% participant obtained less than 5. Besides, Paired t-test was also conducted to find out the difference. The test statistics $t = 7.008$ with 19 df indicates that there is significant difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance and concluded that students in urban schools perform better in spoken English than the students of rural schools.

In order to find out the reasons of the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance, data were collected from teachers, students and EFL classroom by using different instruments like interview, questionnaire and classroom observation. The collected data were analyzed by using statistical analysis, thematic analysis and content analysis.

The results of the interview suggest that the main causes of the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance are the disparities in institutional facilities, teachers' qualifications, parents' education and economic status, as well as learners' linguistic competence and individual characteristics.

The results of the teachers' questionnaire reveal that 90% urban teachers have completed their graduation and post-graduation in English where only 10% teachers of rural areas have studied in English. Most of the urban teachers have participated in different varieties of training programs while some of the rural teachers have attended the basic CPD, ELTIP and CLT training. Though most of the rural and urban teachers have positive attitude to teaching speaking skill, only 30% teachers of rural areas think conducting speaking activities in the classroom is easy. 75% teachers want to use extra materials in teaching speaking skill and all of them agreed about the importance of English as well as importance of testing speaking skill in the exam. Most of the teachers motivate students to speak English and always provide positive feedback but the urban teachers spend more time in teaching speaking skill than the rural teachers do. Besides, the schools of urban areas have back up support while the rural schools do not have any back up support though load shedding is more common in rural areas. The challenges teachers face in both rural and urban areas are a large number of students in the classroom, insufficient class time to focus on all the language skills and classroom with no modern technological facilities. Moreover, the parents are not aware, especially in rural areas. As class time is not enough for developing speaking skill, parents support is important.

The results of classroom observation show that in comparison to rural teachers urban teachers are found to have better English language proficiency and greater techniques in using a variety of activities in the classroom. The urban students were also found to be more fluent in English than the rural pupils. Most of the rural schools used Bangla in the English class and no rural schools conducted any speaking activities from the textbook in the classroom. On the other hand, the teachers of urban schools used both Bangla and English to teach English and some of them also conducted speaking activities in the classroom. While the rural teachers spent 3-5 minutes in average in speaking English at the classroom, the urban teachers spent 8-15 minutes. The problems that were observed in the majority of rural classrooms are numerous students in a single classroom, inattentive students, students with poor linguistic proficiency, students with high affective factors, poor proficiency of the teachers, absence of a supportive environment, the domineering nature of few students, teachers' authoritative attitudes, no fruitful interaction, no group work or pair work etc. On the other hand, Government schools in urban areas had more problems than non-government schools. Government schools had issues with large class sizes, low student participation, authoritative teachers controlling the large class, disgraceful behavior of a few students, etc. in addition to the lack of seating arrangements for communicative tasks, use of mother tongue, and absence of multimedia classrooms, which problems are also available in non-government schools.

According to the results of the students' questionnaire and speaking test, the urban students have better linguistic knowledge and less affective factors than the rural students and therefore the urban students perform better in speaking English. Besides, the urban students get help from family members or tutors to develop speaking skill where the rural students do not get proper exposure to English. The surrounding context of urban students also motivate them to speak in English.

So, the findings of the second research question suggest that there is significant difference between rural and urban students' speaking English performance and the reasons are mostly related to teachers' educational qualification, training and English language proficiency; students' linguistic knowledge and psychological issues; parents' education and income and institutional facilities.

5.3 Discussion

The study was conducted to find out the factors affecting learners' speaking skill development and to compare between rural and urban students' speaking performance as well as to identify

the reasons of the difference in speaking performance. The factors were classified under four broad categories in the questionnaire and in the interview in order to identify the most influential factor in developing learners' speaking skill. The difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance was found from the findings of Paired t-test and speaking test scores and the reasons behind the difference were identified by using the findings from questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. As a mixed method study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from different sources and they were analyzed by different strategies. The discussion part is presented according to the research questions of this study.

5.3.1 Discussions related to the findings of first question of the study

According to the findings of first research question, all the institutional, socio-economic, affective and linguistic factors have more or less influence in developing learners' speaking skill. Institutional factor plays the most significant role according to both teachers and students. Institution indicates the place where the learners achieve knowledge and develop skills formally. The institutional factors can be related to teachers, administrators, staff, classroom, etc. According to the results of the students' questionnaire, the teachers' role is the most important factor in both rural and urban institution. Learners' speaking skill development in the institutions depends on how much qualified, trained and supportive the English teachers are. Khamkhien (2011) also discovered that in the improvement of students' English speaking skill the teachers play the most significant role. Amua-Sekyi (2015) also conducted a study on the factors and figured teacher training as one of the most important factors for making the students' performance better. The findings of the study discovered some other institutional factors like class size, sitting arrangement, allotted class time, teaching materials, modern technological facilities, which is congruous with the findings of Sinha (2001) and (Siddique, 2004). Hossain & Rahman (2015) also found the similar problems of limited class time in their study. Supportive environment in the classroom is also essential to develop speaking skill which correspond to the findings of Larsari (2011). Larsari (2011) stated that if supportive environment is not provided in the classroom, learners will not practise speaking English.

The second most important factor in developing learners' speaking skill is socio-economic factor according to both teachers and rural students of this study. In the study of Hasan (2005), social variables were discovered more influential in developing the target language than the psychological variables. According to the findings of study, the socio-economic aspects that affect learner's speaking performance are their parents' education, employment, financial

ability, social status, and surrounding environment. If students get the opportunity to speak with family and friends and feel the importance of speaking English in their social context, they will develop the speaking skill easily. The findings of the study conducted by Tomul & Gokhan (2013) and Azhar et al., (2014) also supported the findings of this study because they also recognized significant relationship between parents' literary level and students' achievement. Besides, the results of this study indicated that students who have parents with higher financial ability manage extra tuition which facilitates their speaking skill development. Shahjahan et al., (2021) also conducted a study in Bangladesh on the factors influencing poor academic performance and discovered that the parents with limited financial capacity cannot provide comfortable study environment and enough cooperation which are essential for the better academic performance.

According to the students of both rural and urban areas, affective factors also play significant role in developing speaking skill development. The results showed that the students' less confidence, shyness and worries of making mistakes influence the speaking skill development. The findings correspond with those of Alrasheedi (2020) who investigated the factors influencing speaking performance of Saudi EFL learners and noticed that learners feel shy and hesitation as well as they are afraid of making mistakes and confronting criticism. Besides affective factors, linguistic factors also influence the speaking skill development. Most of the rural students have problems in grammar and pronunciation while most of the urban students cannot express their thoughts in English. The findings of the study of Jahbel (2017) reflected that the major influential factors in speaking skill are psychological factors that involve learners' worries about making mistakes, shyness, lack of motivation and confidence and the linguistic factors that include use of mother tongue, limited vocabulary and incorrect pronunciation. Khasinah (2014) stated that individual differences are important factors in second language acquisition and the factors are motivation, attitude, age, intelligence, aptitude, learning style, and personality which influence the way learners encounter language learning and may hinder or support them in their efforts to master second language.

The findings of this study revealed that though affective and linguistic factors influence the development of speaking skill, institutional and socio-economic factors are the most influential factors. On the other hand, the results of the study of Harb and El-Shaarawi (2006) showed that students' linguistic knowledge is the most influential factor in the speaking performance. Additionally, the findings from the study of Triwittayayon (2017) revealed that personality that means self-esteem, lack of anxiety, and risk-taking as well as exposure to the language were the most influential factors that enhanced the participants' English speaking skill.

5.3.2 Discussions related to the findings of second question of the study

In the light of the findings of the study, there is significant difference between the rural and urban students' speaking performance and the urban students perform better in speaking English than the rural ones do. The current study matches findings of Chowdhury (2020) who has identified that urban students of Bangladesh have more confidence and fluency with less pauses and mumblings than the rural students who have more hesitation, nervousness, anxiety with more pauses and mumblings during speaking English. Sun and Du (2021) also identified that rural students of China lagged behind of urban students in the overall academic performance but this gap was more obvious in language subjects. Similar results were also found out by Rahimpour (2015) who discovered that the urban students in Iran performed better than the rural ones in their language performance on real world task.

The findings of the present study also identified several reasons behind the difference between urban and rural students' speaking performance. The reasons of the difference are summarized from the findings of the questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. The reasons are related to teachers' educational qualifications, training, English language proficiency and learners' linguistic competence, exposure to language, psychological issues, socio-economic status, institutional facilities, as well as speaking activities conducted in the classroom. Similar results were also discovered by Sumi et al. (2021) who conducted a study on the rural-urban difference in academic achievement and discovered that the urban students performed better in public examination than the rural students because of the influence of personal characteristics, socio-economic status and institutions. From the findings of the present study, the major reasons of the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance are discussed following:

Firstly, most of the urban schools have experienced and trained teachers than the rural schools. Hasan also (2004) conducted a study on secondary level and found that teachers of urban areas in Bangladesh were more qualified than those of rural areas. The teachers who have good educational background live in urban areas because of better opportunities of life and better earnings. Most urban schools recruit qualified teachers who are graduated in English from different universities. On the contrary, most of teachers of rural areas are not graduated in English and therefore are not proficient in English language. The findings is similar to the observation of Farooqui (2014) who states that "we don't have good teachers in these rural areas" and most of the English teachers are not graduated in English rather they have a B.Ed.

degree with English as a main subject. The teachers from rural areas have lower English proficiency than the urban teachers, according to the findings of the classroom observation. Though the teachers of urban areas use both English and Bangla, the teachers of rural areas teach only in Bangla. In most of the rural schools, the teachers themselves cannot speak English fluently and accurately as they also do not get the environment to practise their speaking skill. The findings from the study of Hoque (2018) also show that the weakest area of language skill the rural teachers need to improve is speaking. Therefore, the rural teachers are quite unable to teach speaking skill in the classroom. They rarely listen to any English TV program or read English newspaper or English book. They just teach English grammar and translate English text into Bangla to make the student comprehend the contents. Sometimes, they ask students to write application, paragraph or essay which are basically memorized by the students. Thus, vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing skills are practiced but speaking and listening are ignored in the classroom. Rani (2020) stated that the teachers from the urban areas are more skilled because of having lots of trainings and they can teach students more efficiently than the teachers of rural background. So, teachers' educational qualifications, training and language proficiency play one of the major roles in creating the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance.

Secondly, Students' perceptions and attitudes towards English, linguistic knowledge, and exposure to English language contribute to the difference in speaking performance in rural and urban schools. Most of the rural students do not feel the importance of the speaking English according to their social and cultural needs. As they do not feel the necessity to speak in English according to the surrounding context, they just focus on passing the examination. Even when teachers want to make them speaking English in the classroom, most of them do not speak because of their linguistic and affective factors. They don't have basic linguistic knowledge like the correct use of grammatical rules, appropriate use of vocabulary and correct pronunciation. Though some of them have linguistic knowledge, they suffer from affective factors like fear, anxiety, lower motivation and lack of confidence. Wigati (2019) stated the desire and motivation to learn English as main factors that make a difference between rural and urban students' speaking English performance. Besides, the rural students do not have the proper exposure to English without the English classroom. On the contrary, urban students are conscious about the necessity of learning English skills as they see the use of English in their surrounding areas. They have better opportunity to learn English speaking as they get better exposure to the language. Besides, the students of urban areas tend to build up better linguistic

knowledge and confidence as they are taught by skilled and experienced teachers. Students' tendency to use mother tongue is also responsible for making differences in their speaking performance. It has been observed in the classroom that the rural students use mother tongue most of the time where the urban students speak in English too. According to Harmer (1991), when students' cannot discuss anything or express their ideas in the target language, they tend to shift to their mother tongue.

Thirdly, disparity between rural and urban areas is also present in parents' education and financial capacity. The parents of urban students are more educated and conscious about the study than the parents of rural students. Usually students from urban areas get help from their parents and other siblings for academic purpose including practising English speaking. Besides, most of them have Television with satellite connection and smartphones with internet connection and therefore, they can enjoy English news, songs, movies, sports, speeches and other programs. Moreover, most of the urban students get help from skilled house tutor who is already a graduate or a university student. Besides, sometimes they can go to the coaching centers to learn more. On the contrary, parents of rural areas are not as well educated as the parents of urban areas and therefore, they cannot help academically. Rani (2020) stated that the rural students do not get good environment to have some speaking practice with family members as most of them are not educated enough to do it. Although a few elder siblings are educated in some rural families, they cannot stay in rural areas either for their study in different universities or preparation for the jobs. And sometimes they become the house tutor for the urban areas' students. Besides, most of the rural parents cannot recruit house tutor because of the financial limitation. This finding of the current study is consistent with Ahmed and Bose (2005) who have found that the parents of rural areas are impoverished and they cannot contribute to their children' education financially and this inability impacts their children's academic performance. Even some families have the capacity to recruit a house tutor, they do not find enough qualified teachers in rural areas. Moreover, the rural parents are not conscious about children' education and they cannot provide other facilities that are necessary for developing speaking skill. Therefore the rural students receive little exposure to English. The findings of the study of Kirunda (2005) revealed similar results that the socio-economic status of the urban parents makes them able to have home libraries, buy newspapers, and own TVs and radios and their education also guide their children if necessary. The current study also matches findings of Boonkit (2010) who discovered that learners' speaking skill in terms of sound, rhythm, intonation and stress can be improved if they get the opportunity to listen to the

target language. As the urban students get more opportunity to listen to English language, they perform better than the rural learners.

Finally, there is also disparity between the facilities provided in rural educational institutions and urban institutions. In most of the rural institutions, there are many students but other resources like teachers and logistic support are insufficient. On the contrary, the urban institutions have enough teachers and other resources that help them to accommodate more students and ensure their better performance (Nath et al., 2014). For developing speaking skill, teachers need some extra teaching materials besides textbook such as computers, multimedia projectors, recorder, and audio-video materials which are not available in rural areas. Kirunda (2005) points out that the conditions in the rural schools also contribute to the poor performance of the learners because the rural schools lack facilities such as libraries, furniture, and enough textbooks. On the contrary, many of the urban schools have all the facilities including proficient teachers who conduct different speaking activities in the classroom in order to develop learners' speaking skill. They also arrange different extra-curricular activities like English debates, spelling contest, creative writing and essay writing to boost up learners' English proficiency. Moreover, there is also the competitive environment of learning in urban schools. On the other hand, this positive competition is absent in rural schools as most of the good students tend to join the nearby urban school if they have financial ability. Besides, most of the rural schools have only two to three English teachers and sometimes teachers of other fields conduct English class if English teachers are on leave. Moreover, the English teachers suffers from extra load because of the limited number of teachers in the rural schools. In addition, some unqualified students keep going promoted to the next class because of the pressure of the administration in rural schools and these students never feel the necessity to improve their proficiency in English.

So, the findings of the second research question reveal that there is significant difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance and the reasons of the difference are related to the disparities between rural and urban areas regarding qualified teachers and students, socio-economic position of parents and institutional facilities.

Chapter Six

Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter at first presents the recommendations that have been evolved based on the major findings of the study about the influential factors in speaking skill development and the reasons behind rural and urban students' difference in speaking performance. The recommendations will be fruitful to the language teachers, students, guardians, administrators as well as to the policy makers. Then this chapter includes the conclusions of the study which discuss the overall analysis of the obtained findings of the study. At last, the chapter provides some suggestions for further studies in future.

6.2 Recommendations

The researcher suggests the following recommendations based on the collected data and results of the study. Some of the suggestions were also taken from the teachers' interview and questionnaire.

1. As institutional factor plays the most significant role in developing learners' speaking skill, the authorities related to the institution can take necessary steps for developing learners speaking skill. The steps can be:
 - The institution should have sufficient English teachers who have completed graduation and post-graduation in English.
 - Teachers' salary structure should be revised to attract brilliant people in this profession.
 - The teachers should motivate learners to speak English inside and outside of the classroom and teachers also should stop speaking Bangla in English classroom in order to make the students speak in English.
 - The number of students in speaking class should be limited so that teachers can manage the class easily and ensure each students' participation in the speaking activities.
 - The time for speaking class should be increased so that teachers can use different speaking activities.
 - Teacher can use audio-visual material so that the speaking class becomes more interesting and enjoyable to the learners.

- Teachers can create supportive ‘English environment’ in the classroom so that students can practise speaking English freely without any anxiety and hesitation.
 - The authority can form English language club and debating club and develop one intensive multimedia classroom with online facilities and proper sitting arrangements for developing English speaking skill.
 - All the teachers should get proper training to implement the objective of the curriculum which is to develop learners’ communicative competence.
 - More emphasis should be given in primary level so that the teachers becomes aware of developing English speaking skill from the beginning.
 - Speaking test should be added in both summative and formative assessment.
2. As socio-economic factors are also important in developing learners’ speaking skill, the parents of the students should provide conducive learning environment to develop learner speaking skill. If the parents are educated, they can practice English with their children. If the financial capacity supports, they can provide them better target language exposure and arrange some target language materials.
 3. Affective factors also play significant roles in speaking skill development. Supportive and flexible environment should be created both at home and in the classroom so that learners feel less worried and more confident during speaking.
 4. Learners’ linguistic competence should also be developed as it affects learners’ speaking skill development.
 5. According to the findings of the study, urban students perform better than the rural students. Some recommendations for the authorities, teachers and students of rural schools are given below:
 - In most of the rural schools, teachers have not completed their academic study in English. So, institutions should recruit subject based teachers.
 - Most of the rural schools have not the basic facilities of teaching speaking skill. The modern educational facilities should be given by the authorities.
 - The rural teachers should make students practice English speaking in the classroom as they do not have any other exposure to English language without the classroom.
 - Teachers of rural areas should spend more time in developing their own language skills besides teaching.
 - Parents should be involved in the learning process and they should motivate their children to practise speaking English at home.

- Rural students should overcome the psychological challenges and develop linguistic competence by practising more. As speaking is a productive skill, learners need to participate actively to develop the skill.

6.3 Conclusions

The study obtained the conclusions that though various socio-economic, affective and linguistic factors influence the development of speaking skill, institutional factors play the most influential role at the SSC level in Bangladesh. Institutional factors involve teachers' use of English, teachers' motivation and guidance to speak English, teachers' reaction in students' mistakes and their feedback, practice of speaking activities, number of students and other logistic support in the classroom. The second most influential factor is socio-economic factors that focuses on parents' education, parents' income and surrounding environment of the learners. The learners can practise speaking English with the educated parents. Besides, the parents can recruit a tutor for developing their children's English speaking skill if they are financially stable. Moreover, if the surrounding environment supports the learners with language learning materials like English news, movies, and songs with internet access and if the learners feel the necessity of speaking English in their social context, they will develop the English speaking skill easily and efficiently. The other two factors called affective factor and linguistic factor are less influential in this study because the negative influences of these two factors can be controlled by the positive influences of the two major institutional and socio-economic factors. If the learners receive sufficient support from both family and institution, they can develop their linguistic competency confidently by avoiding the affective factors.

The study also derived the conclusion that there is significant difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance and the results also revealed that the urban students performed better in English speaking than the rural students did. Additionally, it can be concluded from the findings of the study that the disparity between rural and urban teachers' qualifications, training and language proficiency is one of the major reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students speaking performance. Besides, the disparity between rural and urban parents' education and income is also responsible for creating the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance. According to the findings, the urban parents are more concerned about their children's studies and they spend a handsome amount of their income for educational purpose. On the other hand, some of the rural parents

cannot afford the extra expenditure for studies and some others are not just aware of its importance. There are also some other reasons which create the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance and they are learners' linguistic knowledge, exposure to the language, psychological issues as well as the other facilities they receive from the institution they are studying in.

6.4 Suggestions for future studies

This study investigated the factors that influence learners' speaking skill development. It also compared rural and urban students' speaking performance at the SSC level and discovered the reasons behind the different scores in speaking performance. So, further study should be conducted on the problems that the urban learners and rural learners face in developing speaking skill. This study deals with only speaking skill but for communicative competence learners' listening skill is also important. So, further study can be on issues related to listening skill. This study could not include the parents as participant and therefore further study on the influence of socio economic and cultural factors can be conducted including the viewpoints of parents. Moreover, further study should be conducted to address the rural-urban gap in overall academic performance as well as to decrease the regional disparities. Finally, further study in future should replicate this study in order to achieve the generalizations of the findings.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire for Students

Section A: Respondent's particulars

1. Name of the school(স্কুলের নাম): : -----
2. School's Location (স্কুলের অবস্থান): Rural (গ্রাম) ☐ Urban (শহর) ☐
3. Date (তারিখ):
4. Sex (লিঙ্গ): Male ☐ Female ☐
5. Age (বয়স):
6. Group (বিভাগ): Science ☐ / Humanities ☐ / Business Studies ☐

Section B: Rate your agreement with each of the following statements: (নিম্নলিখিত উদ্ঘৃতিগুলোর প্রত্যেকটির ব্যাপারে তোমার মতামত রেটিং করোঃ)

Factors affecting speaking skill development: (স্পিকিং স্কিলের উন্নয়নে যে সকল উপাদান ভূমিকা রাখে):

A) Learners' linguistic factors

	Strongly agree (দৃঢ়ভাবে একমত)	Agree (কিছুটা একমত)	Neutral (কোন মত নেই)	Disagree (কিছুটা অমত)	Strongly disagree (দৃঢ়ভাবে অমত)
1. I do not have sufficient grammatical knowledge to make correct sentences in English. (ইংরেজিতে সঠিক বাক্য গঠনের জন্য আমার পর্যাপ্ত ব্যাকরণগত ধারণা নেই।)					
2. I have a limited range of English vocabulary. (আমার খুব কম সংখ্যক ইংরেজি শব্দ জানা আছে।)					
3. Though I know many English words, I cannot use them appropriately during speaking. (যদিও আমি অনেক ইংরেজি শব্দ জানি, ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার সময় আমি সঠিকভাবে ব্যবহার করতে পারিনা।)					
4. I do not know how to pronounce the words accurately. (কিভাবে সঠিকভাবে শব্দ উচ্চারণ করতে হয় আমি জানিনা।)					
5. I cannot speak fluently because I think in my 1st language first and then translate into English. (আমি দ্রুত বলতে পারিনা কারন যা বলতে চাই তা প্রথমে					

আমি আমার মাতৃভাষায় ভাবি, তারপর ইংরেজিতে অনুবাদ করি।)					
6. I cannot speak fluently because during speaking I search for words and it creates unusual pauses and false starts. (আমি দ্রুত বলতে পারিনা কারন কথা বলার সময় আমাকে শব্দ খুঁজতে হয় যার কারনে অনাকাঙ্ক্ষিত বিরতি ও ভুল শুরু হয়ে যায়।)					
7. I cannot express my thoughts and ideas in English. (আমি ইংরেজিতে আমার চিন্তাধারা প্রকাশ করতে পারিনা।)					

B) Learners' affective factors

	Strongly agree (দৃঢ়ভাবে একমত)	Agree (কিছুটা একমত)	Neutral (কোন মত নেই)	Disagree (কিছুটা অমত)	Strongly disagree (দৃঢ়ভাবে অমত)
1. While speaking English, I do not feel confident. (ইংরেজি বলার সময় আমি কনফিডেন্ট অনুভব করিনা)					
2. I do not want to speak because I do not know what to say. (আমি ইংরেজি বলতে চাইনা কারন কি বলতে হবে তা জানিনা।)					
3. I feel shy to speak English in front of others. (অন্যের সামনে ইংরেজি বলতে আমার লজ্জা লাগে।)					
4. While speaking, I am worried about making mistakes. (ইংরেজি বলার সময় আমি ভুল করে ফেলি কিনা তাই নিয়ে চিন্তিত থাকি।)					
5. Speaking is not important to me because this skill is not tested in the exam. (ইংরেজি বলা আমার জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ না কারন পরীক্ষায় স্পিকিং টেস্ট করা হয়না।)					

C) Learners' socio-economic factors:

	Strongly agree (দৃঢ়ভাবে একমত)	Agree (কিছুটা একমত)	Neutral (কোন মত নেই)	Disagree (কিছুটা অমত)	Strongly disagree (দৃঢ়ভাবে অমত)
1. I can practise speaking English with my family members. (আমি আমার পরিবারের সদস্যদের সাথে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে পারি।)					
2. I can speak in English with my friends. (আমি আমার বন্ধুদের সাথে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে পারি।)					
3. I have home tutor for learning English. (ইংরেজি শিখার জন্য আমার হোম টিউটর আছেন)					
4. The surrounding environment supports me to watch English movies and listen English music. (আমার চারপাশের পরিবেশ আমাকে ইংরেজি মুভি ও গান উপভোগ করতে দেয়।)					
5. I have access to internet in order to learn English speaking. (ইংরেজি স্পিকিং শেখার জন্য আমার ইন্টারনেট সংযোগ আছে।)					
6. According to my social context, it is necessary to speak in English. (আমার সামাজিক পরিবেশ অনুযায়ী ইংরেজিতে কথা বলা প্রয়োজন।)					

D) Factors related to Educational institutions:

	Strongly agree (দৃঢ়ভাবে একমত)	Agree (কিছুটা একমত)	Neutral (কোন মত নেই)	Disagree (কিছুটা অমত)	Strongly disagree (দৃঢ়ভাবে অমত)
1. Teachers use Bangla as the medium of instruction in our English class. (আমাদের ইংরেজি ক্লাসে শিক্ষক নির্দেশনার ভাষা হিসেবে ইংরেজি ব্যবহার করেন।)					

2. In the classroom, teachers make us practise speaking activities from the textbook. (ক্লাসে শিক্ষক আমাদের পাঠ্যবই থেকে ইংরেজিতে কথা বলার অনুশীলন করান।)					
3. Teachers also motivate us to speak in English outside the classroom. শিক্ষকরা ক্লাসের বাহিরে আমাদের ইংরেজিতে কথা বলতে অনুপ্রাণিত করে।)					
4. Teachers guide us and provide feedback during the speaking activities. (ক্লাসে স্পিকিং কাজ করার সময় শিক্ষক আমাদের গাইড করেন এবং ফিডব্যাক প্রদান করেন।)					
5. Teachers get irritated if we make mistakes during speaking. (স্পিকিং এ আমরা ভুল করলে শিক্ষক বিরক্ত হন)					
6. We have large number of students in the classroom. (আমাদের ক্লাসে শিক্ষার্থীর সংখ্যা অনেক)					
7. No recorder or speaker is available in the classroom. (আমাদের ক্লাসরুমে কোনো রেকর্ডার বা স্পিকার নেই।)					
8. We do not have any online facilities in the classroom. (ক্লাসে আমাদের কোনো অনলাইন সুবিধা নেই।)					

Appendix II

Questionnaire for Teachers

Section A: Respondent's particulars

1. Name of the school: -----
2. Place of the institution where you teach: Rural ☐ Urban ☐
3. Date: -----
4. Name and designation of Respondent -----
5. Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐
6. Educational Qualification: -----
7. Whether you have done graduation/ post-graduation in English: ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Professional training: ☐ CLT ☐ SESDC ☐ NAEM ☐ FSSAP ☐ ELTIP ☐ CPD ☐ BIAM
☐ SEQAEP ☐ Other-----
9. Experience: -----Years-----Months

Section B: Please put tick (✓) mark on relevant boxes against the statement that you mostly agree with in relevant questionnaire.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I like to teach speaking English.					
2. The speaking activities mentioned in the textbook are easy to conduct in the classroom.					
3. I inspire students to speak in English inside the classroom					
4. I motivate students to speak in English outside the classroom.					
5. I get irritated if students make mistakes during speaking.					

Please provide your answer with additional comments.

	Yes	No	Comments
6. Do you use Bangla in the English class?			If yes, then for how long? Half of the time? One-third of the time? Full time?
7. Do you think that textbook is enough as teaching material to develop speaking skill?			If no, what are the extra materials?

			
8. Is it necessary for the students to learn speaking English?			If yes, why?
9. If electricity gets disconnected, do you have back up support to use audio visual materials like speaker, recorder etc.?			If yes, for how long?
10. Do you think that speaking skill should be tested in the exam?			If yes, why?

11. How much time do you spend in a week for teaching English speaking?

.....

12. Which things don't you like about teaching speaking in the class?

.....

.....

13. How can we make the speaking class better?

.....

.....

.....

Appendix III

Classroom Observation checklist

Date:

Name of the school:

Area of School: Rural/ Urban

Class Duration:

Number of students:

	Yes	No	Comment
1. Are the speaking activities from the book practiced in the class?			
2. Do the learners speak in English during speaking activity?			
3. Does each individual learner become involved in speaking activity?			
4. Does the teacher speak in English in the classroom?			
6. Does the teacher provide positive feedback?			

7. How was the teacher-learner interaction during the lesson? What language have they used?

8. How was the learner-learner interaction during the lesson? What language have they used?

9. How much time is speaking skill practised in the classroom?

10. What other problems do the students and teacher face during speaking practice in the classroom?

Appendix IV

Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. What are the linguistic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
2. What are the affective factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
3. What are the socio-economic factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
4. What are the institutional factors that affect students' speaking skill development?
5. Which factor does influence the learners' speaking skill development most? Explain.
6. Do you think that urban students perform better in speaking English than the rural students?
If yes, what are the reasons behind the difference between rural and urban students' speaking performance?

Appendix V

Speaking Test Rubric (adapted from TFU Foreign Language Assessment Rubrics)

Categories	0-inadequate	1-Needs improvement	2- meets expectations	3- exceeds expectations
Vocabulary	Uses only simple vocabulary and expressions. Sometimes uses inadequate vocabulary, which hinders the student from responding properly.	Uses limited vocabulary and expressions and makes frequent errors in word choice. Does not try to use new words learned in class or expand vocabulary and expressions.	Uses varied vocabulary and expressions learned in class, and makes only a few errors in word choice.	Uses appropriate expressions and a wide range of vocabulary learned in and out class.
Grammar	Uses only basic structures and makes frequent errors.	Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures with only a few errors.	Uses a variety of sentence structures but makes some errors.	Uses many different structures depending on contexts with only a few grammatical errors.
Pronunciation	Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation. Voice is too quiet to hear. Hard to understand.	Pronunciation, rhythm and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the student.	Pronunciation, rhythm and intonation are almost clear and accurate, but only occasionally difficult to understand.	Pronunciation, rhythm and intonation are almost always clear and accurate.
Overall fluency	Speaks with much hesitation, which often interferes with communication.	Speaks with some hesitation, which sometimes interferes with communication.	Speaks with some hesitation, but it doesn't usually interrupt the flow of conversation.	Speaks smoothly with little hesitation and doesn't interrupt the flow of conversation. Speaks with confidence.
Grading scale: F 1 = 0-24% 0-3 points E 2 = 25-39% 3-4 points D 3 = 40-59% 5-6 points C 4 = 60-79% 7-9 points B 5 = 80-94% 10-11 points A 6 = 95%+ 12 points				

Appendix VI

Activities from Classroom Observation (Rural)

1. Activities conducted in School F: (Unit Five from 'English for Today')

Lesson 1: The Greed of the Mighty Rivers

A Read the following text and answer the questions.

Meherjan lives in a slum on the Sirajgonj Town Protection Embankment. The whispering wind from the river Jamuna makes the fire unsteady. The dancing flames remind Meherjan of the turmoil in her life.

Not long ago Meherjan had everything— a family, arable land and cattle. The erosion of the Jamuna gradually consumed all her land property. It finally claimed her only



shelter during the last monsoon. It took the river only a day to devour Meher's house, trees, vegetable garden and the bamboo bush. She had a happy family once. Over the years, she lost her husband and her family to diseases that cruel hunger and poverty brought to the family. Now, she is the only one left to live on with the loss and the pain. The greedy Jamuna has shattered her dreams and happiness.

There are thousand others waiting to share the same fate like Meherjan. Bangladesh is a land of rivers, some of whose banks overflow or erode during monsoon. Erosion is a harsh reality for the people living along the river banks. During each monsoon many more villages are threatened by the mighty rivers like the Jamuna, the Padma and the Meghna. It is estimated that river erosion makes at least 100,000 people homeless every year in Bangladesh. In fact, river erosion is one of the main dangers caused by climate change. If we can't take prompt actions to adapt to climate change, there will be thousands of more Meherjans in our towns and villages every year.

Appendix VII

Speaking Activities from Classroom Observation (Urban)

2. Speaking Activities conducted in School D: (Unit Eight from 'English for Today')

Lesson 1: The Shat Gambuj Mosque

A Look at the picture. Work in pairs. Talk about the picture and ask and answer the following questions.

- 1 What can you see in the picture?
- 2 Do you have a building like this in your town/village?
- 3 What do we call it?
- 4 What is it used for?



3. Speaking Activities conducted in School E: (Unit Eleven from 'English for Today')

Lesson 2: Renewable Energy Sources (Part 2)

A Look at the following pictures and discuss with your partner what you see in them. How are the two pictures related to each other?



THE END