

Struggles in English Learning: Perspectives of Bangla Medium Students at the Higher Secondary Level

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Abstract

This research provides an overview of the heterogeneous challenges confronted by Bangla medium students at the higher secondary level in engulfing English even after long years of exposure to English in formal education. Using a mixed-methods design, data are collected from 146 students and 15 teachers from three colleges in the Rangpur Division of Bangladesh. Structured Likert-scale questionnaires are used to collect quantitative data and semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions to collate qualitative information. The study reveals that common barriers to communication persist across speaking, writing, reading, and listening domains, shaped by factors such as insufficient exposure to English, low confidence, rigid curriculum design and resource constraints. Thematic analysis reveals that the challenges are grounded in socio-cultural and systemic contexts. Yet students also show resilience through peer-to-peer support, multimedia tools and self-generated strategies. The study suggests curriculum changes, communicative instructional methods, and inclusive classroom strategies that promote both greater English language proficiency and active engagement of students, addressing broader issues of educational inequality.

Keywords: English learning challenges, Bangla medium students, higher secondary education, communicative competence, educational inequality

1. Introduction

The prevalence of challenges in English language among higher secondary Bangla medium students in Bangladesh continues to pose a major obstacle in their academic and professional tracks, even though these students have had extended exposure to formal English teaching. This ongoing struggle covers basic aspects of language (speaking, writing, reading, and listening) and language skills, preventing their communication competence per se as well as for academic and further professional success (Islam, 2023). Therefore, the present study aims to identify the roots of these persistent challenges in order to inform specific interventions that could positively transform English language learning in Bangladesh. Although English has been a required subject in the Bangladesh education system for decades, a large number of students have continued to fall woefully short of basic communicative competence in the language, thus raising important questions about the effectiveness of current curricular, pedagogical, and socio-cultural structures in realizing desired learning outcomes (Uddin, 2021). The findings of this study offer an understanding and analysis of the issues and challenges that impact the Bangla medium students, learning English, ultimately to use the knowledge and experiences as a means for language pedagogy particularly to the relevant teaching and learning processes. The results of this study will contribute to the researchers who are working to enhance the English education quality of Bangladesh and also the policy makers and practicing bodies such as curriculum developer, teacher training institutions and educational administrators. The building of skill related capabilities is important in the educational system to ensure that students have all round ability for communication, it gives student mechanisms to manage with their academic challenges and prepare them to face life after school (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012).

The historical background of English in Bangladesh, a history rooted in its colonial past as a subject nation of the British Empire, explains why the language retains significance in different domains of the country such as education, business, commerce and governance (Patwary, 2019). Before 1971, the medium of instruction was English, but as the nation gained independence, it was declared in the

constitution that the national language was to be Bangla, which resulted in what seems to be a decreasing trend in learning English in the country (Mridha & Muniruzzaman, 2020). All the same, English is a requirement for university education and for many professional careers, and the demand for successful English language education programs is therefore still present.

The non-representation of indigenous cultures and traditions in the curriculum is also a matter of concern due to relevance in today's world which may cause dissonance among students inclusive of diverse cultural inclinations (Aziz, 2022). The exploration of language learning in Bangladesh should take into account the complex interplay of language, social culture, and pedagogical factors shaping students' experiences and achievements (Sultana, 2012). The view of English as a gateway to social-economic progress also serves to highlight the importance of language ability in determining people's life chances (Sim & Ismail, 2023). English is widely used in higher education, government, judiciary, legislation, executive administration and official public communication, most printed newspaper and media publications use English (Irfan, 2020). As a result, English speakers generally have more resources and opportunities available to them, which further emphasizes the need for intervention addressing the English language challenges of Bangla medium students for equitable access to education and employment. Moreover, emerging research highlights the role of technological innovations, such as the ethical design of AI in education, in addressing equity, transparency, and inclusivity in learning contexts (Leong & Zhang, 2025).

Bangladesh's current education system has big challenges in teaching English effectively, at least in earlier education of students.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Curriculum and Policy Gaps in English Instruction

The challenges of English learning in Bangladesh are significantly shaped by systemic issues in curriculum and language policy. Karim et al. (2023) examined the role of Medium of Instruction (MOI) in higher education, arguing for a bilingual approach to facilitate better knowledge acquisition. Their findings are especially relevant for Bangla medium students, who often enter higher education with fragile foundations in all four English language skills—speaking, writing, reading, and listening. These deficiencies are attributed to outdated curricula, inadequate teaching strategies, and limited exposure to functional English usage in daily contexts.

Rahman et al. (2019) provided further insight into the curricular and policy-level barriers to effective English instruction. Their study points to the misalignment between instructional time and actual language proficiency, a gap that demands urgent reform in curriculum development and assessment standards. Similarly, Macaro et al. (2018) critically evaluated the limited success of English Medium Instruction (EMI), emphasizing that mere policy shifts without robust pedagogical support often fail to yield meaningful learning outcomes. Alhamami (2024) further supported this notion through a decade-long review of EMI in healthcare education, showing that policy ambitions alone are insufficient for real progress. Karabay and Durrani (2024), through a bibliometric analysis of EMI research trends, also highlighted the need for context-sensitive implementations—especially in under-researched regions like Bangladesh.

Adding another dimension, Roy et al. (2020) discussed disparities arising from religious and faith-based educational institutions. Although focused on a specific sector, their analysis of conflicting curricular values and unequal access to quality education mirrors broader concerns within Bangla medium institutions. Zhao et al. (2024) reinforced this understanding through ecological systems theory, which posits that language competence is shaped by interactions among personal, institutional, and societal systems. This study, therefore, proposes a more unified national policy aimed at harmonizing curriculum standards and improving early English education across institutional types.

2.2 Emotional Barriers and Language Anxiety

Emotional and psychological factors also play a crucial role in shaping students' English learning experiences. Khan (2015) identified several anxiety-inducing elements among secondary-level Bangla medium learners, including fear of assessment, financial pressure, and negative past learning experiences. These anxieties inhibit learners from taking risks and fully engaging with the language, leading to further setbacks in skill acquisition. In the same vein,

Dovchin et al. (2025) emphasized how emotional experiences such as fear of judgment and loss of confidence intertwine with linguistic practices, thereby shaping students' overall learning trajectories.

Yasmin (2023) explored online English learning environments and argued that e-learning has the potential to democratize access to education. However, the transition to digital platforms can also exacerbate feelings of isolation and anxiety if emotional support systems are lacking. This observation is extended in the present study, which seeks to understand how emotional responses among Bangla medium learners correlate with their abilities in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Rashid et al. (2023) provided valuable insights into the importance of emotional preparedness and life-skills integration within the curriculum. Their emphasis on context-aware, communicative English instruction aligns with this research's aim to explore how affective filters, such as fear and motivation, impact Bangla medium students' capacity to progress in English proficiency. Similarly, Hoq and Anik (2023) reflected on emotional challenges encountered in online practicum environments, underscoring the psychological and infrastructural unpreparedness that parallels issues in general English instruction.

2.3 Translingual Practices, Digital Shifts, and Pedagogical Solutions

Recent scholarship has turned attention to translanguaging, digital learning, and content-based approaches as tools to enhance English language education. Sultana and Fang (2024) discussed how translanguaging can challenge monolingual ideologies and support inclusive, equitable classroom practices. Their findings are especially applicable to Bangla medium learners, whose home language differs from the

academic medium, creating an invisible barrier in classrooms. This research incorporates such perspectives to encourage pedagogical flexibility and linguistic inclusivity.

Meanwhile, Roshid and Sultana (2023) analyzed the socio-economic motivations driving English language learning, particularly how English is commodified as a marker of status and employment opportunity. In under-resourced Bangla medium schools, this pressure to succeed in English without institutional support intensifies the learning gap. This study builds on their analysis by examining how students navigate these socio-economic forces while developing core English skills.

Vinita and Ilankumaran (2024) argued for Content-Based Instruction (CBI) as a strategy to make grammar and communication more relevant through real-life contexts. This aligns with the present study's focus on communicative, learner-centered teaching methods that can help Bangla medium students overcome both grammatical and speaking challenges. Gs and Bhuvaneswari (2024) similarly demonstrated that inclusive pedagogies—such as Universal Design for Learning—can significantly enhance speaking skills among students with communication difficulties, reinforcing the need for adaptable instruction.

Finally, studies like Sarkar and Hasan (2024) have highlighted the potential of student autonomy in online and blended learning contexts. Embedding autonomy, self-direction, and agency within the curriculum could enhance motivation and engagement, particularly in hybrid models increasingly adopted across Bangladeshi classrooms.

3. Research Question

- What struggles do Bangla medium students face in learning English at the higher secondary level?

4. Methodology

The present study used a mixed-method approach and applied quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate problems of Bangla medium students in learning English at the higher secondary level. Data were collected using two main execution tools: semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires. The quantitative data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaire surveys conducted separately with students and teachers. To complement these findings with qualitative insights, open-ended questions were included—one for teachers and one for students. The triangulated data collection approach helped us to obtain insights from multiple sources regarding the participants' perspectives.

4.1 Mixed Method Approach

A mixed methods research design was utilized for this study, involving the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to answer a research question in a single study (Plano Clark, 2016). This study aimed to deepen insight into the challenges of Bangla medium students in learning the English language.

In particular, an Explanatory Sequential Design was realized (Creswell & Clark, 2018). This study used a Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Design in which quantitative data were collected, first, via Likert-scale questionnaires administered to students and teachers. Quantitative findings were elaborated and clarified, with qualitative data being collected via semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions in the next phase.

This is a combination of both phases, enabling more eye to eye analysis. The qualitative phase was an interpreting and contextualizing tool to help understand the quantitative result patterns, by providing an insight into the participants' struggles, perceptions, and learning contexts. Such a structure, along with a triangulated data collection method, guaranteed credibility and provided a comprehensive representation of their experiences.

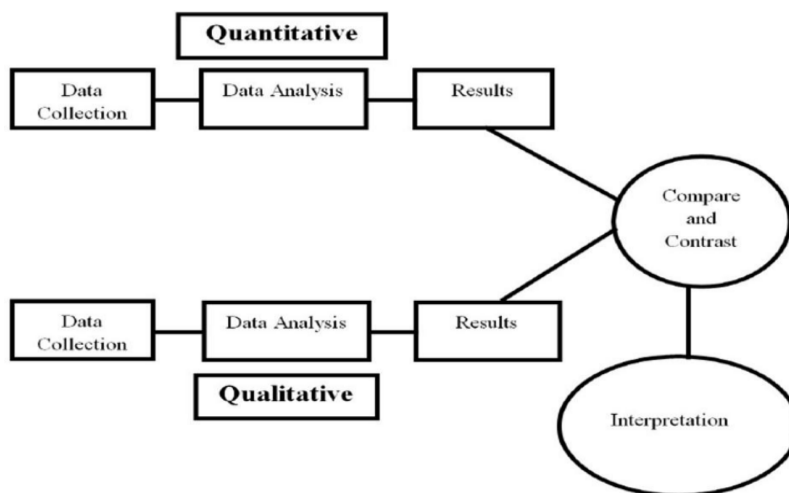


Figure 1. Mixed method research design approach (Adopted from Creswell 2013)

4.2 Data Collection Process

4.2.1 Survey Questionnaire

The structured survey instrument used in the quantitative phase was divided into two different sections for teachers and students of higher secondary level. The student version consisted of 12 close-ended questions using a Likert scale as well as one open ended question, and the teacher version included 12 close-ended questions and an open ended question for qualitative input. For validity and reliability, the items were developed based on literature review consultation for validity by experts' opinions listed and they were pre-tested.

4.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews

A semi-structured interview was employed that ensured uniformity but also permitted to probe further on any new issues that may arise. There were five main questions for the teachers and also five for the student groups, covering a range of crucial topics, like grammar problems, confidence in speaking and exposure to English. This semi-structured design offered the interviewer to ask clarifying questions where necessary and to give participants the room to illuminate their experiences in detail, providing a more in-depth insight. The questions were formed on a specific thematic framework that was constructed, based on the study's aims and readings available in this field.

4.3 Characteristics and Profile of Participants

Teachers and students both at higher secondary levels were involved in the data collection. The student participants were drawn from multiple colleges, with all students having passed an English proficiency test in the context of their respective schools. Participants were chosen using a purposive sampling method (Patton, 1990).

4.3.1 Students' profile

The survey and interview participants were higher secondary-level learners attending three colleges in Rangpur Division, Bangladesh. The subjects were male and female students, most of whom were between 17 and 19 years old. A total of 146 students participated by answering 12 questions in the survey. However, it should be mentioned that 39.7% of the participants were from Rangpur Police Lines School and College and the other two institutes only had a small proportion of participants. The English language proficiency test was also administered by the authors, after having previously recorded their academic ranking — predominantly first-year students who scored lower than 60% on a university-organized English proficiency test conducted prior to regular academic classes beginning. None of these colleges are known for English fluency, these three selected colleges routinely administer this proficiency test at the beginning of the academic year to their new students.

4.3.2 Teacher Profile

In this study, participating teachers had varied teaching experience, ranging from less than two years to over ten. This diversity allowed the study to capture perceptions of English language teaching practices at the higher secondary level. In the quantitative phase, structured survey questionnaires were administered to 15 teachers from three colleges in Rangpur Division. Their responses provided quantitative data on the English learning challenges faced by Bangla medium students. Each of these teachers also answered one open-ended question for qualitative input. Additionally, five were selected for in-depth, semi-structured interviews to explore deeper personal and professional insights. All participants had relevant academic backgrounds and were purposively selected based on their current involvement in higher secondary education, ensuring the relevance of the findings.

4.3.3 Data Analysis Process

In this study, data analysis was in accordance with the principles of an Explanatory Sequential Design, starting with descriptive analysis of quantitative data, followed by a Thematic Analysis of the Qualitative data. Descriptive analysis was performed on quantitative responses that were collected via Likert-scale questionnaires and results are presented in table format to identify patterns and trends between participant responses. Open-ended responses from the questionnaires were also analyzed descriptively to support and elaborate on the quantitative findings. These responses were organized into clusters by common themes and grouped under appropriate descriptive headings to indicate general trends in participants' perceptions and experiences. For the qualitative stage Braun and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic analysis was used for in-depth analysis. This process consisted of several systematized phases: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, deriving initial themes and reviewing those themes iteratively. The interview transcripts were read several times by researchers to become familiar with the data and identify nuanced codes. These codes were then grouped into overarching themes that encompassed key aspects of participants' experiences. The last phase required the distilling of all these themes into a concise narrative that provided insights but also reflected the analytical rigor of the study. Triangulation of both these qualitative findings and survey data from larger demographic studies ensured that the findings were complementary of other quantitative data while still providing a systematic and credible representation of the lived realities of the participants to further deepen the interpretation.

5. Data Findings

5.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

5.1.1 Findings from the Student Survey

The student survey (appendix A) has been the backbone in answering the major research question as to what are the problems faced by Bangla medium students in learning English in the higher secondary level. In this survey, a series of Likert-scale questions were designed to

assess the perceptions and lived experiences of 146 students on multiple colleges in Bangladesh regarding different aspects of English language learning. Overall, the results in Table 1 give us important insights into which areas are the most challenging for students, as well as broader patterns and individual differences that are key to understanding the educational shortcomings we see in the current system.

Table 1. Findings from the Student Survey

Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Do you find English grammar difficult to understand?	17.1%	17.8%	26%	21.2%	17.8%
Do I struggle with speaking English fluently due to a lack of confidence?	21.9%	26.7%	16.4%	23.3%	11.6%
Do I have limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom?	21.9%	14.4%	25.3%	19.2%	19.2%
Do the English textbooks used in your college seem difficult to understand?	16.4%	24.7%	21.2%	22.6%	15.1%
Do you feel nervous while speaking English in front of your teachers or classmates?	17.8%	25.3%	22.6%	21.2%	13%
Did my school education prepare me well for learning English at the higher secondary level?	24%	19.9%	19.2%	19.9%	17.1%
Do I struggle with listening to English audio or lectures and understanding them?	20.5%	12.3%	21.2%	24.7%	21.2%
Do I find it difficult to write English essays and paragraphs correctly?	17.1%	18.5%	20.5%	27.4%	16.4%
I struggle with speaking English fluently due to a lack of confidence	27.4%	15.1%	22.6%	19.9%	15.1%

5.1.1.1 Understanding of English Grammar

The initial area examined in the survey had to do with students understanding of the English grammar. If you are asked, “Is English grammar difficult for you to understand?”, the responses fell on a broad spectrum. Although 21.2% of students agreed and 17.8% strongly agreed with the statement, the same number, 17.1%, strongly disagreed. Roughly 17.8% said they disagreed and 26% said they remained neutral. These results indicate that while a majority of the students were struggling with grammar, a sizeable number of students were feeling relatively confident in this aspect. This variation is likely linked to differences in quality of instruction, self-study habits, or exposure to English grammar at the school level. The 26% neutrality could also indicate uncertainty or inconsistency in their learning experience.

5.1.1.2 Speaking Confidence

The most important piece of information came from the question, “Do I struggle with speaking English fluently due to a lack of confidence?” Here 23.3% agreed and 11.6% strongly agreed, which shows that over a third of the respondents see low confidence as an obstacle to speaking fluently. In contrast, 16% resented and 31.3% objected that this was not their case, indicating that some students do not go through this struggle. The contrasting nature of the responses shallows an unevenness in the development of speaking skills in students and diversity in their confidence levels. It also illustrates how classroom environment, teacher encouragement, and peer interaction may impact self-perception when using a language.

5.1.1.3 Limited Practice Opportunities

“Do I have limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom?”, revealed another major point of concern. Although 19.2% of students strongly agreed and another 19.2% agreed with the statement, 25.3% remained neutral and only 14.4% disagreed. That means around 40% of students indicate that they do not have sufficient exposure or real opportunities to use English outside the classroom setting. The absence of an immersive language setting, particularly in Bangla-dominated areas, may play a part in this. These students may also be underexposed to English outside their classes, with English extracurricular activities — if offered — and digital learning tools possibly underutilized or unavailable.

5.1.1.4 Difficulty in Understanding Textbooks

When students were asked, “Do the English textbooks used in your college seem difficult to understand?”, with many saying they had trouble. In particular, 22.6% agreed, and 15.1% strongly agreed, and 21.2% was neutral. That means 38% of the students actually find their English textbooks difficult. This perception could come from dense academic or sophisticated texts, that are above the actual achievement level of their students. Furthermore, if some illustrations or background references are not requested for textbooks, students may find it difficult to learn.

5.1.1.5 Nervousness in Speaking

Students were also asked how comfortable they felt speaking English in front of teachers and their classmates. Replying to, “Do you feel nervous while speaking English in front of your teachers or classmates?”, 21.2% and 13% strongly agreed, meaning that over a third of the students suffer from some level of anxiety or fear. The apprehension might be related to peer influence, making mistakes, or bad past experiences. It is also significant that 25.3% disagreed and 17.8% strongly disagreed, potentially indicative of more supportive classrooms environments in other institutions. And yet the data show that anxiety about speaking is still common and it can hinder language growth.

5.1.1.6 Preparation by School Education

The transition from secondary to higher secondary English education was evaluated through the question, “Did my school education prepare me well to learn English at higher secondary stage? The responses here were especially illuminating: 24% strongly disagree, and 19.9%

disagree, indicating dissatisfaction by content educators on the quality of English instruction at the school level. Most (19.9%) did not agree and 17.1% strongly disagreed, which may indicate that there were less students who felt prepared. Such discrepancy suggests a systemic problem in foundational English education in Bangla medium schools, where communicative language practices might have been lost in the avenues of rote memorization.

5.1.1.7 Listening Difficulties

Listening comprehension is thus a crucial facet of language acquisition, and the answers to the question, “*Do I struggle with listening to English audio or lectures and understanding them?*”, point to significant obstacles. 21.2% and 24.7% of students strongly agreed and agreed with it, respectively, meaning 45.9% of respondents indicated that spoken English appears difficult for them. These outcomes reflect the limited exposure most students get to spoken English, in media, conversation or class lectures. This loses half the meaning and cause academic failures as well as real life conversations, which is where auditory reinforcement through English teaching comes into play.

5.1.1.8 Challenges in Writing

Writing proficiency was another big area. In response to, “*Do I find it difficult to write English essays and paragraphs correctly?*”, for which 27.4% of the students agreed and 16.4% strongly agreed, altogether were 43.8% of the total respondents. That such a high percentage struggle with academic writing suggests it is a widespread practice that can lead to declining test and cohort graduation rate scores, perhaps due to limited practice, inadequate grammar teaching, or the absence of feedback systems in classrooms. Writing is a complex skill that involves vocabulary, structure, coherence, critical thinking, etc., so students, especially in Bangla medium, may find it difficult, as not much engagement was given to these attributes in previous educational layers.

5.1.1.9 Language of Instruction in Class

Lastly, students were asked, “*Do my teachers primarily use Bangla to explain English lessons in class?*” 27.4% strongly disagreed and 15.1% disagreed, while 19.9% and 15.1% strongly agreed and agreed. This reflects a classroom divide — some institutions emphasize English, others rely on Bangla. Such inconsistency hampers fluency, as learners lack English input. From 146 student responses, common struggles include lack of speaking confidence, insufficient practice, listening difficulties, and weak writing. Problems stem from poor textbooks and weak early preparation. The “dominant presence of Bangla in English classes” highlights a curriculum-instruction mismatch. Differences in support and learning environments vary. To help, communicative methods, practice-based learning, and student-friendly materials are crucial. Action must start now—no need to wait for assessments or focus groups.

5.1.2 Findings from Teacher Survey

The relevant teacher survey (Appendix B) helped to gather information regarding the central research question that deals with the perceptions of higher secondary-level English language teachers about how Bangla medium students find learning English challenging. Essentially, this quantitative study reached a total of 15 teachers. (Learners’ do provide insight into their instruction and experience in classrooms, but in a different way the below make for a professional perspective adding to these students how’s and whys to the systemic and individual when it comes to learners there and beyond.)

The questions in the survey included topics related to grammar, pronunciation, anxiety, the exposure to and use of English, curriculum, and students’ learning habits. The results, summarized in Table 2, demonstrate consistent themes, consistent with student concerns but also reflecting teachers’ perceptions and the realities of situations in the classroom.

Table 2. Findings from Teacher Survey

Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Does a student's limited knowledge of English grammar affect their ability to write correctly?	0%	13.3%	20%	46.7%	20%
Do students in Bangla medium struggle with English pronunciation?	6.7%	13.3%	6.7%	60%	13.3%
Are grammar difficulties a major challenge for Bangla medium students?	6.7%	6.7%	20%	53.3%	13.3%
Do students face anxiety and hesitation when speaking in English?	0%	6.7%	6.7%	46.7%	40%
Does limited exposure to English outside the classroom affect students' learning progress?	0%	6.7%	33.3%	46.7%	13.3%
Do students find English reading comprehension challenging?	0%	6.7%	13.3%	73.3%	6.7%
Is writing in English (e.g., essays, paragraphs) difficult for most Bangla medium students?	13.3%	26.7%	13.3%	40%	6.7%
Does the current English curriculum adequately support speaking skills development?	6.7%	26.7%	26.7%	33.3%	6.7%
Do students focus on memorizing answers instead of understanding concepts in English?	0%	6.7%	33.3%	60%	6.7%
Do students struggle to understand English textbooks due to complex vocabulary and structure?	0%	21.4%	14.3%	64.3%	0%

5.1.2.1 Grammar and Writing Proficiency

The first question in the teacher survey was: “*Does a student's limited knowledge of English grammar affect their ability to write correctly?*” All teachers either agreed (46.7%) or strongly agreed (20%) that they disagreed with this, and no teachers disagreed (13.3%)

or selected a neutral response (20%) This mass agreement only shows that the foundation of writing skills is grammar. The teachers know that, if students lack a good understanding of grammatical structures, they will have a difficult time writing coherent and correct sentences, especially when it comes to writing essays and formal writing assignments. This is consistent with student responses to the previous table, where many reported challenges with essay writing and grammar.

5.1.2.2 Pronunciation Difficulties

On the question, “*Do students in Bangla medium struggle with English pronunciation?*”, most teachers (60%) agreed, with 13.3% strongly agreeing. Only 6.7 percent of respondents strongly rejected the idea. This is a very general problem that most students face while learning English from Bangla medium. Most pronunciation issues can be attributed to phonetic unlearning and limited exposure to the various accents of the English language. Some even end up misinterpreting or establishing a non-fluent dialogue with the English language. Teachers’ responses highlight how this issue can be addressed with listening and speaking drills incorporated into English classes.

5.1.2.3 Grammar as a Major Challenge

A high 53.3% considered grammar as a critical problem for Bangla medium students, and another 13.3% strongly felt that way. By comparison, only 6.7% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed. Grammar is not just a learning problem, but a big stumbling block in preventing students to become more confident in writing and speaking in English. Teachers’ own perceptions echo this concern, with evidence of significant grammatical errors and a high degree of reliance on memorized sentence patterns with little understanding of their grammatical construction.

5.1.2.4 Speaking Anxiety

One of the major things that came up was how students felt about communicating in English. In response to “*Do students face anxiety and hesitation when speaking in English?*”, 46.7 percent of teachers agreed, and an impressive 40 percent strongly agreed. This clearly points towards the fact that anxiety is a common phenomenon in English language classrooms. Many teachers see students with so much desire to express themselves held back due to the fear of being wrong or criticized. This can create such anxiety that they may even avoid speaking tasks altogether, further delaying language acquisition. English speaking activities must therefore take into account the emotional well-being of students.

5.1.2.5 Lack of Exposure Outside the Classroom

Another key finding derived from the question, “*Does limited exposure to English outside the classroom affect students’ learning progress?*” Once more, the responses resoundingly confirm the matter: 46.7% agreed, 13.3% strongly agreed. Since 33.3% remained neutral, it indicates that all teachers do accept, some they do not question the depth of problem. In reality, however, many students live in monolingual homes where English is neither spoken nor heard outside of academic circles. Thus, English is simply a subject that needs to be passed, instead of a practical language to cross, resulting in a delay in fluency.

5.1.2.6 Reading Comprehension Challenges

Teachers were also asked about students’ English reading. For example, “*Do students find English reading comprehension challenging?*”, a staggering 73.3% agreed, and 6.7% strongly agreed. This highlights reading as one of the hardest areas for Bangla medium students. Perhaps you struggle with vocabulary, sentence structure or the meaning of words in context. Teachers say that students tend to read mechanically, without comprehension, which hinders their ability to answer analytical questions or critically engage with texts.

5.1.2.7 Writing Difficulties

The following question examined writing difficulties: “*Is writing in English (e.g., essays, paragraphs) difficult for most Bangla medium students?*” “Answers were mixed, but still illuminating. 40% of them agreed and 6.7% strongly agreed whereas 26.7% disagreed and 13.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that while many teachers agree that writing is a struggle, a substantial number think some students are doing well. The difference might be in the way students are taught, or how they perform at different institutions. Writing, nevertheless, is a skill that needs to be practiced regularly, and learned with explicit instruction and critical thinking — all areas where many students seem to lack.

5.1.2.8 Developing Curriculum & Speaking Skills

The question “*Does the current English curriculum adequately support speaking skills development?*” received mixed reactions. Just 33.3% agreed and 6.7% very much agreed, whilst 26.7% took a neutral stance and 26.7% disagreed. This suggests that educators are divided over whether the current curriculum is effective for improving speaking skills. A low percentage of strong agreement, however, suggests a curriculum too skewed towards reading and writing and lacking in practical speaking activities — role-plays, debates or presentations. These findings emphasize the need for curriculum balance to promote diverse skill development.

5.1.2.9 Rote Memorization vs. Conceptual Understanding

Teachers responded, too, with their thoughts about memorization in learning English. When we asked “*Do students focus on memorizing answers instead of understanding concepts in English?*”, 60% agree and 6.7% strongly agree while 33.3% are neutral. These results reflect a deep-seated problem in the Bangladeshi education system: the dedication to rote learning instead of understanding. Students memorize paragraphs, answers, or grammar rules, often without understanding their meanings or applications. Teachers say that produces immediate academic gains but lags skills over time.

5.1.2.10 Textbook Complexity

The last question was about textbooks: “Do students struggle to understand English textbooks due to complex vocabulary and structure?” 64.3% strongly agreed and 21.4% disagreed. This highlights how inaccessible textbooks are for most Bangla medium learners. The vocabulary is often out of reach and context, sometimes even culturally irrelevant. Teachers' responses add depth, confirming these struggles are “multivariate and complex.” One key issue is students' continued difficulty with grammar and writing. “Errors of grammar are common and too often a hurdle to be overcome before writing can become a skill.” Writing demands clarity, logic, and language accuracy, which many lack. In speaking and listening, “students present high anxiety and hesitation,” worsened by poor pronunciation and minimal exposure to English beyond classrooms. Teachers say the curriculum overly stresses exams, leaving “no room for innovation or interactive learning.” These systemic issues demand reforms in curriculum, pedagogy, and resources to better align language teaching with real-world communicative needs.

5.2 Findings from Qualitative Data

5.2.1 Thematic finding of Student Responses to the Open-Ended Question

For this purpose, an open-ended question (Appendix C) was given to 146 student participants (SPs) to get more insight on their views related to the barriers that they faced for English learning at higher secondary level. The next subsection provides a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from the data analysis. Responses were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-phase framework for reflexive thematic analysis. Specifically, we asked students: “*What are the biggest challenges you face while learning English, and what suggestions do you have to overcome them?*” And below is a thematic overview of their responses.

5.2.1.1 From inductive coding and reviewing the qualitative data, three major themes emerged:

- a. Listening and Speaking Barriers Caused by Native Pronunciation Patterns
- b. Literal and Structural Challenges in Reading and Writing
- c. Psychological Barriers and Confidence Deficiency in English Language

Theme 1: Listening and Speaking Barriers Caused by Native Pronunciation Patterns

The speed, accent and rhythm of native speakers became major barriers to understanding, a number of students emphasized. One student described, “*I find it hard to follow native speakers when they speak fast. They employ connected speech, which causes words to mush together.*” To cope with this, many said they used podcasts and videos at slower speeds, before progressively adding the playback rate to train their ears.

Comments such “*Some English sounds are not in my native language, which makes pronunciation difficult.*” indicated the influence of Bengali phonetics on pronunciation problems. To solve this problem, students used shadowing techniques, tongue twisters and minimal pairs with native audio.

Students also struggled to recognize errant grammatical constructions, phrasal verbs, and intonation — all obstacles to clear conversation. A further common concern was the difficulty in understanding jokes, sarcasm, and figurative language in English media such as sitcoms and commercials. One student said he watched with subtitles, then repeated without them, as a training strategy. “*It's hard to follow conversations in noisy places or over the phone without facial expressions,*” one respondent said, showing how real-world conditions affect oral comprehension. Exposure to English in authentic but challenging contexts—like listening to podcasts in crowded places—was a typical self-directed solution.

Theme 2: Literal and Structural Challenges in Reading and Writing

Students frequently struggled with academic English in particular, notably when writing essays, reading dense texts, or understanding the content of textbooks. As one student wrote, “*Academic writing is complex. I begin with academic writing adapted for children and progress toward riper passages.*” Many mentioned troubles with organization, coherence and using the appropriate register in formal writing. Core difficulties were identified with respect to spelling, grammar (which seemed particularly challenging considering article usage and verb tenses) and sentence construction. “*I make grammar errors. I practice by rereading grammar rules and using online grammar checkers.*” Another wrote, “*My essays lack structure. I use outlines and focus on introduction, body, and conclusion formats.*” “*The cause of reading problems was long, complex sentences, unknown vocabulary and archaic or academic English. Students managed this by simplifying texts, summarizing paragraphs and using dictionary apps.*” One student for example said, “*News articles have complex words. I use English-learning news websites like News in Levels.*” Difficulty writing persuasive or descriptive pieces, summarizing academic papers, or understanding legal or technical documents came up as well. To combat these, students employed techniques such as reading templates, annotating the text, Grammarly or spell-check programs.

Theme 3: Psychological Barriers and Confidence Deficiency in English Language

Their problems, as many students pointed out, lay in their emotional or psychological barriers against English. Fear, doubt, and mistakes visited them; they were sometimes haunted. “*I get nervous and blank on words in job interviews,*” shared one student. Another wrote, “*I also admitted the truth.*” One said, “*What makes me hesitate is the fear of making mistakes. I tell myself that mistakes are a natural part of the learning.*” Low confidence impacted spoken fluency: “*My speech lacks expression. I read aloud with expressions and various intonations.*” Isolation mattered too: “*I live in a non-English-speaking country, so I don't get much listening practice,*” he said. Students

employed TED Talks, BBC Learning English, language learning apps, role-played icons, and even practiced polite expressions. Though faced with decoding fast speech and self-doubt, they found ways to adapt: shadowing, controlled reading, and mock interviews. These findings demonstrate the value of skill-based, emotionally supportive, and culturally sensitive classroom teaching for Bangla-medium students.

5.2.2 Thematic Finding of Teacher Responses to the Open-Ended Question

To gain deeper insights into the barriers faced by students in learning English at the higher secondary level, an open-ended question (Appendix D) was administered to 15 teacher participants. The following subsection presents a detailed analysis of the responses, which were examined using Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-phase framework for reflexive thematic analysis. Specifically, teachers were asked the following question: In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges Bangla medium students face in learning English, and how can they be improved? Below is a thematic overview of their responses.

5.2.2.1 From Inductive Coding and Reviewing the Qualitative Data, Three Major Themes Emerged

Theme 1. Limited Exposure and Application of English in Real-life

Teachers stressed the minimal use of English in the students' real lives, limiting their language growth tremendously. English for them is often limited to the classroom, and revolving around memorization at best.

"Bangla medium students don't have exposure to English outside the classroom that much," said one teacher. "Real-life application is difficult for them, because everyone around them is speaking Bangla." Some pointed to the pedagogical shortcomings, focused on grammar: "Conventional Bangla medium schools still follow rote learning techniques, where students learn by heart an English lesson, rather than using the language in real life experiences." Teachers suggested that methods like communicative tasks such as debates, storytelling and role play, and more exposure to English media, like movies, podcasts and digital learning tools, can make for a more immersive environment.

Theme 2. Mental Roadblocks and Lack of Confidence

A major theme that came out was students' fear of making mistakes and anxiety about speaking English. This psychological barrier stops many from doing what they know how to do, and practicing what they know how to do.

"Many Bangla medium students get afraid of speaking in English for the fear of mugging up and being ridiculed," one teacher said. This challenge is exacerbated by the absence of a nurturing environment. "Teachers need to create non-judgmental classrooms where mistakes are part of the process of learning," another commented. Suggested interventions are that you create an encouraging space where in lesson group discussions and drama activities are accepted, and the introduction of positive reinforcement, as to help students gradually increase their determination to use English.

Theme 3. Structural and Resource-Based Constraints

Teachers pinpointed some of the central issues: teaching is not sufficient, there is a lack of English materials, and grammar is very weak. Direct translation from Bangla to English was frequent, resulting in "grammatical errors and unnatural sentence flows," according to the report. "the main troubles they are facing are owing to the concern of not having enough knowledge and understanding on grammar." Solutions included more targeted vocabulary work, more students reading regularly, better trained teachers and stronger interactive tools in support of student learning.

5.3 Findings from Interviews

5.3.1 Thematic Findings of Student Interviews

To elicit their experiences in learning English at the higher secondary, a semi-structured interview (Appendix E) was conducted with five students as participants (SPs). The objective was to gather in-depth qualitative data on the real-life challenges of the Bangla medium learners. Data were thematically analyzed using the six-phase process developed by Braun and Clarke (2019) and resulted in five key themes. Each theme corresponds to a particular area of exploration within the interview and is substantiated with direct quotes from the participants.

First, the interview transcripts were read multiple times to ensure familiarity with the data. Second, meaningful segments of text were identified and coded to capture important ideas, such as fear of speaking, grammar struggles, or lack of exposure. Third, these initial codes were reviewed and clustered into broader categories by comparing similarities and differences across participants' responses. Fourth, the categories were refined through constant checking against the data to avoid overlap and ensure that each category represented a distinct aspect of the students' and teachers' experiences. Finally, the categories were defined and named as themes that best represented the underlying patterns in the interviews. Through this systematic coding process, five major themes were generated, which are presented below with supporting evidence from participants' direct quotations.

Theme 1: Speaking Difficulties Stemming from Fear, Translation, and Vocabulary Gaps

All of the participants spoke of difficulty in speaking English in a formal classroom or informal setting. Fear of making mistakes and fear of judgment from peers were ongoing social fears that often resulted in silence or avoidance.

"I know what I want to say, but I can't form the sentences quickly... I'm afraid my classmates will laugh at me."

(Participant 1)

"I try to think in Bangla first, then translate it, which takes time." (Participant 2)

Students struggled with pronunciation and recalling vocabulary as well. Most of them said they faltered mid-speech out of confusion or embarrassment. These challenges highlight the need for greater opportunities for oral practice, activities for building confidence, and supportive, non-judgmental classroom environments.

Theme 2: Writing as a Tiring and Unstructured Task

The second theme revolves around the frustration of students facing writing essays or paragraphs. Writing in English, most of them said, felt tiring, because of limited vocabulary, grammatical errors and disorganized thoughts.

"I translate from Bangla in my head, and it doesn't sound natural." (Participant 1)

"I repeat the same ideas because I don't know how to expand them." (Participant 3)

Many also noted disengagement due to uninteresting topics or repeated assignments. Others suggested more creative, organized writing assignments that incorporate models, feedback and concrete formatting strategies in their design.

Theme 3: Absence of English Practice Outside the Classroom

Participants reported that opportunities to practice English outside the classroom were almost nonexistent, because of the lack of support from peers or family and fear of judgement.

"At home, everyone speaks Bangla, so I don't get any chance to use English." (Participant 1)

"I tried to speak with one of my friends once, but he said I was acting smart." (Participant 5)

"People who do watch English media say they don't understand fast speech." This theme highlights the need for low-pressure, English speaking environments, whether it be peer-speaking clubs or planned, at-home speaking tasks.

Theme 4: Textbooks as Complex and Detached from Real-Life English Use

Students reported mixed experiences with their textbooks in English. While some noticed basic help on grammar, most found the books too difficult, too abstract and insufficiently practical.

"Sometimes I just memorize without knowing the meaning." (Participant 1)

"I feel it is written for smart students, not for weak students like me." (Participant 5)

They wanted easier texts, visual support, practice in talking in real life and clearer instructions. The ensuing prevalent textbooks focused more on doing the exams instead of gaining knowledge, this led to call for restructuring the curriculum that incorporated functional usages of English.

Theme 5: Peer Collaboration and Self-Initiative in Overcoming Challenges

Their support for each other and effort to improve was incredible despite the odds. This theme emphasizes students' fortitude and desire to learn through mutual aid.

"We practice small sentences together... We support each other so we can improve." (Participant 2)

"Sometimes we learn together using mobile apps." (Participant 5)

At breaks, participants did translation for each other and shared notes, a little bit of speaking practice. Some were proactive — writing every day, posting subtitled videos or reading aloud. Interviews reveal issues like communication anxiety, poor writing, lack of practice, "unphysiological textbook contents," and low support. Still, peer-led initiatives show promise, emphasizing "interactive classrooms," curriculum simplification, and speaking-focused peer learning.

5.3.2 Thematic Findings of Teacher Interviews

The thematic findings were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-phase framework for reflexive thematic analysis, (Appendix F) based on the five semi-structured interview questions administered to five also teacher participants. There were five themes that emerge and revealed the consistencies across participants' responses regarding the challenges faced by Bangla medium students while learning English at the higher secondary level. A few selected quotes from participants are also included to illustrate each theme.

Theme 1: Fear, Anxiety, and Lack of Confidence in Speaking

Most notably among teachers, students' fear and anxiety about speaking English came up as an issue. Some students shy away from talking because they are afraid of making mistakes and being judged by classmates or teachers. This fear is anchored in their experience deprivation and lack of confidence which presents a significant barrier to fluency.

"Even brilliant students hesitate to answer in English because they're not used to expressing their thoughts spontaneously," said Participant 4.

Participant 1 echoed this, stating, "They often worry about making grammatical mistakes or being laughed at by their classmates."

Interviewees stressed that students need regular speaking practice in low-stakes, mistake-friendly settings to overcome this fear.

Theme 2: Gaps in Grammar Understanding and Sentence Construction

Every participant mentioned students' struggles with grammar and sentence construction. Students may memorize grammar rules in a classroom setting, but they often have difficulty implementing those rules correctly in written or spoken scenarios. The root of the issue was pinpointed to the traditional teaching of grammar, in vacuum, devoid of context.

"Even if they understand grammar rules, applying them in real communication becomes difficult," noted Participant 3.

Participant 2 added, *"Students think in Bangla and try to convert their thoughts word-for-word, which leads to awkward or incorrect expressions."*

Teachers reported simplified explanations, visual aids, games, and bilingual instruction were all helpful strategies to address these issues.

Theme 3: Limited Exposure to Real-Life English and Poor Listening Skills

A common theme was that they had not been exposed to real, authentic English language use, especially in listening and speaking situations. Students also rarely communicate in English outside the classroom, which affects their language development, especially listening comprehension—this is something teachers noted as a significant issue.

"Their listening skills are poor, mainly because they don't get exposure to authentic English conversations," commented Participant 3.

Similarly, Participant 5 said, *"Students haven't had enough exposure to English conversations... many of them have a negative experience early in school—either being scolded or laughed at—which stays with them."*

Participants recommended setting up moves of merging audio-visual materials, podcasts, together with actual life simulations to enhance exposure and also making them accomplish active listening as well as speaking exercise.

Theme 4: Curriculum Misalignment with Student Needs

Teachers pointed out that the existing English curriculum was outdated, exam-oriented, and had little relevance to students' actual language needs. A more combat-focused curriculum focused on grammar and reading comprehension gives little room for communicative skill development.

"The English curriculum seems more exam-oriented than skill-oriented," noted Participant 2.

Participant 1 added, *"It doesn't focus enough on developing communicative competence... Speaking and listening skills are especially neglected."*

This discourages individual learners even further due to the absence of relatable and engaging content. Some teachers stressed the importance of reforming curriculum to ensure that it contains task-based learning materials, developmentally appropriate materials, and real-life communication practices.

Theme 5: Recommended Strategies for Reducing Learning Struggles

Teachers suggested that a variety of approaches could help to overcome these difficulties, including communicative language teaching, integrated technology, and learner-centered instruction. It really stressed the creation of interactive, supportive, (even responsive) environments and diversifying instructional materials.

"We must create a supportive and non-judgmental environment," said Participant 3.

Participant 4 suggested, *"Incorporating task-based language teaching and blended learning models can address these problems."*

In addition, the teachers noted the need to reduce class sizes, involve parents in the process and change assessment styles to put more emphasis on practical application as opposed to cramming. Many teachers also recommended peer practice, real-life conversations, and confidence-building tasks. So, the teacher interviews reflect a complex yet consistent narrative over the struggles faced by Bangla medium students in learning English. Overwhelmingly across responses, recurring themes of fear of speaking, grammar problems, limited input, misalignment of curriculum with communicative and context-rich practice and the search for practical strategies emerged. They not only reveal the shortcomings of current practices but also offer big ideas suggested by teachers to implement real change.

6. Discussion

The findings of the study provide a more comprehensive and more profound understanding of why and how factors impede the higher secondary curricular Bangla-medium students' learning English. By triangulating observations through both students and classroom teachers, the results provide an in-depth picture of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dilemmas that echo and extend existing findings. This section discusses the implications of these findings with respect to relevant themes: difficulty of grammar Speaking anxiety, lack of exposure, mismatch in the curriculum, and the need for reform.

The role of nervousness and perceived incompetence related to oral English in the Process of learning English. The most notable discovery includes the effects of discouragement and students' self-perceived incompetence in oral English. In the student survey, 37.7% said that they are reluctant because of lack of confidence, and 86.7% of the teachers agreed (or strongly agreed) that the students have fears when they are told to speak in English. This hypothesis is supported by our interview data, where participants reported a fear of receiving judgment or an inability to articulate a sentence. "Even brilliant students hesitate to answer in English because they're not used to expressing their thoughts

spontaneously,” said one teacher “This conclusion is consistent with Khan (2015), who considers anxiety and psychological blocks to affect students' learning of English. Nonetheless, the present study distinctively addresses students' independent strategies, like peer cooperation, role-playing activities, and using multimedia tools -- for alleviating anxiety. We practice small sentences together... We help each other,” as students put it.

The second challenge is the students' difficulty with grammar and sentences, which has substantial implications for writing. Results Of the participants, 43.8% experienced problems with writing essays and paragraphs, according to the survey. “Grammar is taught in isolation and is memorized and not applied in context,” teachers said. “Students think in Bangla and try to convert their thoughts word-for-word, which leads to awkward or incorrect expressions” one student said.

These results are in agreement with Rahman et al. (2019), who critiqued the grammar-oriented pedagogy and the absence of communicative approaches in Bangladesh. This research directly connects macrolevel problems to the microlevel of students' daily lives in a classroom.

Limited exposure to English outside of school is a problem too. There was a consensus among students and teachers that a lack of practical English interaction limits their listening and speaking ability. Some students were discouraged or even taunted for using English socially. “I would tell you all about this, but I would be scaaaadt [scared],” one girl said. One of the boys said, “I tried to speak with one of my friends once, but he said I was acting smart.” These narratives underscore that societal and cultural attitudes are the main barrier, which is consistent with Roy et al. (2020), who analyzed conflict cultures in education.

This issue is further exacerbated by the lack of appropriate textbooks and curriculum. Participants said books were difficult to understand and abstract. One said, “I feel it is written for smart students, not for weak students like me.” Teachers concurred attacking the curriculum for being exam-led and not conducive to practical usage or real communication. The focus of the curriculum in drilling reading and grammar, rather than speaking and listening, is consistent with Macaro et al. (2018), who found that English Medium Instruction is not conducive to integrating skills. McDonald claimed that students struggled with writing since they had difficulty selecting vocabulary and organizing ideas. “I repeat the same ideas because I don't know how to expand them.” one student said. This study highlights the absence of critical and creative thinking in our curriculum, which is prevalent in most classes.

The most prominent finding is the psychological and emotional block: anxiety, low self-esteem, and the fear of failure. These sentiments expressed via interviews and free-text responses were found to be associated with poor engagement and learning achievements. Although Khan (2015) identified these concerns among secondary students, we demonstrate that they persist into the higher secondary stage, where academic pressure is significantly greater and support is less readily available.

One alarming figure showed that only 37% of students believed that their school had prepared them well for advanced English language study at a higher secondary level. Most either disagreed or had no opinion. Teachers echoed that, criticizing the curriculum for not being relevant to real life or functional English. These concerns are consistent with Karim et al. (2023), who proposed a bilingual skilled strategy. The new research builds on the previous findings by demonstrating that the split isn't only pedagogical; it's perceptual. Teachers as well as students believe the curriculum does not cater to their actual learning needs.

Institutional constraints notwithstanding, each group demonstrated strong determination to be better. They shadowed, did mock interviews, kept grammar journals, and took quizzes online. Teachers made use of bilingual materials as well as sentence games and simulations. “We must create a supportive and non-judgmental environment” one teacher wrote. The evidence indicates that the problem is not of motivation, but of the lack of systemic support and resources.

Our study presents a few interconnected obstacles that hinder learning a language: fear, grammatical complexity, scarcity of exposure, unavailability of materials, and a linear curriculum. But it also emphasizes learner-led and teacher-driven approaches peer learning, bilingual support, and contextual strategies that provide a path forward. This research shows the intertwining of educational and sociocultural issues, in contrast to previous research that tended to isolate them. Genuine reform needs to be comprehensive, not only curricular and assessment-related, but also classroom cultural, teacher preparational, and student empowering.

7. Recommendations

The study suggests a communicative and student-centered approach in the higher secondary level English language teaching of the Bangla medium students. Educators should embed speaking and listening activities in lessons, move away from rote learning, and create psychologically safe spaces that empower learners to take risks. The curriculum should also be more functional and include English that is usable and relatable in context. Media, peer collaboration, and digital tools should encourage exposure to English outside the classroom. Lastly, teacher training programs must prepare teachers with modern, interactive teaching strategies that better align with students' real-world communication needs.

The study suggests conducting additional large-scale studies in different regions of Bangladesh to validate these results, especially longitudinal research to track learners' progress over time. Subsequent studies should also examine how digital learning platforms, bilingual strategies and socio-cultural factors contribute to the development of English language proficiency. Encouraging cross-sectional studies between policy makers, teachers and caregivers can lead to comprehensive insights that guide the sustainable reform of curriculum.

8. Limitations

The relatively small sample size is a limitation of this study, with data from only 146 students and 15 teachers in a specific region of Bangladesh being collected. Accordingly, the findings may not be fully applicable to all Bangla medium students across the country. Furthermore, self-reported data may have introduced response bias, while the time frame limited the opportunity for more extensive longitudinal analysis.

9. Conclusion

The study investigated the various struggles of the Bangla medium students at the higher secondary level in learning English, focusing on the four language skills (speaking, writing, reading, and listening). Findings identified three interrelated themes from both students and teachers in a mixed methods study that reflected systemic issues involving lack of confidence, lack of practice opportunities, lack of exposure, and misalignment of curriculum. The voices of students not only revealed linguistic obstacles, but also psychological barriers and socio-cultural pressures that obstruct status and participation in fluent speech. Teacher insights confirmed these challenges, citing structural barriers, grammar challenges, and insufficient instructional approaches. The reviewed literature cited similar anxieties, including ineffective pedagogies and policy gaps. Yet, this study yielded a distinct perspective by pinpointing the everyday, classroom and emotional challenges of Bangla medium students — an aspect less addressed in earlier studies. It also highlighted the graphing that students did despite the confinement of self-guided strategies, limited as they are, to grow their English.

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Authors' contributions

Mr. Sadekul Islam and Mr. Sultanul Arefin jointly supervised the study and contributed to its overall design. Mr. Sadekul Islam played a key role in developing the research idea and questions, assisted with proofreading, and took part in formatting and final preparation of the manuscript. Mr. Sultanul Arefin led the literature review, methodology, data collection, analysis, and writing of the paper. Dr. Miew Luan Ng provided academic guidance and constructive feedback. Ms. Megala Rajendran contributed to data validation and editing, and Ms. Marzana Binte Khan assisted in data collection. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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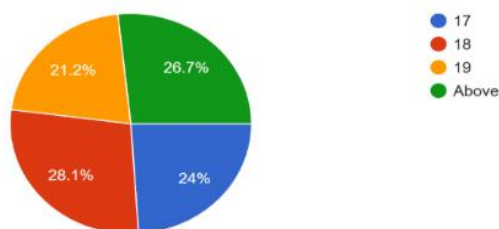
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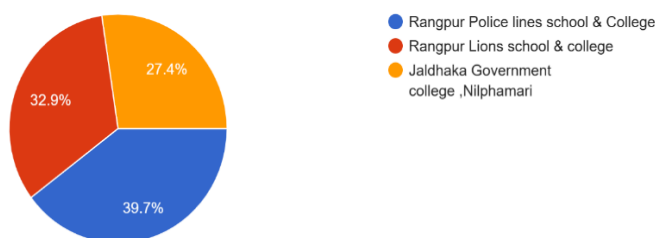
Appendix A

Questionnaire for the Student participants

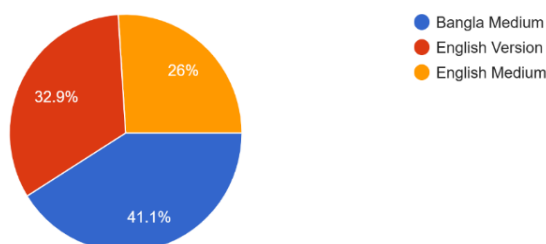
1. What is your age?
146 responses



2. Which college do you currently attend?
146 responses

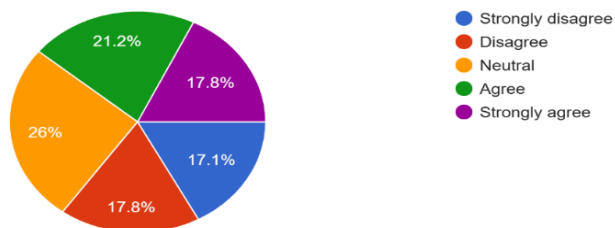


3. What was the medium of instruction (MOI) in your school?
146 responses



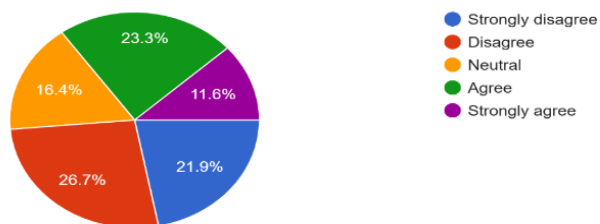
4. Do you find English grammar difficult to understand?

146 responses



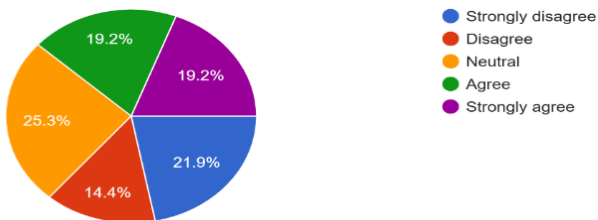
5. Do I struggle with speaking English fluently due to a lack of confidence?

146 responses



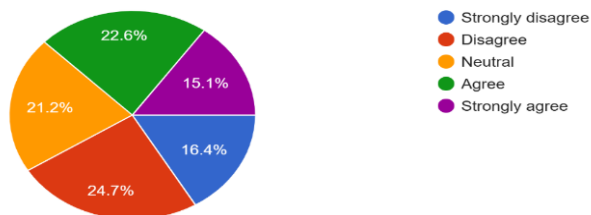
6. Do I have limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom?

146 responses



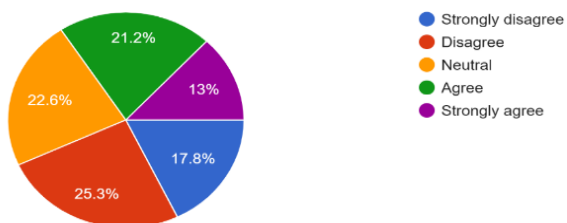
7. Do the English textbooks used in your college seem difficult to understand?

146 responses



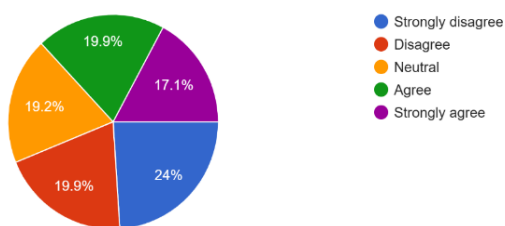
8. Do you feel nervous while speaking English in front of your teachers or classmates?

146 responses



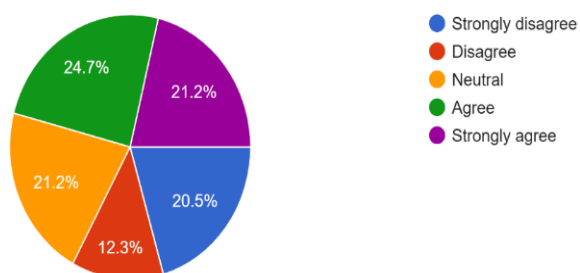
9. Did my school education prepare me well for learning English at the higher secondary level?

146 responses



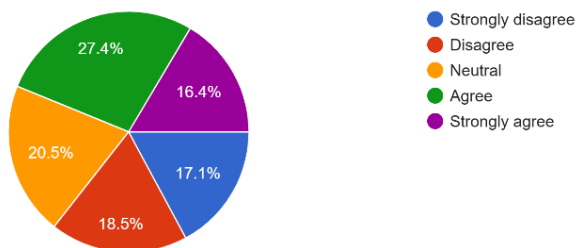
10. Do I struggle with listening to English audio or lectures and understanding them?

146 responses



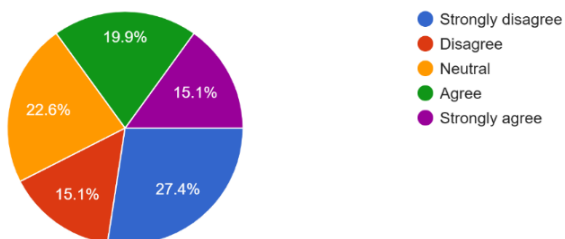
11. Do I find it difficult to write English essays and paragraphs correctly?

146 responses



12. Do my teachers primarily use Bangla to explain English lessons in class?

146 responses

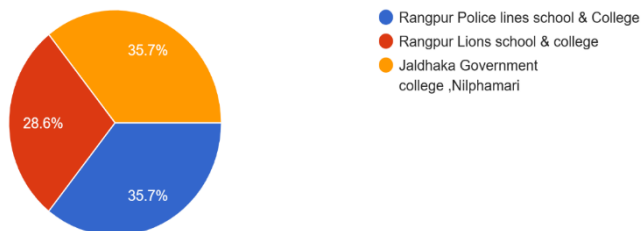


Appendix B

Questionnaire for the Teacher Participants

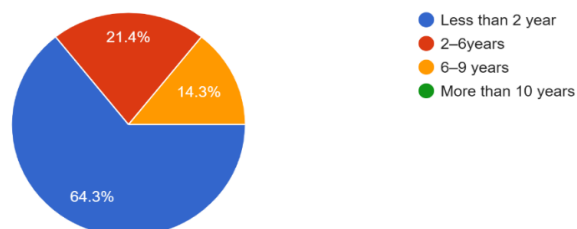
1. Which college do you currently teach at?

14 responses



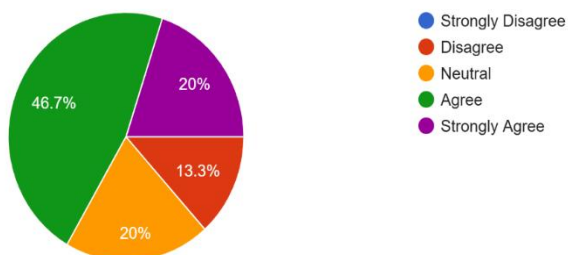
2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

14 responses



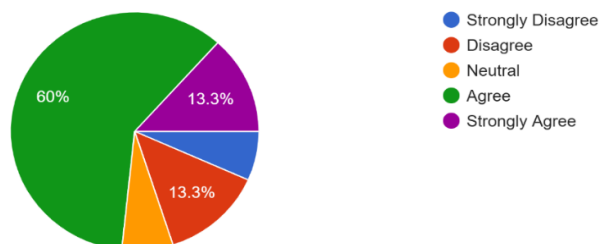
3. Does a student's limited knowledge of English grammar affect their ability to write correctly?

15 responses



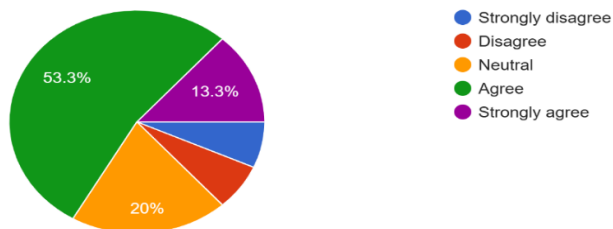
4. Do students in Bangla medium struggle with English pronunciation?

15 responses



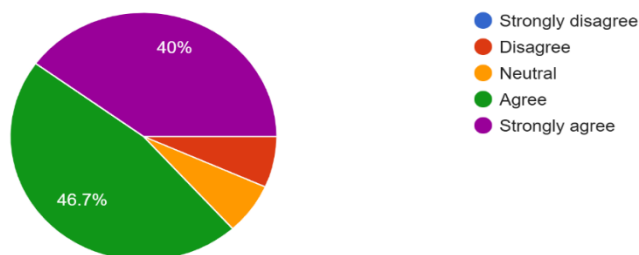
5. Are grammar difficulties a major challenge for Bangla medium students?

15 responses



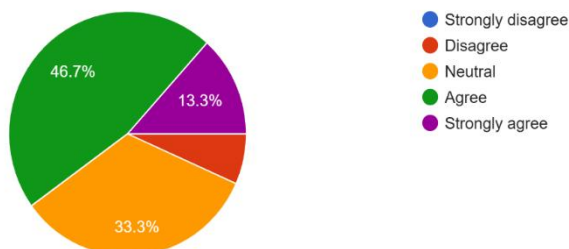
6. Do students face anxiety and hesitation when speaking in English?

15 responses



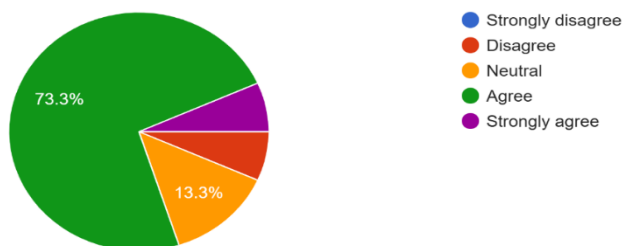
7. Does limited exposure to English outside the classroom affect students' learning progress?

15 responses



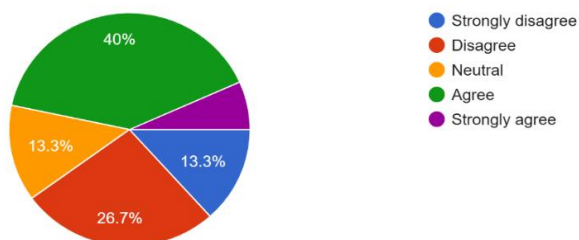
8. Do students find English reading comprehension challenging?

15 responses



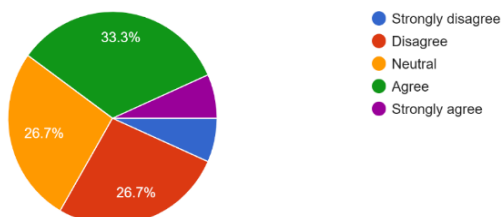
9. Is writing in English (e.g., essays, paragraphs) difficult for most Bangla medium students?

15 responses



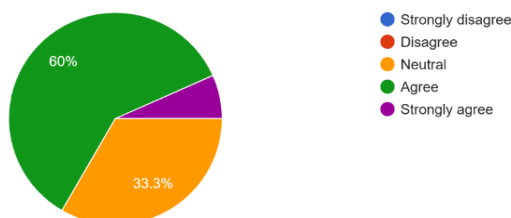
10. Does the current English curriculum adequately support speaking skills development?

15 responses



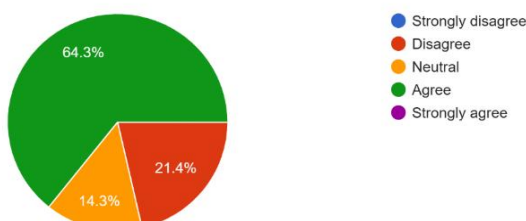
11. Do students focus on memorizing answers instead of understanding concepts in English?

15 responses



12. Do students struggle to understand English textbooks due to complex vocabulary and structure?

14 responses



Appendix C

Open-Ended Question for student

- Question: What are the biggest challenges you face while learning English, and what suggestions do you have to overcome them?

Appendix D

Open-Ended Question for Teacher

- Question: In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges Bangla medium students face in learning English, and how can they be improved? *(Please provide your detailed response.)*

Appendix E

Interview Questions for Students

- What are the specific things that you have trouble with when you need to speak to people in English in class or otherwise?
- Do you feel tired of writing essays or paragraphs in English? How about any challenges you can share?
- Do you practice English enough outside the classroom? If not, why?
- How do you think school or college textbooks assist or obstruct your understanding of English?
- How do you help your students overcome their challenges in learning English?

Appendix F

Interview Questions for Teachers

- What do you think are the most common problems that Bangla medium students face when it comes to learning English?
- What materials or strategies do you use to help students who have a hard time with English grammar and sentence construction?
- Students are afraid while speaking in English. Do you believe that? What explains that problem?
- How well, in your opinion, is the current English curriculum meeting students' language learning needs?
- What changes or strategies would you recommend to lessen students' struggles in learning English?