



Neglected teaching of listening and speaking skills in mastering the language at the secondary and tertiary level, students in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This research is a viewpoint of how speaking and listening skills are overlooked in our educational curriculum which resulting in disasters in the academic study of English. At the secondary and tertiary levels, some teachers strive to implement various strategies to teach students these skills, which are essential for the language; however, the negligence of the NCTB and the authorities' expectations results in these efforts being overlooked. The importance of these skills is now considered, and students are trying to get involved in different curricular and co-curricular activities to improve these skills. Coordination of all four speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills will make someone master a particular language. Neglecting two skills hampered the preferred learning environment. This paper revealed the challenges and the actual situation that teachers are facing. Some issues need to be changed to improve the quality of teaching and to learn the English language from the perspective of Bangladesh. From the secondary to the tertiary level, these issues need to be taught perfectly from the beginning to the end of the education curriculum.

Keywords: English curriculum in Bangladesh, nctb negligence, Bangladesh education, academic challenges, skill coordination

Introduction

Overlooked Teaching of Listening and Speaking Skills in Mastering the Language at the Secondary and Tertiary Level, Students in Bangladesh

Defining the importance of speaking and listening. There are specific variables and reasons why students master the listening and speaking abilities of the English language at the secondary level. When teaching listening and speaking skills, what are the gaps that lead to students not learning and using proper listening and speaking skills in English? Teachers and students at the secondary level worked hard to master advanced listening and speaking abilities so that they might become excellent users in their future courses.

Hwaider (2017) ^[7] mentioned there are deficiencies in tertiary level speaking and listening skills, and the faults are mostly secondary level listening and speaking skills problems, which we believe should not be the case for tertiary level students. Regardless of academic achievement, secondary students' curricula include a greater emphasis on listening and speaking abilities.

The major focus will be on teaching listening and speaking skills strategies to secondary school students and university students, and we will attempt to demonstrate the differences and certain characteristics of these teaching methods. Bahadorfar & Omidvar (2014) ^[2] claimed that speaking and listening are some of the most important aspects of the English language that must be taught so that everyone can become equally proficient in this part. Teachers follow different methods to teach these skills at the secondary and tertiary levels. Looking at the Bangladeshi teaching curriculum does not have any focus on speaking skills and listening skills. Bahrani & Soltani (2012) ^[3] mentioned that most of the time, the teachers are forced to take only the class in which they are assigned and the contents that will appear in the public examination.

There is less chance of the teacher teaching something that is not included in the curriculum. Teachers get less time in

the secondary as well as in the tertiary level. The course content is the first priority of a teacher at the university level. "Anything else is not considered teaching material in Bangladesh" (Djabborova, 2020) ^[6]. Different teachers and the people who are designing the materials for these two-level students do not think about their proper and personal growth. In Bangladesh, teachers sometimes think of the students' needs, but the people who are associated with making the curriculum have less connection with the students and do not understand the required issues for students.

The need to teach these two skills has not been considered for a long time. It is high time that the teachers and the people who are in the NCTB need to think about this issue in a serious manner. Hwaider (2017) ^[7] mentioned that the weakness in the English language and the low competency in the language are not new for Bangladeshi students. It is not because we do not have enough resources and teachers. King & Womack (1983) ^[8] narrate that the other two skills are overlooked. Scholars nowadays are requesting to expose CLT methods to the education system. These techniques not only help the students to learn and develop their speaking and listening skills, but also this system enable students to learn academic English proficiently.

However, the importance of speaking and listening skills cannot be overlooked because, without this, the appropriate ways of language development are not possible, and the teaching techniques of these skills must be up to the mark to learn the language more precisely.

Review of Literature

Writing and speaking are given top priority in the secondary and higher secondary levels, where Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is used. Bahrani (2012) ^[3] mentioned that tuning in capacity isn't inspected like other abilities, subsequently it goes unnoticed throughout a student's scholarly career. Indeed, at the college level, the

circumstance of learners with poor listening skills continues with the same impassion. Parmawati (2018) [13] emphasised that, given the significance of this skill's improvement, the research was conducted employing a survey overview of both students and instructors.

The overview has been inspected, and a few suggestions have been made. "Listening could be a significant dialect expertise since it permits students to develop language, such as talking and composing, by utilizing the vocabulary learned from listening"(Muhsin, 2016) [11]. The English educators at MAN 3 Banjarmasin utilized a variety of approaches to instructing tuning in within the language lab, including tape cassettes, TV, and VCD/DVD players. "For a long time, the curriculum of the Bangladeshi English

teaching has not changed in the way that it should" (Antoni, 2014) [1].

In addition, the reason behind this is to change the grammatical and writing structure, considering the change in learning. Danaher (1996) [5] narrated that the modern types of teaching techniques are not being exposed to the students, and they are the students who suffer in the long run. Korkmaz & Güneyli (2017) [9] claimed that although people have different opinions about the changes in the curriculum but the result of the English subject in the university and public examinations is a sign of how much improvement is happening, as well as the personal growth of the students.

Research Method

Research Type	Component	Details	Sample Size/Quantity
Primary	Interviews	In-depth interviews with secondary-level and tertiary-level teachers.	4 teachers (2 secondary, 2 tertiary)
	Student Surveys	Two different survey questionnaires were designed for secondary and tertiary students, covering relevant topics.	80 students (divided into 2 groups: ~40 secondary, ~40 tertiary, assuming equal split)
	Special Teacher Survey	A dedicated survey sheet for secondary-level teachers to deepen engagement with the research topic.	Not specified (planned, but sample size unknown)
Secondary	Peer-Reviewed Articles	Analysis of scholarly articles related to the topic.	6 articles
	Library and Online Resources	Compilation from websites, blogs, books, author reviews, and other non-peer-reviewed sources.	Not quantified (multiple sources)

Research Questions

At this point in my research, researchers have pointed out some of the questions, and these questions are given below:

- a. How are the secondary level students focusing on their listening skills?
- b. How are teachers teaching both skills at the secondary level?
- c. How effective are their teaching techniques for both levels of students?

Data Presentation & Analysis

Quantative Anaysis

The survey question of how frequently your teacher conducts sessions on English listening was asked at the tertiary and secondary level students about how frequently their teacher conducted sessions on English listening. At both levels, a high number of students said once a week. According to the survey, the secondary level charts illustrate that 60% of the total population responded to 'once a week'. Secondly, 30% of the total population responded to 'twice a week'. Lastly, 10% of the total population responded to 'a monthly' on the teacher's listening sessions. On the other hand, tertiary level the 35% of the total population responded to 'once a week', and 30% of the total population also responded to 'twice a week'. In addition, 25% of the total population responded to 'once a month', and 8% of them responded to 'never', and the rest 2% of them responded to 'once a semester'. This indicates that teachers are prioritizing listening skills, and it should be a concern. Its importance is visible not only at the secondary level but also at the tertiary level. This answers one of the research questions and matches the hypothesis.

The survey question of how frequently your teacher conducts sessions on English Speaking was asked at both

the secondary and tertiary levels. The high response got in the secondary level, 'once a week', and the tertiary level high response got 'monthly'. According to the survey, at the secondary level, 60% of the total participants responded to 'once a week', and 30% of the total also responded to 'monthly'. Even 8% of them responded to 'twice a week', and the rest 2% responded on a 'yearly' basis. On the other hand, 65% of the tertiary level respondents responded to 'monthly', and 20% of them responded 'once a week'. In addition, 15% of them responded to 'twice a week'. Lastly, 10% of them responded on a 'yearly' basis their teacher conducts sessions on speaking. The highest responses are an indication that this skill has high importance among the students. This also matches my hypothesis. This speaking skill is high at both levels. Teachers are focusing on and prioritizing this skill.

The survey question of the obstacles your teachers face when he/she want to teach you speaking skills was asked at both tertiary and secondary levels. The question was about the types of obstacles their teachers face while teaching English language speaking skills at secondary and tertiary levels. The highest number of obstacles in the second level shows that the students show less interest. At the tertiary level, the teacher has limited time in the curriculum. According to the survey, 60% of the total students responded that 'students show less interest at the secondary level. Another group responded to 'not having time in the syllabuses. Moreover, 20% of them responded with 'not able to understand the technique'. Lastly, 10% of the total students responded to 'teacher less motivation'. Considering the tertiary level students' responses, 50% of them responded that 'time is limited in the curriculum. Another group responded to 'students show less interest' approximately 30%, and 25% of them also responded to

'students are less capable of understanding the method'. Lastly, 5% of the total students responded to 'teachers are less motivated'. Looking at the responses, it is clear that secondary-level students are less motivated to practice speaking. On the other hand, tertiary-level students have less time to practice these skills. These obstacles teachers mostly face. These skills are important, and the curriculum has been modified to show proper importance.

The survey question of how your teacher teaches listening skills was asked at the secondary and tertiary level: how their teacher teaches listening skills in their class. The researchers were interested in knowing the strategies that the two-level teachers follow to teach their students the responses of the secondary level students. It is clear that most of the time, teachers arrange workshops and seminars to teach their students listening skills. On the other hand, tertiary-level teachers 'materials related to listening got high responses. According to the survey, secondary level, 50% of the total students responded to 'arrange seminar & workshop'. Another two close groups responded to 'give home task on listening' and 'take special classes' together, 20%. Lastly, 10% of the total responses got 'provide materials for listening'. On the other hand, 50% of the students at the tertiary level think 'provide materials related to speaking'. In addition, 30% of the total students responded to 'arrange workshop and seminar'. Even 15% of the total students responded to 'give a home task on listening'. Lastly, 5% of the total students think 'take special classes'. From the survey, it is clear that students and teachers understand the importance of these skills in the classroom. The teachers use different strategies to improve the quality of the students. This matches the hypothesis and answers a research question.

The statement was that without learning to speak in English, they may not be able to improve their English skills, and they agree with the statement. It was asked of secondary and tertiary level students. The researchers were curious to know about their perspective on this issue. The highest number of responses in the tertiary and secondary levels agree with the statement. According to the survey, 16 secondary students responded with 'strongly agree.' Another 6 of them agree with the statement. Moreover, 5 of them responded to 'neutral'. Another 4 students responded to disagree, and 2 of them strongly disagreed with it. On the other hand, 13 tertiary level students strongly agreed with it. Another 10 students agreed with it. In contrast, 3 of them responded to 'neutral', and the rest 3 students strongly disagreed with it. There are no disagreement responses found here. From the responses, it is clear that there is no way to overlook this skill. Being competent in English, students must acquire these skills and their importance. This way, it matches the hypothesis. Leong & Ahmadi (2017) ^[10] mentioned that some students in the secondary level may become afraid of learning it because of its hard process, but inside they have the feeling that this skill is a much-needed skill that they have to acquire.

The question of how frequently they can practice speaking skills outside the classroom was asked of the secondary level students. According to the survey of 33 students, 16 of them responded that they sometimes. Another group of 12 students responded to 'rarely', and 3 responded to 'always'. The rest of the 2 students responded to 'Always'. This indicates that half of the total students are at least trying to speak in the English language outside the classroom. This is

a positive thing for my hypothesis. Students understand the importance of speaking. This also reveals that there is another group of students who do not get any chance to practice the skills. This should be taken into consideration because speaking can not be overlooked for any reason. This also answered one of my research questions, the effectiveness of both skills teaching in the secondary and tertiary levels.

The question asked what the obstacles are their teacher face when he/she want to teach speaking skills at both secondary and tertiary levels. The purpose of this question was to know the effective strategies that the teachers of these two levels are taking to teach English speaking skills. The survey indicates that tertiary level teachers are suggesting more in high numbers, and the secondary level teachers are performing tasks one by task in English. According to the survey of 33 students, 16 of them responded to providing tasks in English presentations. Another group of 9 students responded to 'conducted an extempore speech session, and 7 responded to 'suggested a book for improving skills. The rest 1 student responded to 'taking interviews in English'. On the other hand, among 29 students, 15 of them responded to 'suggested books for improving skills', and 6 of them also responded to 'taking interviews in English'. Moreover, another 5 of them responded to 'providing a task of presentation', and the rest of 3 students responded to 'conducting extempore speech'. These are common types of strategies that Bangladeshi teachers mainly follow. From the survey report, it is clear that different techniques are being used to improve the quality. These language skills are vital. This skill is important to these two groups of students. Moreover, these responses answered one of the research questions as well, and the situation created a positive indication of the hypothesis.

The question was how much attention does your teacher pay to these two skills was asked of the secondary and tertiary level students. The purpose of this question was to find out the satisfaction and rate of the students and how much their teachers emphasize these speaking and listening skills. The highest number of responses indicated average in the secondary and tertiary levels. In the survey, 19 secondary level students responded to 'average'. Another 5 students responded to 'good'. Moreover, 2 of them responded to 'bad.' Another group of 3 students responded to 'more than neutral near good' rest of the 4 students responded to near bad but not in the neutral position. On the other hand, 16 tertiary-level students responded to 'average'. Another 6 students responded to 'good', and 2 of them responded near good. 3 of them responded to 'bad', and the rest 2 responded near bad. These responses show that students feel the average situation in terms of these two skills. Students think they need more attention on these skills and want progression in these skills. This shows how much students want to give importance to these skills. This matches my hypothesis, and it also answered my one research question.

The opinion about a statement developing the ability to speak English, teachers should expose a course, at the tertiary level, this question was asked that to develop the ability to speak English, teachers should expose a course. This is one of the most significant questions. The purpose of the question was to know the students' perspectives on the teaching of speaking capability the students. According to the survey, 45% of the students strongly agree with the opinion. In another group of students, 35% of them agreed

with the statement. Even 17% responded neutral. The remaining 3% of students responded to disagreed with their opinion. This survey indicates that the teachers need to think about themselves as well, because to improve the quality of the students, teachers have to improve themselves. The modern types of teaching techniques must be exposed to modern teaching techniques. They need to attend more training sessions where they will learn the modern ways of teaching these two skills more easily. This also matches the hypothesis. These two skills have equal importance, and teachers need to learn them before teaching them.

Qualitative Analysis

Secondary Level Teacher Interview

There were three secondary-level teachers' interviews. Interview one was with one of the experienced teachers in our city, and he has been teaching the English language for more than ten years. The interviewer is also a prominent teacher in our city. She has been teaching the English language for three years. Interview three is also an experienced teacher who has been teaching for the last 15 years in our city. Interviewer one, it has been a long time since these two speaking and listening skills is overlooked in our curriculum, and we teachers understand that these things are it is helpful for the students because after doing their higher degrees, they must have acquired these things but in our curriculum e do not have the time to teach students this skills. Interviewer two teacher mentioned that when I try to teach something beyond academics, students feel less motivated, and they do not show any interest while I am teaching these skills because they are expecting something that will appear in their examination, not something that I will teach them for their future and to gain competence in English. Sometimes I try to give them some words that are associated with listening, but they do not provide me feedback, and sometimes, it happens that students never submit anything. For speaking, I usually call them in front of the class so that they can speak about something that they have learnt in the class, but students are not willing to come forward. All the teachers agree that they understand the importance, but they cannot take the classes regularly or on any basis; sometimes, when they get the time, they try to teach beauty skills. Interviewer three teachers highly emphasise some of the important environment that allows them to teach in class based on student needs and improve the condition of the English language, which cannot be overlooked. The teacher also said that the teaching quality could not be improved without considering this to reach skills because out of the four skills, we are only concentrating on the two skills that are not sufficient to get proficient in the English language.

Tertiary Level Teachers Interviews

Conducted three interviews with tertiary-level students. They are very experienced teachers. They have all been teaching for more than ten years as university students. The teachers claim that they do not get the opportunity to think about this issue. In the university, they have to strictly follow the rules of the course outline. All of them agreed that students came from a variety of backgrounds, and they have some leggings in English. Most of them are leg behind these to display, especially in speaking, they are struggling throughout the first two years and 2 last two years. Because of not good at listening if they are not able to connect with

the lectures. The teachers want to make decisions, but the students do not take part in the nation most of the time, so they suggest books and some techniques so that they can slowly include, but at least they can improve something. Two teachers try to teach all the students and conduct an extempore session to improve their skills in the English language. Some of the suggestions of the teachers are making a curriculum so that everything is covered, not only the one use of language, but also the four skills of the language.

Discussion & Recommendation

Teachers are using different techniques to teach students these to speaking and listening skills. But it has been found that these two skills have been neglected for a long time. These two skills should be improved from the beginning at the secondary level. At the tertiary level, all the teachers need to brush up on the things so that the students can efficiently learn them. The modern teaching system should be included and exposed to the students from the beginning of their education system to learn the speaking and listening skills in a good way.

Mastering these skills is not possible until we expose something change in our curriculum and courses, so faculty and the people who are making the curriculum must consider that they need to include something related to speaking and listening skills. Sabet (2012) ^[14] claimed that the teachers and the faculty must be properly trained to use modern techniques to teach students these skills. The teacher needs to make the lesson more interesting and interactive so that students can participate on their own in this speaking session and any other session that the teachers conduct to improve the quality of the English language.

Although we have not considered these skills for a length of time, after watching the results, it has been declared that it should be taken into consideration more and more focused on the listening skills, and also the speaking skills will help us acquire the language perfectly. So, more and more speaking and listening sessions can be conducted at the secondary level and at the tertiary level so that a student can easily connect with the four skills. From the primary level, there is an included speaking session, and also for the listening station to Bil tales from the foundation English speaking and learning from the beginning level. Syafii *et al.* (2020) ^[15] mentioned that at the tertiary level, there must be some courses that will teach students these two skills as well. The teacher needs to give some freedom to the students, and the people who are designing must have to give some space to the teacher so that they can look at something for the betterment of the students.

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