

## Teaching English at Secondary Level: Curricula Directions and Classroom Scenario

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### Abstract

The study reported here was carried out to explore the curricula directions and classroom scenario in Bangladesh as far as English language (EL) teaching and teachers are concerned with a focus on secondary schools (SS). Two documents- the National Curriculum (NC)-2012, and the English Curriculum (EC) were analyzed to uncover how these policy documents position pedagogical aspects for classroom EL teaching-learning and teachers' skills. Following multiple case study approach four EL teachers from four SS were then selected for classroom observations, and one-to-one interviews. Data was analyzed using the Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke 77-101) with the help of qualitative data analysis software NVivo 11 Pro. The findings show that classroom teaching-learning practices very often do not align with the curricula directions.

### Introduction

Policy and planning plays a significant role in educational management. In most educational settings across the world curriculum is regarded as the heart of education. Curriculum not only specifies the policies for pedagogical practices, content selection, and assessment mechanism, it also reflects, in a broader sense, aspirations of a nation. In 2012 the National Curriculum (NC) in Bangladesh was redesigned after seventeen years, the last one being in 1995. The NC-2012 explained why it was essential to develop a new curriculum:

The following long period has seen remarkable changes in societal, cultural, economic, political and many other spheres especially in the field of Science, and Information and Communication Technology in both national and international contexts. Learners' demands are also changing fast. To meet the demands and keep teaching-learning updated, it has been mandatory to develop a new curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

As it has been more than five years since the inception of the new curriculum, it makes sense to have a look at the curricula directions and implementation scenario. Curriculum development is a complex

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process involving interaction among different stakeholders.<sup>2</sup> At the macro level policy makers, curriculum experts, subject specialists, and practising teachers play a significant role in designing a curriculum. At the micro level teachers are the major forces for curriculum implementation.<sup>3</sup> Successful EL teaching-learning at the micro level depends predominantly on quality teachers and effective teaching methodologies. Consequently, the teachers need to believe in the curricula tenets so that they can easily incorporate those in their everyday classrooms. In addition, supply of adequate and aligned teaching-leaning materials is essential for curriculum implementation. In line with that, textbooks were updated, and training was arranged for teachers in Bangladesh.

English language teaching has a long history in Bangladesh as it was a part of the Indian subcontinent (now South Asia) under British rule. Though once treated as the language of the elite only, now people of nearly all segments of Bangladeshi society understand instrumental value of English. The emerging trends of globalization, economic development and employment dynamics have positioned English as the lingua franca. As such, at present following the trend in many other Asian countries English is taught from grade 1 to 12 as a compulsory subject in Bangladesh. The policy makers think that learners should be exposed to English from an early stage.<sup>4</sup> The main goal is to ensure learners' communicative competence so that Bangladesh can capitalize on economic opportunities created by globalization.<sup>5</sup> However, there is a growing public concern in Bangladesh that standard of English is following a downward curve.<sup>6</sup>

Some studies have been conducted on curriculum implementation and classroom realities. Farooqui conducted a study on teachers' use of EL in classrooms in Bangladesh. The findings showed that the teachers mostly used Bengali for classroom instructions. The author recommended removing contextual barriers for implementations of policy position.<sup>7</sup> Hardman and A-Rahman in their study on new English curriculum implementation at the primary level in Malaysia found how the teachers failed to engage learners in interactive tasks to develop their communicative competences. They suggested to arrange intensive training for teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills. (In another study, Altinyelken explored implementation process of new thematic curriculum in Uganda and found that though the teachers sounded positive about the new curriculum, they faced different problems like

too much load, inadequate training and teaching aids during implementation of the curriculum.<sup>8</sup>

Further, Kirköz in a study found that language policy of Turkey was not implemented at schools, and tertiary educational institutions. The researcher suggested creating more opportunities for teachers' professional development (PD), and ensuring adequate infrastructural facilities for schools.<sup>9</sup> Hamid and Honan claimed that pedagogical practices did not match with CLT approach at primary EL classrooms in Bangladesh. The author suggested to take steps to enhance teachers' language skills and develop classroom techniques that would facilitate learner-centred teaching-learning.<sup>10</sup> Atai and Mazlum in their study on English curriculum in Iran found that ELT programs were not based on evidence from research; they argued that there was a gap between policy direction and micro level implication. According to them, the gap was created as teachers were not involved in the policy making process. All these studies indicate that policy initiatives do not automatically translate into practices, and the implementation may encounter resistance from different contextual factors.

The objective of this study was to explore the positioning of EL teaching and teachers in curricula in Bangladesh, and the extent to which curricula directions are implemented in classrooms at non-government secondary schools. Thus, this study precisely targeted the connection between curricula and classroom practices. As such, it had two specific research questions (RQ) as mentioned below:

RQ1: How EL teaching and teachers are positioned in the National Curriculum-2012, and English Curriculum?

RQ2: How the curricula directions are implemented in EL classrooms?

This write up is organized into several sections: the first part introduces the topic, presents context of the study, and a brief literature review along with research questions (RQ); methodologies are discussed in the second part; the findings are then presented; the fourth part discusses the results and some implications; finally, it highlights limitations of the study followed by suggestions for further research.

## **Research Design**

### **Approach**

A qualitative multiple case study approach was used for conducting this study.<sup>11</sup> The case study approach is frequently used in research as it helps to get to the bottom of things.<sup>12</sup>

### **Documents**

Particularly two documents were collected and analyzed for this study: (1) the National Curriculum- 2012; and (2) the English Curriculum for secondary level. National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), an autonomous body working under Ministry of Education, played the key role in designing the NC following the product-oriented model. Both the NC and EC have been designed in light of the policy directions in the National Education Policy-2010. Relevant information on the documents is shown below in Table 01.

**Table 01: Details of the Documents Analyzed**

<b>SL</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Time of Collection</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	National Curriculum- 2012	July, 2017	Government document
2	English Curriculum	July, 2017	Government document

Source: NCTB website (<http://www.nctb.gov.bd/>)

### **2.3 Participants**

Following the purposive sampling technique four EL teachers (T1-T4) were selected from four non-government SS in Dhaka for this study. The teachers were formally requested to participate in the study and were told about the objective of the study so that they could make informed decision about their participation. They were informed how the collected data would be used for this research, and about steps taken to safeguard their privacy. Participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw at any stage of the study.<sup>13</sup> Alpha-numeric identity labels (T1-T4) have been used in reporting the study to ensure anonymity for participating teachers.<sup>14</sup> Details of participating teachers are given in Table 02.

**Table 02: Demographic Information on the Participating Teachers**

<b>SL</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age (Years)</b>	<b>Teaching experience (Years)</b>	<b>School Type</b>
T1	Female	47	21	Non-government
T2	Male	42	21	Do
T3	Male	50	22	Do
T4	Male	51	20	Do

Source: Fieldwork data

### **Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis**

For collecting data on the curricula directions and classroom realities, different techniques were followed: document analysis, classroom observations using a semi-structured observation guide, classroom narratives writing, and one-to-one teacher interviews following a semi-structured checklist.<sup>15</sup> For recording interview data, a professional voice recorder was used; all interview data was later transcribed verbatim and digitised for analysis. As the teacher interviews were conducted mainly in Bengali, the quoted excerpts have been translated in English by the first author. Collected data was stored with personal computer, external devices, and Google drive. Thematic analysis (TA) as recommended by Braun and Clarke (77-101)was used as a framework for data analysis.<sup>16</sup> The analytical software NVivo11 Pro was used for qualitative data management and analysis.

### **Findings**

#### **National Curriculum (NC)-2012: The Core Features of National Curriculum**

The National Curriculum-2012 has some key characteristics. It embodied the spirit of people that was manifested during the Liberation War in 1971. The main concern of the curriculum was to produce good human beings and skilled manpower for the development of the country:

...creating knowledgeable, skilled, rational, creative and patriotic human resources full of human, social and moral qualities through holistic development of the learners.<sup>17</sup>

Considering present needs, the NC advised to include new issues like digital technology, career planning, climate change, women development, management of energy etc. The teachers then must use new pedagogical practices for developing learners' critical and creative

faculties. Consequently, the teachers are highly encouraged to use ICT in classes. Moreover, learners' habit of memorization must be changed as it does not facilitate comprehension of contents. It also recommended making more use of formative assessment and using innovative questions in examinations. As far as EL is concerned the focus was on making learners skilled in four skills- reading, writing, listening, and speaking- so that they can confidently use it in real life situations. Thus, the NC targeted to help implement Vision-2021 for making Bangladesh a digitised and middle-income country by 2021.

### **Classroom Teaching-Learning**

As advocated in constructivism, the teachers must follow a learner-centric approach in classrooms for teaching-learning. By participating in collaborative activities like group work, role play and debate learners can play an active role in their own learning. The teachers should arrange different tasks in their classes to make learners interested in lessons. Different learners have different learning styles so to ensure learning of all teachers need to address individual learners' difficulties. To make learning easier and sustainable the teachers must link new contents to past experiences and knowledge of learners. By using different teaching aids, classes can be made more interesting. According to the NC, different teaching methods can be used for effective teaching like Socratic question-answer strategy, group work, demonstration method and investigation.

The NC rightly pointed out that successful implementation of any method depends on concerned teachers. Whatever method is used, the focus must be on achieving learning outcomes of a specific lesson. All methods have their respective advantages and disadvantages and use of certain method is very much context specific. Teachers themselves can only ensure learning by proper use of a selected method. Consequently, they must have 'the expertise' in using a method successfully as demanded by his or her classroom realities and needs of learners. Moreover, teachers' knowledge, skills, attitude, beliefs have a great role to play in classroom teaching. That is why it is said - "..... teacher is the best method".

### **Teachers: The Key Stakeholders**

According to the NC, teachers have a central role to play for ensuring successful teaching-learning. Quality teaching-learning depends on teachers' committed classroom teaching, and the use of effective teaching materials including textbooks. Teachers are not expected to

convey knowledge to learners through lecture rather they should work as catalyst for facilitating learning. They must encourage learners to play a proactive role in classes by creating opportunities for them to get engaged in different activities. It is essential for teachers to develop a cordial relation with their learners. A positive relation between them will facilitate teaching-learning. So, teachers need to avoid negative attitude to their learners' capability. They must understand that individual learners have different learning styles, and as teachers their duty is to bring out the best in each learner.

### **English Curriculum for Secondary Level Learners' Communicative Competence**

Developing different competencies of learners was the main target of the EC. Learners must be skilled to communicate effectively with people home and abroad for carrying out different everyday activities. It mentioned that English is not a knowledge-based subject rather a skill-based subject. Consequently, all learners need to develop adequate skills in the target language (TL) so that they can use the language in real-life situations. It is also essential to make accurate use of the TL. So, learners must attain a good command over grammar. English can also play a vital role for producing skilled manpower for both internal and external market. Learners should be able to enhance their technology knowledge using English. The EC outlined specific year-end learning outcomes for each class so that both teachers and learners have precise ideas about skills they are to attain.

### **Communicative Language Teaching**

According to the EC, teachers were to follow the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach for teaching the TL. In CLT the focus is on "learning by doing." Teachers should involve learners in classroom practices on all four skills in an integrated way. Creating ample opportunities for learners to practise the TL in class with aural and visual facilities is vital. Teachers can engage learners in language tasks as given in NCTB textbooks. Thus, they can help learners achieve learning outcomes as specified in textbooks. Through simulation in classrooms learners have to practise using the TL in real life situations. Arranging collaborative activities like group work, pair work would inspire learners to speak the TL. The number of EL learners in classes must be workable so that teachers can take care of each learner's language needs.

In classroom teachers can use diverse techniques for teaching the TL. Using interactive tasks for practising the four skills will enhance interaction among learners. Language game is another viable option for language practice. Through role play, dialogue, debate learners can practise speaking and listening skills. Teachers can use digital technologies for listening and speaking practices. If teachers work in low resourced classrooms, they can use their own voices for storytelling. Learners should be taught how English words are stressed, and intonation is used at sentence and discourse level. Teachers will teach communicative English grammar in classes so that learners gain a better command over the TL and can use it accurately. Both grammar and vocabulary must be taught through contextualization. The EC also advocated for assessing learners' all four language skills through both formative and summative assessment.

### **Language Skills of Teachers**

As mentioned earlier, the EC predominantly focused on developing learners' competency in the fours skills. As teachers play a big role in language classrooms, they must have required competence as EL teachers. Teachers themselves must have adequate skills in all four skills, and they need to use English in their classes. If teachers are not skilled in the TL, they will not be able to help learners gain competency. Teachers' lack of skills will demotivate learners to develop their own TL skills. Considering all these, the EC proposed that during teacher training emphasis must be given on developing their language skills:

.....it is imperative that teachers should be competent in all four skills of English language. What the teachers are expected to do in classrooms to realise the objectives is directly linked with the teachers' own competence in the four skills. Therefore, teachers' language skills development should be given priority over training them in teaching methodology or any such other areas.<sup>18</sup>

As teachers play a very important role in implementing CLT, they need to know how CLT works, and what is expected of them.

### **Classroom Scenario at the Secondary Level**

This part presents the findings on how the curricula directions are implemented in classrooms at the secondary level.

### **Teacher-centred Pedagogy**

The teachers did not follow a learner-centred approach in classes rather pedagogy was predominantly teacher-dominated. Most often in EL classes these teachers taught through lecturing, and they behaved like knowledge dispenser. Learners were simply receiving knowledge from their teachers as if only listening to teachers would ensure development of their language skills. The teachers did not try to play a facilitative role rather they were in control of everything. Consequently, learners were not involved in that many language tasks.

Learners' involvement is really limited because we are following the tradition that has been in action for a long time. We have failed to change that. (T3)

However, learners were also blamed for their less involvement.

Because they are not fit for the class.

Therefore, their involvement is limited. (T4)

As teachers mainly lectured in classes, they did not use question-answer strategy that much. The communication between teachers and learners was fragmentary and ritualized. Whatever questions the teachers asked, they did not wait for eliciting answers from learners rather they themselves provided answers. Learners rarely asked questions in classrooms. As the teachers did not monitor group work properly, it failed to ensure collaboration among the learners.

Moreover, the teachers failed to address individual learners' language difficulties. The number of learners was a major barrier in this regard. Teachers were not at all concerned about learning outcomes. As classroom teaching practices were teacher-dominated, the relationship between teachers and learners in classroom seemed to be mechanical.

### **Not Skill Oriented**

Though the curricula focused on developing skills of learners, but the teachers had a totally different concern in classrooms. They did not bother whether learners were developing the four language skills. There was no sincere effort on their part in classrooms to groom the TL skills of learners. They basically lectured in classrooms on contents and grammar items to complete exam syllabus so that learners can pass examinations.

Only to make them able to pass in the exam. This is our only motto.  
(T4)

Listening and speaking skills were totally ignored in classrooms as they are not assessed in high-stake examinations like SSC. Learners were never taught how English words are stressed, and intonation is used at sentence and discourse level. Integrated teaching of all four skills was totally missing. As a result, learners were not developing communicative competences in the TL but trying to pass examinations with a good grade. Again, no effort was made in EL classes to develop the critical and creative skills of learners. So, the main spirit of the EC was neglected in classrooms.

### **English Taught as a Knowledge-based Subject**

The teachers spent the bulk of their short lesson time for explaining contents and grammar rules. They did not engage learners in pre-reading actives. They were interested in reading and translating reading passages given in the textbooks. Most times they themselves read those passages and translated into Bengali. They even sometimes involved learners in translating the passages. Interestingly, no learner in classes asked teachers to do the translation. After reading and translation by teachers and learners, only a few minutes were usually left for doing the rest of the activities. In grammar classes teachers put emphasis on explaining grammar rules in great details following the deductive approach. As a result, the learning outcomes were not achieved as mentioned in textbooks. In addition, as the focus was on content and grammar learning and passing the examinations, memorization of contents was very much in practice, and teachers sometimes encouraged learners to memorize.

They cannot understand. So, they memorize a whole paragraph. (T3)

Learners memorized grammar rules, story, paragraph, composition etc. as preparation for their examinations. This was happening as teachers treated English as a knowledge-based subject.

### **Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary- Decontextualized**

In classes two significant language components- grammar and vocabulary- were usually taught following traditional technique. On a positive note, these teachers taught grammar in deep details. However, it seemed that they were teaching grammar as an end in itself. It was not shown how learners are going to use that grammar; it was taught in a kind of decontextualized manner without any link to the four language skills. The communicative function of grammar was ignored as well. Learners need to learn how they can use grammar with other skills and in

their everyday communication. Grammar tasks were not then arranged for learners to practice. There are communicative grammar books by NCTB, but teachers did not use those grammar books in classes. They followed grammar guide books available in the market and claimed that NCTB grammar books do not cover all grammar items. According to them, in examinations questions are not set following the NCTB English grammar and composition books.

Teachers and learners are being compelled to use guide books. The reason is that many grammar items are not covered in the NCTB books. Exam questions are not set following NCTB grammar books. (T3)

TL vocabulary was taught in isolation as well. Very often teachers taught vocabulary by only giving L1 (Bengali) meanings and there was no further work on vocabulary. It has to be noted that these teachers explained both grammar and vocabulary using Bengali in their classes.

### **Lack of Practice- Learning a Language Without Using It**

EL learners did not get substantial scope of practising the TL in their classrooms. To begin with, these teachers never made it mandatory for learners to speak in the TL. They freely used Bengali inside their classes with their teachers and classmates. In addition, teachers did not create adequate opportunities for learners' exposure to and use of the TL. Sometimes they engaged learners in some individual activities like filling in the blanks, matching words with their meanings, making sentences. As group work, pair work was rarely arranged, learners could not interact with one another using the TL.

Class time is limited. Within that time, I have to make them understand things. I have to check whether they have understood or not. At the same time, I have to make them speak. It is difficult to do all these within limited class time. (T1)

Interaction in class among learners was really missing. Role play, dialogue, debate was not at all arranged so speaking and listening practices were ignored in classes. There was a lack of aural and visual facilities in EL classrooms. The teachers never used their own voices for listening practices. Not assessing learners' listening and speaking competence in examinations was also contributing to negligence of these two skills by both teachers and learners. Moreover, simulation was not at all arranged in classroom for learners to practise TL in real-life situations. Thus, teachers' classroom approach was not at all task-oriented. This absence of varied activities in classrooms made learners

disinterested in lessons and deprived them of opportunities of TL production.

### **Where are the Teaching Aids?**

Teachers were not very concerned to use teaching aids efficiently. There was a dearth of teaching aids in classrooms. They used traditional teaching aids like textbook, guide book, model question book, white/black board, marker, duster, and two of them used digital technology. Only T1 used some posters in her classes on different grammar items like tense or sentences. However, the teacher's use of poster was not very effective as they were used only as visuals. The posters did not lead to further exploration of the TL inside classes.

In our school we have financial problem. As a result, we cannot buy teaching aids. I wish we could buy more teaching aids. I need time to prepare teaching aids, but I cannot manage time to make them. (T1)

Though the teachers used white/black board, their use was teacher-centred. None of the teachers involved learners in writing on board. Surprisingly teachers then did not make effective use of English textbooks as prescribed by NCTB. The textbooks are well written and mentions specific pre-reading and post-reading activities, but teachers rarely engaged learners in those tasks. Moreover, none of the teachers used language game in their classes. Language games are great ways of exposing learners to TL input through fun activities. Overall, teachers mostly depended on their lectures, and did not use teaching aids effectively. So, ultimately there was no variation in classroom teaching; it was like having same menu for all meals.

### **ICT Use: Not Serving the Purpose**

In regular classes, EL teachers never used any digital technology. Occasionally they conducted multimedia classes (MC), and there they taught lessons on English using digital tools. However, it seemed that teachers used technology for the sake of using it. There was no alignment between technology use and expected learning outcomes.

I do not think technology use is being very effective. Learners are very interested in multimedia class. They like to watch the pictures. (T3)

These teachers did not know how to use technology effectively for facilitating development of learners' TL language skills. Efforts were not made to expose learners to TL input through educational

technologies. It is true that most learners were excited about MC, but teachers could not capitalize on that eagerness. Ultimately what happened, MC became a platform for showing images to learners. As mentioned earlier, technologies were not exploited at all to practise listening and speaking skills though emphasis is given on these two skills in secondary textbooks. Again, technology use in classes was very much teacher-centred. Learners did not get any scope to use technology in their classes. Like in regular classes, learners were at the receiving end. Enhancing learners' digital literacy through English was not at all an issue in MC. All these portray a dismal scenario of technology use in EL classrooms at the secondary level.

### **Teachers- Teaching a Language without Speaking It**

The teachers most often used Bengali for speaking in their English classes. Only T4 used the TL to some extent in his classes. These teachers used the TL only for giving examples of grammar points and reading given passages in textbooks. However, they used Bengali for explaining the grammar rules, for translating the passages and vocabulary, and for all other activities. Following their teachers, learners also spoke in Bengali. Interestingly, teachers made no effort at all to speak in the TL. They claimed that they speak in Bengali because learners cannot understand them if they speak in the TL.

If I speak English in my class, learners do not understand anything at all. As a result, we are compelled to speak in Bengali. However, it is true that there are some teachers who do not want to speak in English at all. Again, many teachers have lacking in English. (T3)

However, a teacher was concerned about her weakness in speaking the TL.

In my classes, I can't speak that much in English. (T2)

Teachers' past knowledge and experiences also affected their classroom language use.

When we were students, there was no focus on speaking skill. So, our speaking skill has not developed that much. Our teachers used to speak in Bengali in classes. They taught us English grammar using Bengali. We understood things that way. We did not get much opportunity to learn speaking. (T1)

The obvious result was that these teachers could not provide their learners with good language models. Ultimately, learners did not get that much TL input from teachers in classes. On a different note, according to

these teachers, teacher training programs in Bangladesh do not focus on developing their language skills. Enhancing teachers' pedagogical knowledge is the main target.

## **Discussion**

The EL teachers were not following a learner-centric approach at the micro level. Either the teachers did not understand the core tenets of CLT or they had knowledge, but they were not committed to follow CLT. There might be some barriers to teach classes following CLT and make classes learner-centred, but teachers could overcome all those barriers if they had strong willpower for implementation. Inside classes they made no serious effort to teach classes as per the CLT approach. In their study in Malaysian context, Hardman and A-Rahman found the same scenario where the teachers ignored underlying tenets of CLT. Teachers' past experiences as learners, knowledge, and beliefs influenced their everyday classroom practices profoundly. They were in fact following the 'transmission pedagogy' where learners are supposed to learn through listening to teachers' lecture and explanations in classes.<sup>19</sup>

Exam-oriented education system in Bangladesh is inhibiting development of learners' TL skills. All stakeholders are only interested in ensuring good grades in examinations which is exerting negative backwash effect on teachers' classroom practices. As English is not a knowledge-based subject, both classroom teaching and assessment need to focus on TL skills of learners. Till date the country has failed to put into place an assessment mechanism that would assess all the four skills of learners. Good grades in examinations do not guarantee learners' operational language skills in the TL. This exam-oriented classroom practices are also encouraging learners to memorize contents. If listening and speaking skills are not assessed, teachers and learners will never be serious about practising them in classrooms.<sup>20</sup> Thus, it will never be possible to develop learners' communicative competence- the main target of EL classes. Very soon there will be a generation of learners who have good grades in examinations but no operational skills in the TL.

In classrooms teachers need to engage learners in interactive activities so that they can practise the TL. It's essential to increase class time for language classes.<sup>21</sup> Teaching a language class fruitfully within a period of 30-40 minutes where you have usually more than 60 learners is tough. Bangladeshi EL learners usually do not get any

opportunity to practise the TL outside their class. Moreover, while teaching grammar and vocabulary, teachers have to focus on contextualization. Learners must know how they can use grammar in communication, and with other language skills. A balance is needed between explicit grammar teaching and their communicative functions. Otherwise grammar teaching will not bring any positive changes. Very limited use of teaching aids in classroom indicates teachers' overall lack of preparation for classes. Appropriate teaching aids can help teachers retain learners' interest and engage them in TL practices through collaborative work.

Policy, and equipment availability does not ensure proper use of technology in classrooms. For making Bangladesh a digitised country, a lot of investment is being made particularly in education for buying equipment. Now it is high time to assess whether that money is well spent or not. Training teachers on ICT is mandatory because at the end of the day teachers will use technologies in classrooms. They must know how to use ICT effectively to achieve lesson objectives. Educational technologies have real potential to expose learners to TL input enriched environment. EL teachers can easily capitalize on those aspects of technologies. Otherwise, it will turn out to be a big effort and investment without substantial results. Superficial use of educational technologies will have no beneficial effect on learners' language learning.

If EL teachers cannot speak English in classes, that is really worrying. When learners see that their teachers are mostly using L1 (Bengali) in classes, they will never be motivated to learn and use the TL. The findings of this study on teachers' language skills are in alignment with those of Farooqui.<sup>22</sup> Learners are supposed to listen to TL input from their teachers. How will these teachers develop their learners' competency in TL? As teachers themselves use L1 for teaching the TL, they simply cannot force learners to use the TL. Most EL teachers at non-government secondary schools have no background in English; they start teaching classes without any pre-service training on EL teaching. So, in-service teacher training programs for EL teachers have to emphasize developing teachers' language skills.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, there should be both internal and external monitoring to ensure that teachers are using English in their classes. Otherwise the classroom scenario will not change.

## Conclusion

The examined curricula at the macro level have specified the policy directions for effective classroom teaching-learning. However, in EL classrooms there were more divergences than convergences. The curricula directions are not an end in themselves. Only designing policy is not going to help change the existing realities, policy planners must have a plan for the implementation phase as well.<sup>24</sup>

The study reported here has some limitations. It was a multiple case study that targeted to explore curricula directions and their implementation at the classroom. In that sense the findings are not to be generalized for all classrooms across the country. Again, sample was selected from schools of Dhaka city only. Future researchers can work with a large sample from different parts of the country to uncover the big picture. It needs to be explored whether well-planned mechanism is there to bridge policies and classrooms. For practical reasons, it was not possible to involve some other stakeholders in Bangladesh particularly those who designed the curricula. Future studies can investigate their perspectives on curriculum implementation.

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