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A Sociolinguistic Study of Social Stratification in Bangladesh and Its Impact on Academic Performance in English at Secondary Level Education

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**[This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of
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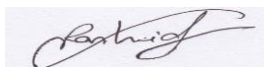
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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation, ‘**A Sociolinguistic Study of Social Stratification in Bangladesh and Its Impact on Academic Performance in English at Secondary Level Education**’ submitted here is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged and that the same or closely related material has not been previously submitted for the same or different courses . I also acknowledge that I am aware of honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as determined by the authority of IML, Chittagong University.



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Acknowledgement

The presence of Social Stratification in every society is an open secret issue. It has multidimensional effects on people's food habit, life style, expectation, pastime, education etc. In this regard finding a relationship between social stratification and second language learning of Bangladeshi students was a long cherished desire of me. That desire converted into an action with the influence of my course teacher and project supervisor, Mr. Monjurul Alam, Associate Professor, Institute of Modern Languages (IML) .So first of all; I would like to express my gratitude and humble gratefulness to my supervisor for his valuable suggestion, guidance, advice and overall co-ordination of my research project.

My further gratitude goes to Mr. Ibrahim Hossain, Associate Professor, (IML), and Md. Khaled Bin Chowdhury, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English, BGC Trust University Bangladesh, whose suggestions were valuable in the initial stage of my research work. My thanks also go to all the participants -teachers and students who willingly involved themselves with my research project.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and respect to my parents whose blessings always lead me towards glory. I must thank my wife, Sharmin for her active support in my work and helping me in computer compose, sacrificing many of her favorite TV programs!

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List of Symbols and Abbreviations Used

Symbols/ Abbreviations	Expression
GPA.....	Grade Point Average
CGPA.....	Cumulative Grade Point Average
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
L1.....	First Language
L2.....	Second Language
SSC.....	Secondary School Certificate Examinations
GTM.....	Grammar Translation Method
CLT.....	Communicative Language Teaching
NCBT.....	National Curriculum and Textbook Board

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Abstract

The presence of social stratification in every society is an open secret issue. It has multidimensional effects on people's food habit, life style, expectation, and education etc. The purpose of this study is to find out a relationship between social stratification in Bangladesh and its impact on students' academic performance in English at secondary level education. In doing so an empirical study has been conducted. Data were collected from secondary level students and English teachers through questionnaire. The analysis of the data of this study seeks to show that students' academic performance in English co-relates with their social status, economic condition, family background and area of residence etc. As such varied performance of different groups of students is related to social stratification; hence finding out any single solution to this deep rooted issue is virtually impossible. However, to reduce the gaps among different groups of students some recommendations of experienced English teachers have been suggested in this dissertation.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Bangladesh is a developing country. During the past two decades Bangladeshi students have done relatively well in various aspects of education as well as in academic performance. Conversely, a notable but unfortunate feature of educational development in the country is the inequality that exists between different groups in the population (Education Watch 2009-10). In education, overall progress is in upward trend but it has not developed in a balanced way. A hapless feature of education development in the country, however, is the inequality. Inequality exists in terms of school type, stream of education, geographical location and socioeconomic status (Ahmed et al., 2005, 2006, Nath et al., 2008, Nath and Chowdhury , 2009. BBS and UNICEF, 2010, cited in Education Watch, 2000-10).

A notable overall progress with unequal performance of different group of students is perceived in compulsory English also. We know that in Bangladesh more than 30 million students study English as a compulsory subject at primary, secondary and higher secondary level at different schools ,colleges and madrasahs. Though our students start learning the language as a required subject in grade-1, they can hardly show expected performance in academic examinations at the upper levels. Beyond the issue of low performance in English, our general observation is that going through the same curriculum and appearing at the same test different students show different levels of performance. These uneven performances often result from their differential personal, social and family backgrounds with a few exceptions. As , in this study, the researcher has not taken any standard test to measure the better or lower performance in English of secondary level students, their academic GPA in English of Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSC) is considered as the criteria of

performance in English. If a student has obtained lower score in English in comparison with his over-all CGPA then his performance in English is considered poor/low. On the contrary, if a student's English GPA is found equal to or higher than his overall CGPA then his performance is counted as better performance/success.

In terms of academic achievement and progress, Sorayaie (n.d.) in one of his articles mentions that scientists have considered several effective factors involved in their achievement and progress. In the explanation of such achievement and progress, psychologists say about the effect of psychological factors, and sociologists argue in favour of sociological factors. But when the issue of language (First or Second/Foreign language) comes then we should see it from sociolinguistic point of view. Canale and Swan (1980) (cited in Ellis, 1994) mention four modules of ability relating to different types of language knowledge-- grammar, sociolinguistics, discourse and strategies. In this regard we can match the explanations of Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) for differential success among second language learners. They have identified age, aptitude, socio-psychological factors, personality, cognitive style, hemisphere specialization, learning strategies and some other factors. Research exists in other areas also, like learners' parents, peers, learning situations, teachers, ethnic group etc. The study of Hasan (2004), confirms that proficiency in English varies according to learners' area, place and city in which the schools and madrasahs are located. So it is worth mentioning that students' social background, ethnic identity, family environment etc. may affect their learning and performance in second language. However, the social factors that influence L2 acquisition are likely to differ according to social context. That means that the sociolinguistic factors vary from society to society, culture to culture, situation to situation. Therefore, even if learners follow the same syllabus and spend the same duration of time in learning language their performance may fluctuate.

In this study the ground of our assumption was that- "Socially, economically and psychologically advantaged students perform better in their academic examination especially in English". And our focus was on social stratification and its impact on academic performance in English rather than finding out the reasons of individual variation in English performance at secondary level education in Bangladesh. This dissertation investigates 180 secondary level students and 51 secondary and higher secondary level English teachers' self-reported information, perception and belief about social stratification and its impact on

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academic result in English. Through the data of participants, the researcher has made an indirect relationship between Social stratification and English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a foreign Language (EFL) learning. The relationship is drawn as follows: The Social stratification- its impact on Education – impact on ESL/EFL performance.

Unequal performance in English of different types of students (rural- urban, poor- rich, uneducated family-educated family) is a national issue in Bangladesh. Several newspaper articles are the evidence of this claim (Prothom Alo, 2012; Daily Star, 2012; Daily Star , 2006 etc.). And as this dissertation is a primary attempt to deal with some sociocultural, economic, psychological factors of Bangladeshi students along with their ESL/EFL performance, the researcher thinks that this will be one of the ground works for future study in this field.

Research Questions

At secondary level examination, the success (passing) rate of students is increasing day by day. But it is the common scenario in Bangladesh that the students coming from rural area, poor economic and uneducated family background cannot demonstrate better performance in academic examinations; especially in English their better performance rate is very low. After the publication of SSC result a comparative analysis of urban versus rural educational institutions is done in various newspapers .In such analysis different explanations are given for poor performance in English of rural, poor, and disadvantaged students. But the explanations for such differences are not consistent as well. So it is important to know the reasons of such unequal performance of different groups of students coming from different social class, area, family background etc. In this study the researcher has set the following hypothesizes or research questions:

- a. Is there any difference in the academic performance in English in terms of urban versus rural students, economically rich versus poor students, and students from educated versus uneducated family background?
- b. Does social stratification contribute to differential performance of different social groups of students?

- c. To what extent can an individual (coming from rural area, economically poor, and uneducated family background) show better performance in English overcoming such social stratificational issues?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Social stratification is one of the most important issues in our social structure. In modern society special concentration is given on social stratification because this issue is related to social reward such as wealth, power, prestige and education etc. According to social scientist, Ian Robertson, Social stratification is the structured inequality of entire categories of people, who have different access to social reward as a result of their status in the social hierarchy. Thus, it is seen that social stratification is a deep rooted issue that exists in human society and it dominates the entire life, expectation and reward of human. In this regard, we can relate the foundation of sociology of education with social stratification. Social stratification shows us that the people of a society acquire differential social status and they belong to different social groups. In Bangladesh the main variables in social stratification can be described in terms of urban versus rural; rich versus poor; male versus female etc.(Hasan, 2004).

We know that language and society are inter-related. The success of learning a language by the students depends on the total situation in which they are located (Cook, 1991). This is because L1 and L2 learning usually take place in a social situation, whether in the class room or outside. Therefore, we can say that L2 acquisition is affected by social and psychological variables. If we relate various social and cultural issues of Bangladesh with L2 acquisition of

learners we see that here the learning environment is not same for different groups of students.

This chapter attempts to define social stratification and its features in Bangladeshi context. An attempt will also be to relate students' social difference with their educational success at secondary level academic performance in English.

A. Social Stratification

Social stratification has a great significance in modern sociology as it helps us to understand the society and its people. It is found in all society and tends to be transmitted from generations to generations. It refers to the categorization of individuals and groups in any society.

Different social scientists have given different definitions of social stratification. David Ropenoe (1969) (cited in Ali, 2004) says that Social stratification is a social pattern based on the ranking of individuals and social position in terms of the distribution of the desirable things, both material and emotional, which society has offered. In this definition Ropenoe has given importance on material and emotional things that are achieved by the people of a society because of their differential social rank and position.

Social scientists, Bali and Bryant in their definition say, "Borrowed from geology, the term stratification in sociological use denotes a hierarchy of inequality, a system in which the population is assigned differentiated status of superiority and inferiority (Bali and Bryant. ed. , 1969: cited in Ali, 2004: p.21). This definition admits the existence of differential social status of different types of people in a society.

Thio, Alex defined, " ...social reward such as wealth, power and prestige are distributed unequally. Having a particular position in this pattern of inequality, called social stratification"(Thio n.d. cited in Rahman, 2008, p.33). From this definition the unequal social status of different groups of people of a society is clear.

Ross, H. Raurence in his book, *Respective of the Social Order* says, 'social stratification refers differential ranking of status whereby some are considered higher and others lower'

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(Ross, 1968, P.393). That means social stratification is like a scale which measures differential rankings of the people of a society.

According to most of the social scientists, social stratification existed with the invention of human race (Rahman, 2008). They believe that there is no society where there is no social layer, class and difference. So it can be inferred that social stratification is deep rooted, universal and unanimous.

From the above definitions we find some features of social stratification:

1. Social stratification is universal and ancient.
2. Stratification is social not natural fact.
3. Though it exists in every society its nature is not same.
4. Social stratification carries over society and its people from generation to generation.
5. Material, psychological and emotional things- property, dignity, status etc. are achieved according to social status of the people of that society.

In Western society, stratification is broadly organized into three main layers: Upper Class, Middle Class, and Lower Class. In some societies two more layers are included – Upper-Middle class and Lower-middle class. But typically an individual's social class is determined by means of composite measures that take account of income, level of education and occupation (Ellis, 1994).

B. Social Stratification in Bangladesh

Social stratification in Bangladesh has its root in the ancient history of this area. As Bangladesh was a part of Indian sub-continent, its social structure was similar to the Ancient Indian society. In India, *Arayan* society started such social class system (Sen, 1995). The Hindu society in Bengal was built on four- fold widely known Caste System – *Brahman*, *Ksatriya*, *Vaisya* and *Sudra*. According to *Sanatan* religious myth the four castes originated from the four different parts of *Brahman*, supreme lord. It is believed that *Brahman* emerged from the head, while the *Sudra*, the lowest caste from the feet.

During Muslim rule, we find three broad classes in Muslim society-*Ashraf* or higher class Muslim; *Atraf* or lower class Muslim, *Azlat* or the degraded class. However, Muslim stratification pattern was not as rigid as the Hindu stratification pattern. Intra-caste marriage, opportunity of mobility among the castes and moving into the higher positions etc. were possible in Muslim society.

After Muslim rule, 'Agrarian Structure' played a significant role that gradually brought our social structure to the present shape. That time *Zamindars* or the revenue collectors were the most powerful class since the pre-colonial time in Bengal. Later on the subsequent land policy in the colonial period, particularly the sub-infeudation system (*Madhyasvatvas* or *Pattanidari*) created intermediated rent collecting layers- *Jotedar*, *Gantidar*, *Howlader*, *Talukdar* or *Bhuiyan* etc.

With the introduction of British rule in Indian sub-continent, a huge change took place at the urban society level. A new class *Badralok* or gentle man class who were educated professionals (Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Teachers, service holders and others) emerged in urban society. Accordingly, the class of *Banian* or Traders became significant after they had become educated. Therefore, it is seen that social stratification in Indian sub-continent had become more complicated during and after British colonial period.

After the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, a significant change happened – *Zamindari* land system was abolished and when the government started collecting rent from the peasants directly the rent collecting class disappeared. However, despite agricultural capitalization and limited industrialization the process of capitalist development during the Pakistan period was not strong enough to produce a differentiated society.

With the liberation war in 1971 social stratification in Bangladesh took various dimensions. Here people's social identity may be grouped because of their religion (caste), land, family lineage, education, occupation, material possession, living area etc.

C. Secondary Level Education System in Bangladesh

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The present education system of Bangladesh is broadly categorized into three major stages: primary, secondary and tertiary education. Operationally, Primary Education (Grade I-V) is managed by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) and Secondary to Higher Education under the administration of the Ministry of Education (MOE).

The Secondary level of education comprised of total 7 years of formal schooling. The first 3 years (grades VI-VIII) is referred to as junior secondary; the next 2 years (grades IX -X) is Secondary while the last 2 years (grades XI - XII) is called Higher Secondary.

Secondary education in Bangladesh is classified into three categories in terms of curriculum:

A. General Education B. Madrasah Education, C. Technical and Vocational Education.

A. General Education starts from class VI and becomes complete with the academic program to the public examination called SSC (Secondary School Certificate Examination) at the end of class x. In general education system there are three streams of courses such as, Humanities, Science and Business Education, which start at class IX and students are free to choose their course(s) of studies. Seven boards of secondary education are responsible for conducting the SSC level public examinations.

B. The Madrasah education system focuses on religious education, teaching all the basics of education in a religious environment. However, after the independence of Bangladesh (1971) steps were taken for the modernization of Madrasah education and Bengali, Mathematics, English, Social science, General Science etc. subjects were included as compulsory subjects for all students. This board is responsible for conducting public examinations from Dakhil to Kamil levels.

C. The Technical and Vocational Education system provides courses related to various applied and practical areas of science, technology and engineering, and focuses on a specific area of specialization. This vocational education is conducted under the supervision of Technical Education Board, called SSC Vocational. This board is entrusted with the task of conducting certificate and diploma examinations in technical education.

Besides, Bangladesh Open University is a specialized university which offers SSC program where irregular and adult students can get admission and can complete the program in

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semester system. There are several courses; students are free to choose their courses of studies.

The Secondary level education in Bangladesh is designed to prepare the students to enter into the Higher Secondary stage. In Higher Secondary stage, the course is of two-year duration (XI - XII) which is being offered by intermediate colleges or equivalent technical colleges, and Kamil madrashs.

D. Variations in Academic Performance of Secondary Level Students

Bangladesh had demonstrated remarkable progress in education after its independence .Every year the passing rate in the SSC exam breaks the record of the previous year. But there is a questionable gulf between the success rates of the urban and rural educational institutions, rich and poor students (economically solvent and poor group), educated and uneducated parental students. It is well known that schools in urban areas particularly those in the metropolitan cities dominate the passing rate (Daily Star, 2012; Daily Star, 2006) On the contrary, most of the students who become unsuccessful in their academic examination are from rural areas and educational institutions with zero success are situated in rural setting where there are fewer facilities of education. This statement gets its support from a report of Prothom Alo (2012), entitled –*Medhabider Chorachori Shohor Candrik* (Meritorious students are found in urban areas).

Therefore, we can say that academic success is related to students' living area and financial condition of students. Usually economically solvent students show better performance than those of economically poor across the town and village (With a few exceptions).This point is related to educational investment in Bangladesh. The larger proportion of secondary students in rural Bangladesh is either poor or disadvantaged, their families can not afford to make on optimum investment in heir education (Ahmed, Hossain and Bose, 2005: cited in Hamid and Baldauf (2008). Such socio-economic realities influence the goal, expectation, future aim etc. of the students and because of such factors students cannot equally concentrate on their study. A newspaper report entitled- “Poor students lag behind as good result depends on private tutors” says that school education system becoming dependent on private tutor (Deabnath, 2007). Such scenario is found every year at all levels of education, especially at

Primary and Secondary levels. Here some socio-political realities may be considered. In Bangladesh, maximum educational institutions cannot provide quality education, because of some social and political reasons. Considering this reality solvent parents invest money to send their children to private teachers or coaching centers as a supplement of institutional learning.

This is one of the main gaps that the poor students cannot fill up. As a result, students coming from poor family lag behind. After the publication of SSC result-2007, education secretary M. Mamtazul Islam said that the percentage of successful students had gone down that year due to the long teachers' strike. On that point educationists said that students of urban areas of solvent families made good the loss in lessons while the students of rural and poor families could not. (Daily Star, 2007). Therefore, it is seen that private investment as an additional support to the students is a contributing factor in making variation in academic performance. Besides, economically solvent parents tend to send their children to better school, provide sufficient study materials, arrange better living and learning environment etc. Such necessary supports give them a chance to show better performance in academic examination than their counter part (poor students).

Like family income, level of fathers' and mothers' education also produces significant mean differences in the test and the SSC examination, which favours those students whose parents' have at least secondary education. (Hamid and Baldauf, 2008). Normally middle and upper class parents instill an academic background into their children before they even start their academic education which leads them ahead in academic field. Triventi (2011) hypothesizes that in most countries, parental education is positively related with graduation in a top institution and a prestigious field of study. Therefore, we can say that parental education as well as students' family backgrounds significantly influence the future education and success of students.

In this connection some important comments by different philosophers and scholars on the importance of family in the education of child may be mentioned—

1. Education begins at birth and the proper nurse is the mother.

- Rousseau

2. Home- a centre of love and affection is the best place and the first school of children.

-Pestalozzi

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3. Mothers are the ideal teachers and informal education given by home is most effective and natural. - Froebel

4. Child learns the first lesson of citizenship between the kiss of mother and the care of father.

-Mazini

Above mentioned views clearly assert the importance of family, parental education and home environment for education and academic success of students. The foundation of education which children obtain from their family gradually influences the future academic performance as well as their success in all fields. According to Sharma, Yogendra K. (2009) each family has its own culture and set up quite distinct from the other, therefore no two children are the same at the beginning nor during development or as a grown up adult citizen. Therefore, we see that parental education, social background, family setting etc. highly influence students' habit, education, success etc.

F. English at the Secondary Level in Bangladesh

The history of learning and teaching English in Bangladesh is associated with the British colonial period. The British first introduced English as a compulsory subject in this region (Kabir, 2012). They wanted a class among Indian people who might be interpreters between them and local people. During the British rule, English was the medium of all official activities as well as educational and commercial works. Gradually it became a common means of communication between the rulers and the educated class of Indian subcontinent. Thus English language sustained its common position till the end of British colonial period, 1947.

After the partition of India and Pakistan, there were two languages in Pakistan –Bangla in East Pakistan and Urdu in West Pakistan. As there was no common language for communication between two different nations (Bangali and Pakistani) English language had occupied the position of common language .Thus, English continued to play its significant role in all official activities in Pakistan period. In Pakistan period, English enjoyed the status of a second language and was taught as a functional language in secondary schools (Curriculum Committee 1962, cited in Hasan, 2004). During the whole Pakistan period English was widely exercised in education, business, and all intra -communications (between

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the Eastern and Western Pakistani people) .But after Bangladesh had achieved independence then the wide use of English language reduced dramatically. Bangla was given constitutional recognition when the independent nation's first constitution was drawn in 1972. Bengali language was made the centre of this new nationalism and thus was promoted in every sphere of society. Such monolingual policy was applied because of the strong public sentiment in favour of mother tongue Bengali. Thus English lost its official second language status with the inception of Bangladesh in 1971 and Bangla replaced English in all sectors except in foreign affairs where there were no alternatives. However, English was still a compulsory subject through secondary and higher secondary education. Over the last few decades, several scheme and proposals have been put forward to improve the learning of English at all levels of education. At present it is taught as a compulsory subject for 100 marks at primary and tertiary level and for 200 marks at secondary and higher secondary level.

G. English Language Teaching at Secondary Level Education in Bangladesh

Teaching English as a subject in Bangladesh was previously associated with the traditional Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which dominated European foreign language teaching for a century (1840 to 1940). Before 1996 this widely acclaimed method GTM was applied for teaching English in all kinds of education in Bangladesh. However later on GTM was replaced by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In Bangladesh CLT was introduced in 2001. We know that CLT is a learners' centered approach which chiefly focuses on the development of the communicative competence of the learners through the practice of four skills of language. CLT aims broadly to apply the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Thus CLT emphasizes the practice, and it encourages learners to communicate information through the target language. It invites students to learn through mistakes. It also initiates the students to learn with mutual communication.

With a view to improving English teaching in Bangladesh CLT textbooks were prescribed and English teachers in some schools received 13 days CLT training under the English Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP Bangladesh). Beyond these changes, in superstructure however, English teaching and learning continued in the same classroom, surrounded by the

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same external socioeconomic and political realities, with the same learners, and the same generally inadequate facilities (Hamid and Baldauf, 2008). That means CLT was introduced in Bangladesh setting without any study. Here CLT was imported only theoretically but the sociolinguistic realities of Bangladesh were not considered.

However, regarding the application of NCBT provided communicative text book, *English for Today*, for Grade 9-10 explains: “The book follows the communicative approach to teaching and learning English in Bangladesh situations. It provides learners with a variety of materials such as reading texts, dialogues, pictures, diagrams, tasks and activities. These materials have been designed and developed for practice in four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. As a result, classes are expected to be interactive with students actively participating in the classroom activities through pair works, group work as well as individual work.” (NCBT, 2001).

Thus it is seen that in Bangladesh theoretically CLT focuses on the new textbooks where there are various CLT related activities but teachers and students are not interested to practice speaking and listening as these two skills are not assessed in academic examinations. Hamid and Baldauf (2008) rightly remark that despite the CLT focus of the new textbooks, it can be argued that this focus is ignored, and texts generally are used like the old grammar-translation text. Therefore, it may be argued that though few changes have come in language policies, restructuring texts; overall classroom teaching in Bangladesh setting basically remain same over the last two decades. Nothing has changed here; everything remains same inside but the outer level just got changed name CLT.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology, Research Gap and Limitation of this study

Research Methodology

This study aims to investigate the unequal performance of different groups of students having different social identity. This section focuses on the methods and procedures that had been applied to investigate about the topic of this study.

This study is mainly based on students' self reported information of their experience, education, facility, family background that can be related to their academic performance. For the investigation, the researcher has collected both qualitative and quantitative data from the learners who have completed their secondary level of education. This study has been conducted following mixed method.

The materials used for this study are questionnaires for students and teachers. The students are selected from a public college situated in urban area and from a private college in rural setting. From both the colleges, students have been selected randomly. All the student participants in that study had completed their secondary level education in the academic years 2011 and 2012 and they come from different areas, schools and family backgrounds. Accordingly, the researcher has collected some opinion, suggestions from several practicing English teachers of different educational institutions situated in urban and rural settings to know their perception about the unequal performance of different groups of students and to find out possible solutions for such problems.

In the students' questionnaires there are three types of questions- factual, behavioral, and attitudinal; and teachers' questionnaire included two types- factual and attitudinal.

- a. Factual questions, which have been used to find out demographic characteristics (for example, age, residential location, socio-economic status, etc.) of the participants.
- b. Behavioral questions are used to find out their life-style, habit, and personal history etc.
- c. Attitudinal questions, which have been used to find out the perceptions, ideas and beliefs of the participants' about the research topic.

In students' questionnaire there are four sections. In Section –**A**, questions are asked for knowing family information, status and background. In Section –**B**, questions have been asked to know about the learners' attitude of future plan, aim and view about English. The questions in Section –**C** are about the information of learners' academic background,

facilities they have got and barriers they have encountered. And finally in Section –D, pedagogical questions are asked to know how they have learnt English.

In teachers' questionnaire some questions are for practicing English teachers where some hypothesizes are given to rate them according to their importance in learning ESL/ EFL. In this questionnaire there are three sections (Section-A, Section-B and Section- C).

Research Gap

Education and society are intimately related. A society determines and formulates the patterns of its education according to needs, ideals and ambitions. As is the society so its education (Sharma , 2009). From the above statement it can be inferred that society, sociology and educational sociology are closely connected with education. In this connection educational setting, investment, students' family background, life style, expectation etc. are also related. Now a question arises whether all people of a society or geographical area are equal. From the point of social stratification we have come to know that social stratification exists in all societies and people of different classes, ranks, status, types live in a society.

People acquire different material reward according to their respective social status. This kind of variation is seen in education also. For example, some lower class community actively rears an anti-academic attitude in their children; this attitude can then have a further effect on discouraging academic achievement. Thus it is clear that social stratification has a huge effect on education. Now there arises the issue of second language learning and academic performance of different social groups. Preston (1989) as cited by Ellis (1994) points out that there is a clear parallel between sociolinguistic phenomena and social class. Like other linguists he also finds a relationship between social class and L2 achievement. Finally, Skehan's (1990) study cited by Ellis (1994) also reports moderate correlations between the family backgrounds of 23 secondary school children in Bristol and both language learning aptitude and foreign language achievement in French and German, with middle-class children again outperformed lower-class. Therefore, we find that several researches have been conducted in the field of social factors and L2 acquisition. However, in this study the researcher's attempt is also to find out a correlation between the unequal academic performances in English of secondary level Students in Bangladesh context.

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Limitations of the Study

- In this study a small sample size (180 students and 51 English teachers) have participated. The study would be more representative if a larger sample size was included to this. The study has got 69 student in group (L) [low/poor GPA obtaining group] and 111 students in group (B) [better/higher GPA obtaining group]. If the number of students in group (L) was equal to group (B), then the comparison would be more reliable.
- There were not sufficient samples in some cases to make reliable comparative comment; for example, there were a few numbers of samples of highly educated mothers for the researcher to make a dependable comparison as to how mothers' education can be a factor in terms of students' academic performance.
- The researcher has not explained the reasons of unequal performance of the same group students; for example, there is no explanation why the students, living in the same scholarly family culture have shown dissimilar performance.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Discussion

Data Analysis Part 1: Students' Data

In this study total 180 secondary level students have taken part voluntarily. After the collection of students' data; the researcher has divided them into two groups according to their English GPA at SSC examination. The researcher has named: 'group: (L)' for low/poor GPA obtaining students and 'group: (B)' for better/higher GPA obtaining students. The researcher has got 69 students in group (L) and 111 in group (B).

In this chapter the researcher has arranged, structured, matched and unmatched the data of students' questionnaire for the convenience of analysis. In this respect the researcher has used two types of tables -Table: (L) and Table: (B); and several bar charts to analyze different sections of questionnaire. Table: (L)'s are used to show the information of low/poor GPA obtaining group and Table: (B)'s for better/higher GPA obtaining groups. Accordingly, several bar charts are used to show the comparative performance of two groups of students. In bar charts, Green Bars show low/poor performance rates of group: (L) [low/poor GPA in English] and Red Bars show better/higher performance rates of group: (B) [better/higher GPA in English].

Section –A

In this section there were 10 questions, elicited students' family, social and economic condition. Such questions were asked to know the socio-economic condition and background of the participants.

1. Participants' Area of Residence

Table: 1. (L). Participants' Area of Residence

Consolidating the data of group (L) [Table: 1. (L)],it is found that among 69 students, 53 lived in union area, 9 in Thana area and only 7 in City corporation /District town. That means 76.81% students, whose performances are poor, lived in rural area.

Union area	Thana area	City corporation/ District town
53	9	7
76.81%	13.04%	10.14%

Table: 1. (B). Participants' Area of Residence

Table: 1. (B) exhibits the data of better GPA group (B), whose academic performances in English are equal to or higher than their overall

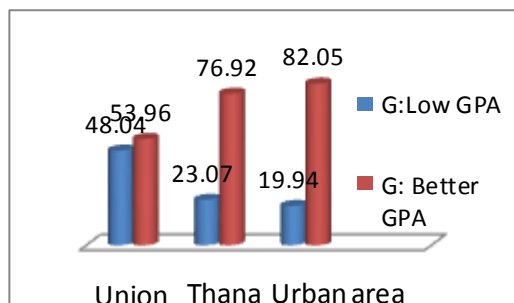
Union area	Thana area	City corporation/ District town
49	30	32
44.14%	27.02%	28.82%

CGPA. In this category among 111 students, 49 lived in union area, 30 in Thana area and 32 in city corporation/District town.

Participants’ Area of Residence-wise Comparison

Figure: 1. (L/B)

Participants’ area of residence wise data authenticates [Figure: 1. (L/B)] that among 180 participants, 102 are from union area, 39 are from Thana area and 39 are from City corporation area. Overall, the students coming from rural setting are 5.92 percentage points behind of their counterpart (who has shown better performance in English).



At Thana area, the better performance rate is 53.85 percentage points ahead of their counterpart. But the highest better performance rate is found among the students who have lived in City Corporation /District town area. There, the better performance rate is 62.11 percentages higher than the group (L).

2. Participants’ Educational Institution Setting

Table: 2. (L). Educational Institution Setting

Like living area wise better or poor performance of the participants, the setting of educational institutions affects the performance in English significantly. In

Union area	Thana area	City corporation /District town area
40	22	7
57.97%	31.88%	10.14%

Table:2.(L), it is seen that among 69 students, 57.97% students had studied in the educational institutions located in rural setting, 31.38% in Thana area and only 10.14% in City Corporation/ District town.

Table: 2. (B). Educational Institution Setting

A plain characteristic is also displayed in the Table: 2.(B). Here we notice that group (B) who have performed better in English, 39.64% are from village institutions, 31.53% from

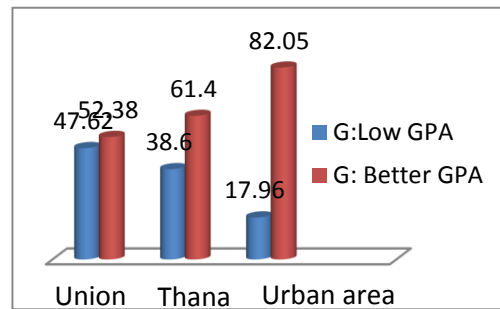
Union area	Thana area	City corporation/ District town
44	35	32
39.64%	31.53%	28.83%

Thana area institutions and 28.83 % are from urban institutions.

Participants’ Educational Institution Setting-wise Comparison

If we analyze and match the data of participants' educational institution-wise information, we find that 39, 57 and 84 students are from urban, Thana and Union area respectively. Figure: 2.(L/B) confirms that comparatively better performance is seen in all kinds of institutions with remarkable variations. Variations are less remarkable in union area (4.76%) but higher in urban setting (64.10%). That means, educational institutions located in urban setting positively contribute to better performance in English than those of rural setting.

Figure: 2.(L/B)



That means, educational institutions located in urban setting positively contribute to better performance in English than those of rural setting.

3. Level of Parental Education

It was one of the beliefs of the researcher that parental education positively contributes to the better performance of students, especially in learning L2. Therefore, to measure the rate of success, separate data has been collected about students' father and mother level of education.

A. Level of Participants Fathers' Education

Table: 3. A. (L). Level of Fathers' Education

Table: 3 A. (L) presents that group (L) who has shown low performance, majority of their fathers are not highly educated; only 15.94% of them have Bachelor or Master Degree. That means the rest of 84.06 % have no higher education.

Illiterate	Class (V-X)	SSC+ HSC	Bachelor /Master Degree
2	30	26	11
2.90%	43.48%	37.68%	15.94%

Table: 3. A. (B). Level of Father's Education

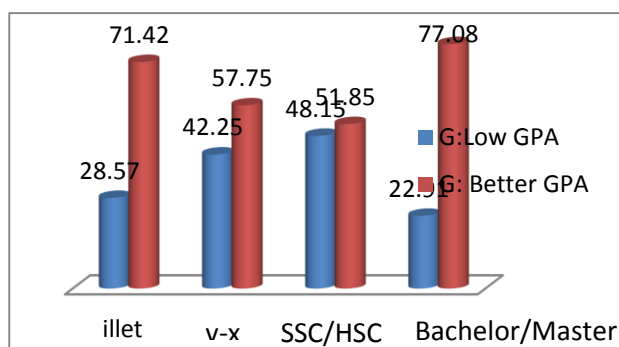
The ratio of higher education of students' father little bit changes when we analyze the data of group (B), which have shown better performance. In Table: 3.A.(B). We find that among 111 students, 37 students (33.33%) are from such family where the level of fathers' education is high.

Illiterate	Class (V-X)	SSC+ HSC	Bachelor/Master Degree
5	41	28	37
4.50%	36.94%	25.23%	33.33%

Comparative Data Analysis of the Level of Participants Fathers' Education

Apart from the issue of participants' living area and educational institution setting, the data of students' father educational background indicate something very considerable in the better and lower performance of students [Figure:3.A.(L/B)]. That is, the sons/ daughters of 48 fathers who have

Figure:3.A.(L/B)



Bachelor or Master's level of education have performed better. The success rate of such students is 54.17% higher than their counter group. Another remarkable variation is found in the sample of illiterate category that is 42.85% more than the counter group.

B. Level of Participants Mothers' Education

Table: 3 B. (L). Level of Mothers' Education

Performance variation also exists among the sons/ daughters of educated and uneducated mothers. Table: 3.B.(L) exposes that only 1.45% of 69 students of group (L) are from such mothers who have Bachelor or Master level educational qualification and rest of the 98.55% are from less educated mothers.

Illiterate	Class (V-X)	SSC+ HSC	Bachelor/Master Degree
9	29	30	1
13.04%	42.02%	43.48%	1.45%

Table: 3.B. (B). Level of Mothers' Education

However, the percentage of participants, whose mothers are highly educated increases slightly when we analyze the data of group (B). Here the ratio, differs from

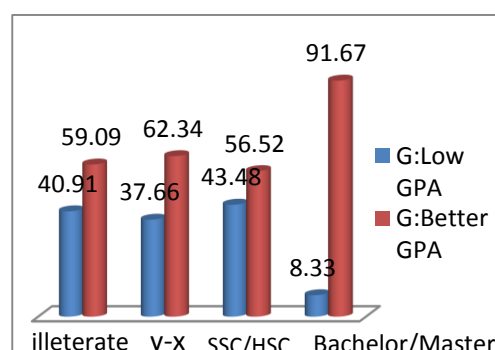
Illiterate	Class (V-X)	SSC+ HSC	Bachelor/Master Degree
13	48	39	11
11.71%	43.24%	35.14%	9.91%

the counter group positively. But the amount is very feeble. This may be because of having maximum samples from such participants whose mothers are less educated.

Comparative Data Analysis of the Level of Participants Mothers' Education

The importance of higher education of students' fathers was established in previous section. Similar contribution of mothers' education we also see when we analyze the comparative Figure: 3.B (L/B). It shows that proportionately the higher education of mothers contributed more to group (N). Among such students (whose mothers are highly educated) success rate is 83.34% higher than those who have got low GPA in English. However, like the previous Figure: 3.A. (L/B) in this figure we also find less variation in the performance of the students whose mothers are less educated.

Figure: 3.B.(L/B)



4. Parental Profession

From general observation is seen that students' parental profession plays a significant role in the overall academic performance. Therefore, data has been collected to analyze the rate of contribution of parental profession in English performance. In this regard, four types of professional ranks are decided to know the level of profession. However, there are some difficulties in the categorization of non-ranking jobs, professions. To solve the problem the researcher has categorized them considering the type, social value, income, working environment etc. of that occupation.

A. Fathers' Professional Status

Consolidating the data of group (L),

[Table: 4 .A. (L)] it is discovered that the rate of 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st class category

professions are respectively 71.01%, 20.29%, 7.25% and 1.45%. There the highest rate is identified in the 4th class category profession and lowest rate in the 1st class category profession.

Table: 4. A. (L). Fathers' Professional Status

4 th class	3 rd class	2 nd class	1 st class
49	14	5	1
71.01%	20.29%	7.25%	1.45%

Table: 4 A. (B) Fathers' Professional Status

4 th class	3 rd class	2 nd class	1 st class

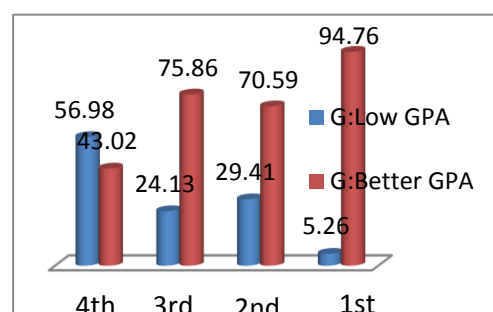
In group (B) the researcher has got a mixture of reflection of fathers' profession on the better performance of students. Here the highest rate 39.64 % is inspected in the 3rd class category profession. [Table: 4. A. (B).]

37	44	12	18
33.33%	39.64%	10.81%	16.22%

Comparative Data Analysis of the Level of Participants Fathers' Profession

Figure: 4. A. (L/B)

The comparative study of fathers' professional status positively supports the better performance rate of participants. Figure: 4. A. (L/B) displays the highest success rate, 94.76% of sons/daughters of 1st class category professionals. Two other remarkable rates are also found among the students who have come from 3rd and 2nd class category professionals. Their success rates are 75.86% and 70.59% respectively. On the contrary, negative rate of better performance is found among the students who have come from 4th class category professionals. In this group 13.92 % lower rate is signified.



B. Mothers' Professional Status

Table: 4.B. (L). Mothers' Professional Status

Considering socio-cultural realities of Bangladesh, one additional occupation named 'House wife' has been added to the table of participants' mother profession. Surprisingly in group (L), researcher has found all the samples of this category (house wife). So any comment is worthless here because of having only single type of samples.

House Wife	4 th class	3 rd class	2 nd class	1 st class
69	-	-	-	-
100%	-	-	-	-

Table: 4.B. (B). Mother's Professional Status

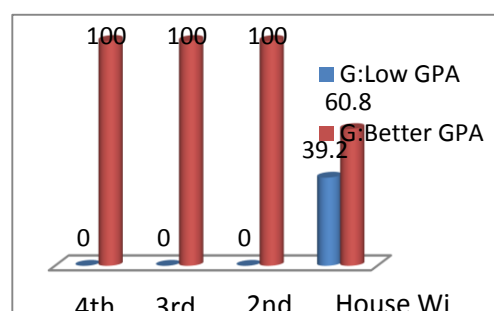
Nearly similar kind of samples are also found in group (B). There 96.40 % samples are in 'House wife' category and rest of the 3.60% in others category.

House wife	4 th class	3 rd class	2 nd class	1 st class
107	1	1	2	-
96.40%	0.90%	0.90%	1.80%	-

Comparative Data Analysis of the Level of Participants Mothers' Profession

Figure: 4.B. (L/B)

As there are no sufficient data of professional mothers (who are engaged in others profession than house wife) it is very difficult to draw any divided line among group (L) and group (B). However, we can comment depending on our limited samples that students who have come from professional mothers, their better performance rate is 100%. Figure: 4.B. (M/N) shows 4th, 3rd and 2nd class job holder mothers and the success rate of their son/daughter.



5. Partakers' Family Income

Table: 5. (L). Monthly Family Income in Tk.

In section -A, another question was set to know the family income of partakers of this study. There researcher has got variety of samples of family income. Table: 5. (L)

(0-5000)	(6000-10,000)	(11,000-20,000)	(21,000-40,000)	41,000+
16	22	21	5	5
23.19%	31.88%	30.43%	7.25%	7.25%

shows details of income category. In group (L), highest number of students is found in (11,000 – 20,000) taka monthly income category and lowest in Tk. (21,000 – 40,000) and Tk. 41,000 + monthly income category. That means that students who have got poor GPA in English, 85.50% are from lower income category.

Table: 5. (B). Monthly Family Income in TK

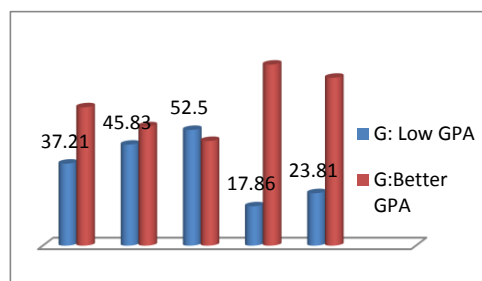
But if we analyze the family income of group (B), we don't find any remarkable monthly income category depending which we can make any comment. However, this may be because of the limitation of data.

(0-5000)	(6000-10,000)	(11,000-20,000)	(21,000-40,000)	41,000+
27	26	19	23	16
24.32%	23.42%	17.11%	20.72%	14.41%

Comparative Data Analysis of Family Income

Figure: 5. (L/B)

The comparative data of students' family income exposes that students coming from Tk. (21,000- 40,000) and Tk. 41,000+ taka monthly income category have showed higher performance than their counter part. The success rates are 64.28% and 52.38% more than the rival group. On the contrary, poor performance is noticed in the Tk. (11,000- 20,000) monthly income category.



6. Helping Hand in English Performance

Table: 6. (L). Helping Hand in English Performance

This is another remarkable question in this section. This question has been asked to know the support and help behind the performance of students. Table: 6. (L)

Family members	School teachers	Private teacher / Coaching center	Others
10	18	35	6
14.49%	26.09%	50.72%	8.70%

demonstrates that group (L) who has showed poor performance in English, the highest number of students, 50.72% are dependent mainly on private teachers. That means, they have got little help from their family members.

Table: 6. (B). Helping Hand in English Performance

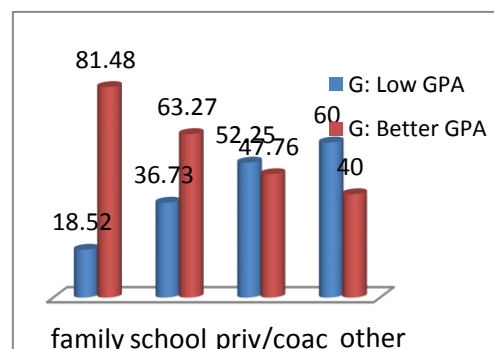
On the other hand, in the data of group (B), it is noticed that the highest rate 39.64% has got maximum help from their family.

Family members	School teachers	Private teachers/ Coaching center	Others
44	31	32	4
39.64%	27.93%	28.83%	3.60%

Comparative Data Analysis in Taking Help

The comparative bar chart, Figure: 6.(L/B) shows that the number of students who has got help from their family in learning English, performed the best (81.48%). On the contrary, students who are mainly dependent on private teachers, coaching centers etc. have showed 4.48% less performance than their counter group. There are little amount of sample in the ‘others’ category. However, in this category the researcher has got 20% less performance of the participants than their rival group.

Figure: 6. (L/B)



Section –B

Attitude to English

Table: 7. (L). How important is English to you?

In section –B, there are some questions about the importance of English. By such questions the researcher has tried to know how important they think English in their academic and social life. Table: 7. (L) helps us to know the attitude of group (L). In that group 76.81% students think English as ‘Highly’ important for them.

Highly	Fairly	A little
53	12	4
76.81%	17.39%	5.79%

Table: 7. (B). How Important is English to you?

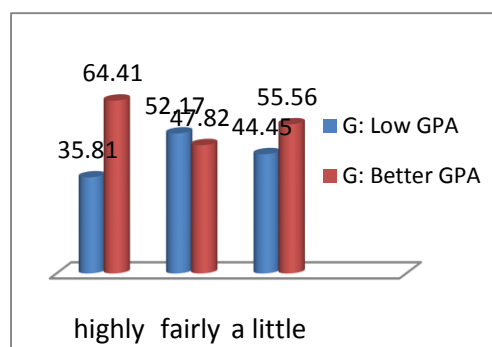
The counter Table: 7.(B). displays that 85.59% students consider English as ‘ Highly’ and the rest of 9.91% and 4.50% as ‘ Fairly’ and ‘ A little’.

Highly	Fairly	A little
95	11	5
85.59%	9.91%	4.50%

Comparative Data Analysis of the Importance of English

Figure: 7.(L/B)

In comparative analysis it is clear that better performance rate is accelerated among the students who have considered English as ‘Highly’ important for their academic and social need. In such students, better performance rate is 28.61% more than their opponents. But a reverse trend is found in second category of students who have considered English as ‘Fairly’ important. They have showed 4.35% lower performance than their counter group. Therefore, better performance in English is likely to increase if students consider it highly important in their academic and social life.



8. Participants' Learning Needs

Table: 8. (L) . Participants' Learning Needs

This is another leading question in section-B. Through his question the researcher has tried to know whether there is any connection between students' academic English performance and learning purpose. Table: 8. (L) of group (L) displays that maximum poor performance rates are identified among such students whose learning aims are personal and social.

Academic purpose	Personal and social purpose	Job purpose	Others
33	10	21	5
47.82%	14.49%	30.43%	7.24%

Table: 8.(B). Participants' Learning Needs

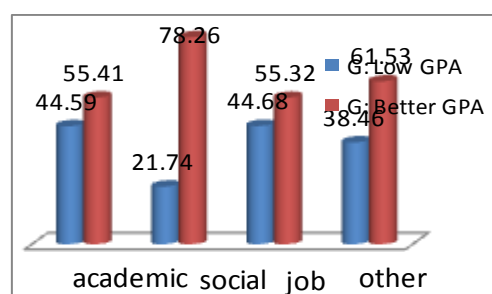
On the contrary, Table: 8. (B) exhibits that better performance rates are found among such students whose purpose is limited in academic purpose. However, the second highest rate is identified 32.43% among the students whose view of learning is social and personal.

Academic purpose	Personal & social purpose	Job purpose	Others
41	36	26	8
36.93%	32.43%	23.42%	7.20%

Participants' Learning Needs Wise Comparison

In comparative data analysis the researcher finds that goal or purpose based success rate is maximum, 78.26% among such students who learnt English for their social and personal needs rather than other purposes- academic, social, job and others[Figure:8. (L/B)].

Figure: 8. (L/B)



Section –C

9. Reasons behind Obtaining Lower or Better GPA in English

Table: 9 .(L) Reasons behind Poor GPA

Section –C of students' questionnaire asks some questions related to their academic result, schooling and reason of poor or higher GPA in English. Question no. 23.A asks about the reasons of students' poor

Self-weakness	Home and surrounding environment	Not getting extra tuition	Uncommon questions
17	17	26	9
24.64%	24.64%	37.68%	13.04%

GPA and no. 25.B asks to know about the secret of their higher GPA in English. Table: 9. (L) presents the reasons of group (L). Among 69 students the highest rate group (37.68% score obtaining group) has showed cause of 'Not getting sufficient extra tuition', 2nd and 3rd highest rate groups have mentioned the reason of their 'self-weakness' and 'Home and surrounding environment'.

Table: 9. (B) Reasons behind Better GPA

Table: 9.(B) mentions the secrets of group (B). From students' self-reported information the researcher has found that their better performance has come from various sources. In that regard, the highest

Self-effort	Home and surrounding environment	Extra tuition	Common questions
40	42	17	12
36.03%	37.83%	15.32%	10.81%

rate obtaining group has mentioned about the contribution of their home and surrounding environment and the second highest rate (36.03%) obtaining group say for their personal effort.

As question no 23.A and 23.B were asked to know different types of information, there any comparative comment is worthless.

Section-D

10. Duration of Tutor Assistance

Table: 10. (L).Duration of Tutor Assistance

Section-D of questionnaire is designed to know the learning process and getting facilities of students. In that section several questions are asked to know about students’ leisure period spending, TV program watching, technology using etc. Table: 10 (L) shows the data of group (L); and there the researcher notices that maximum students are dependent on extra tuition.

Not at all	6 Mon.	1 yr.	2 yr.	3 yr.	4 yr.
6	21	17	15	6	4
8.70%	30.43%	24.64%	21.74%	8.70%	5.80%

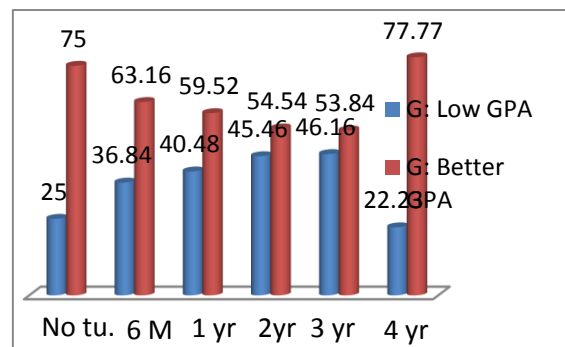
Table: 10. (B) Duration of Tutor Assistance

But after analyzing the data of group (B), the conception of researcher has dipped into confusion because surprisingly there he perceives that top success obtaining groups have studied 6 months and 1 year duration extra- tuition in English.

Not at all	6 Mon.	1 yr.	2 yr.	3 yr.	4 yr.
18	36	25	18	7	7
16.21%	32.43%	22.52%	16.22%	6.31%	6.31%

Comparative Analysis of Duration of Tutor Assistance

Figure: 10. (L/B)



In comparative analysis of extra tutor assistance taking duration, it is observed that extra tuition taking group has improved in all categories noticeably. Figure: 10.(L/B) indicates that students who have taken tutor assistance, their success rate normally has risen. There he has got another remarkable data about such students who have not taken any assistance from tutor but have shown better performance. In that category the better performance rate is 50 times more than the counter group.

11. Participants' Access to Modern Amenities

Table: 11. (L) Modern Amenities Access

Question no. 30 in section -D gives us information of students' access to modern amenities which seem to be facilitative in overall advancement and performance in English. Table: 11.(L) states the data of group (L); and shows that 43.47% of 69 students have access to mobile phone and they use it only for primary purpose (call, SMS), 21.74% students have access to cable TV.

Mobile	Internet	Satellite TV	all
30	13	15	11
43.47%	18.84%	21.74%	15.94%

Table: 11. (B). Modern Amenities Access

Table: 11. (B) demonstrates statistics of group (B); but like the previous group [group (M)] we find that here the rate of mobile phone users are in the highest in rate (46.85%) and common users of mobile phone are less in amount (only 11.71%).

Mobile	Internet	Satellite TV	all
52	19	27	13
46.85%	17.12%	24.32%	11.71%

Data Analysis Part II: Teachers' Questionnaire

In that study total 51 experienced English teachers participated. Like the students' questionnaire there are several sections (A, B, C) of that questionnaire and different sections are designed for different purposes. Section – A is for teachers' personal and academic qualifications, section- B is for their perceptions about some popular hypothesis and suggestions to reduce the unequal performance gaps among different groups of students and section-C is designed for the own suggestions of teachers.

Question no. 6 of section-B of teachers' questionnaire is designed to elicit English teachers' perceptions about several popular hypothesize of social stratification and its impact on academic performance in English. Here six common hypothesizes have been listed and teachers are asked to give a rating number (1, 2, 3) in each to select them according to their affecting intensity in English performance. In analysis, the researcher has carefully calculated them and found that hypothesis no. 6.a has got the highest rate (47 point), no. 6.d, the second highest rate and no. 6.b, 6.c and 6.e the third position rate and 6.f in the 4th position.

(Table: 12. 1)

Table: 12.1 Rating of Hypothesizes

No. 6	Hypothesizes	Point
a.	Urban students have more chances to show better performance in academic English at secondary level than the rural students.	47
b.	One's social position can affect one's academic performance in English.	22
c.	One's family condition (economic) can affect one's academic performance in English.	22
d.	Students coming from educated family have more chances to show better performance in Academic English.	23
e.	Student's living environment can affect his Second language (English) learning.	22
f.	Local and family culture can affect one's academic performance in English.	18

Question no.7 of the same section in teachers' questionnaire asks to know and decide the priority of some regular but important suggestions. Like the previous question there also the researcher has asked teachers to rate the written suggestions. In calculation he gets that maximum teachers has given the highest rating number into no. 7.a (41 point); that means they thinks that for better performance in English, qualified subject teacher is needed. Other chronological rate obtaining suggestions are 7.b, 7. e, 7.c, 7.d and 7.f. (Table: 13.1).

Table: 13.1 Rating of Common Suggestions

No.7	Suggestions	Point
a.	For better performance in English qualified subject teachers are needed.	41
b.	For better performance in English favorable school environment is essential.	30
c.	For better performance in English extra tutor assistance in English is needed.	19
d.	For better performance in English better family environment is needed.	18
e.	For better performance in English personal effort is needed.	25

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f.	For better performance in English student's lifestyle should be improved.	13
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Question no. 8 of section-C is actually designed for open ended suggestion and advice from English teachers to suggest possible solutions to reduce the impact of social stratification in education as well as in English performance. There the researcher has got various valuable suggestions and comments. However, here he is only mentioning some representative categorical suggestions:

Institution setting

- Proper monitoring of all educational institutions.
- At least equal or more logistic support should be provided to the rural educational institute.
- Rural educational institutions should be provided with more qualified teachers.

Economic support

- The gap between rich and poor should be minimized so that affluent learners become more and more motivated.
- Special counseling is need for back footed students and their parents.
- Teachers who serve at rural educational institution their salary should be increased.
- Extra economic support for the poor students.

Education of parents and managing committee members

- If parents are educated they can better motivate their children.
- Educated Managing committee should be elected.
- Parental communication with the teacher may be improved so that parents can properly guide their son/daughter.

Qualification of teachers and teacher training

- Regular teacher training is essential
- Qualified English teachers should be recruited.
- Teacher should know the system of teaching with modern technology.

Others

- Language club should be established for weaker students.
- Children of less affluent families can be given extra coaching at school.

- Extra class (not coaching) at pre-school hour or after school hour should be arranged for weak and poor students.
- Students should be equally treated at school.
- The number of students in each class should be limited to 30.

Discussion

This chapter supplements a discussion about the reasons for low or better performance of students. Though the information collection was huge, the researcher has limited his discussion onto certain key points. Firstly he has focused on students' information, their judgment and thought on their causes of performance in English. Secondly, he has scrutinized the perception and suggestions of English teachers and subsequently identified some possible reasons of low or better performances.

This study started with some set assumptions but many things had gone changed with the advancement of the study. However, the present study reveals that the participants - Secondary students and English teachers have rightly identified and confirmed that social inequality and social stratificational factors directly or indirectly affects the academic performance of students. At surface level normally it is seen that only students' merit is the precondition of better performance but in real life experience the researcher has found that various social issues worked as catalyst or barrier to better performance.

In students' data, he has got almost details information of their academic performance, schooling, family background, educational qualification of family members, family profession, students' learning habit etc. social and psychological factors that seem to be affective to their English performance.

A. Students' Area of Residence

The information of students' living area stated in Figure: 1. (L/B), says that better performance is related to students' living area. Success rates of students living at Thana area and urban area are 76.92% and 82.05%. On the other hand, performance rates of students living at rural area are 48.04%. Such information clearly indicates that rural students cannot perform better because of some social and geographical realities. According to the report of

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Prothom Alo (2012), meritorious students are mainly from urban areas. In this respect the researcher points out some socio-cultural and socio-economic limitations of rural and poor students : In rural and under developed areas they have little chances to practice the target language and they get hardly any support from their family members and peer groups. In L2 acquisition research it is found that linguistic environment makes a difference in learning and performance. The role (If any) of environmental factor in first or second language acquisition affects the power and scope of any innate linguistic or cognitive contribution which becomes necessary to posit in the learner (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991) .On this point we can hardly match the dissimilar linguistic environment of rural and urban areas. Urban students get the advantage of better linguistic environment than rural students.

B. Educational Institution

There is no denying of the contribution of school in better performance of students. Comparative Figure: 2. (L/B) shows that the success rates of students reading at urban educational institutions are 82.05%. On the other hand, those of rural educational institutions are 52.38%. This reality is also justified from the study of Education Watch, 2009-10, saying that secondary schools in the urban areas are more efficient than those in the rural areas. Educational institution wise success rate actually depends on various facilitative of educational institutions. It is seen that normally in urban institutions meritorious students got admitted through competitive admission tests. Therefore the chances of success of such talented students are more than rural students. It is perceived from the better performance rate from urban educational institutions that there the students get a competitive peer groups, better facilities and care. We know that a qualified teacher is the first condition of quality teaching. But unfortunately maximum English teachers of our country are less qualified (Chowdhury, 2011). Majority of Bangladeshi English teachers are not properly trained in teaching language. That means here is an acute shortage of qualified English teachers. This scarcity is more severe at the rural educational institutions where teachers' salary is so poor. Generally it is found that the quality of teaching, school management, school environment, and peer groups etc. directly or indirectly influence the performance of students.

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C. Parental Education

Parental education, scholarly family culture and educational success are closely linked. We know that a child receive his first lesson of speech in the family. During the first five years of life, the child lives freely under the care of parents and other family members. Children growing up with many books get three years more schooling than children from bookless home, independent of their parents' education ,occupation and class (Evans , et al., 2010). This opinion clearly reveals the importance and value of parental education and scholarly family culture in the education and performance of children.

In this respect, the researcher matches his finding from students' father and mothers' level of education from the comparative figure 3. A.(L/B) and 3.B.(L/B) , and comments that the highest success rates 77.08% and 91.67% are perceived among such students whose father and mother are highly educated. However, the findings about the success rate of illiterate fathers' sons/daughters are not matching with our hypothesis. In this regard he has given different explanation about their better performance rate, commenting that perhaps they are self-motivated and succeeded because of their personal effort.

D. Parental Profession

Behaviorist view of language acquisition simply claims that language development is the result of continuous practicing of a set of habit. According to this theory both L1 and L2 acquisition receive linguistic input from speakers in their environment. On this point the researcher relates his finding of comparative figure 4.A.(L/B) and 4.B.(L/B). In both bar diagrams it is seen that the better performance rate of 1st class category profession is in the highest position. Such better performance has nothing but one explanation that is they have got the support and inspiration from their parental profession and positive home environment. Evans , et al. (2010) asserts that this is as great an advantage as having university educated rather than unschooled parents, and twice the advantage of having a professional rather than unskilled father. As language learning is somehow related to habit formation so if parents are highly educated and professional then of course children will get the direct or indirect benefit of it. From the behavioristic point of view we can say that the personality, learning habit,

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future aim etc. of a child usually develop following his parents. Students are normally positively motivated about learning English if they find their professional parents using it at home and professional life. Besides that, 1st class professional parents who are economically solvent can send their son/daughter to best schools in district, and towns what clearly make a difference from the son/daughter of low status parents. Here matches the article of Daily Star (2012) - of the top 160 institutions under the eight general education boards 78 are state run and those are considered the best in the district with most of their students coming from well off families.

E. Family Income

Family income is directly related to educational investment. When a family has financial stability, normally they invest more money on educational expenditure. In this respect, the survey of Hamid (Hamid and Baldauf, 2008) finds that different level of family income makes differences in 10th grade students mean results in language proficiency test and SSC examination showed that students whose family income have higher income levels obtained significantly ($P < 0.001$) higher scores/better grade). In this study, almost similar connection to better performance and higher family income is also found. Figure: 5.(M/N) clearly shows that the students whose family income is higher [Tk. (21,000-40,000) and tk. 41000+ monthly] they has shown higher score rate, 82.14% and 76.19% in their academic English performance.

F. Helping Hand in Better Performance

Although English classes are conducted regularly by school teachers, we know that some students take help from family members, private teachers, coaching centers and other sources. In this study we find in Figure: 6.(L/B) that students who have taken help from their family members, their success rate is better. Accordingly, the students who solely follows institutional classes of their subject teacher at school their success rates are higher. On the contrary, students taking help from private tutors, coaching centers and from other sources have performed poorly. Here we note the importance of family as a powerful informal agent of education as Sharma (2009) asserts. Among different options like private tutor, coaching

center etc. for outside support, in terms of education, there seem to be no alternative to educated family and parents.

G. Attitude to English

This topic is related to motivation. We know that in L2 learning motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he or she devotes to it. If a learner attitude is negative, there may be strong internal barriers against learning. Gardner (1979) (cited in Larsen- Freeman and Long 1991), claimed a linear relationship between constellation of attitudes and second language learning success. Therefore, learners' attitude were said to have an important contribution to learning and performing in second language. In this study such co-relation of learners' positive motivation and better performance is established in figure: 7.(L/B). The researcher finds that students who have thought that English is highly important for them, their success rates are high, 64.41%.

H. Participants' Learning Needs

Students' learning needs or purposes can affect their L2 learning rate; as such factors are also related to motivation. Gardner and Lambert in a series of books and papers (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985; cited in Crook, 1997) introduced two types of motivations: Integrative and Instrumental motivation.

- a. **Integrative motivation:** Wanting to learn a language in order to communicate with people of another culture who speak it.
- b. **Instrumental motivation:** wanting to learn a language because it will be useful for certain 'instrumental' goals such as getting a job, reading a foreign newspaper, passing an examination.(Richard, Platt, and Weber, 1985)

Different researchers have reached at different conclusions about the affecting intensity of different types of motivation but the only reliable finding is that the intensity of motivation is more important than the type. This claim is supported by the finding of this study also .In this study it is found that whatever the motivation is, the performance of students are accelerated.

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In the Figure: 8.(M/N) the highest success rate, 78.26 % is identified for the students whose learning purposes are ‘personal and social’.

I. Reasons of Showing Poor or Better Performance

Identifying the exact reason for poor or better performance is really difficult. Sometimes learners actually don't know the reasons. In this study the researcher has seen that students of group (L) (who have showed low performance) identified “not getting extra tuition” as the 1st reason; ‘home and surrounding environment’ and ‘self-weaknesses as the second and third reasons. On the contrary, the students of group (B) (who have showed better performance) have not mentioned ‘getting extra tutor assistance’ as the first contributing factor for their better performance. They rather find that their ‘home and surrounding environment’ and ‘self-effort’ are the main contributing factors in their better performance. Now the question arises whether extra-tuition can help the students in their better performance. Here the researcher gives the answer saying that yes, it helps students, but extra-tuition is never the alternative to self-effort, motivation, scholarly family environment and positive surrounding for learning language.

J. Extra Tutor Assistance

As maximum schools are not providing proper education to the students, solvent parents are investing additional money for private education/extra-tuition, as it is instanced by a report in a national English daily, expressing concern over the result of SSC examination-2007 , educationists said capitalism had engulfed the country's education system. Students backed by solvent families are achieving glorious result while students from poor families are failing to obtain even pass marks as schools fail to provide quality education to them (Daily Star, 2007). In Bangladesh it is the general picture that solvent families are taking the help of coaching centers whereas poor families are failing to provide necessary English books, materials and most importantly private lessons in English. Such additional supports to the solvent students clearly make difference in academic performance. In this study similar picture is also found that extra tutor assistance helps the students in better performance [Figure: 10.(L/B)]. And about the existence of distinguished data of students group who have

not taken any extra tutor assistance but performed better, the argument is like the previous point that perhaps they are self-esteemed or have got help from their family members.

K. Participants' Access to Modern Amenities

Through this point, the researcher has tried to examine his hypothesis that students who use modern amenities (mobile phone, internet, satellite TV etc.) have more chances to perform better in English. But unfortunately he has not got sufficient data to support his claim; more research is needed in this point.

Chapter 05

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

Conclusion

Summarizing the data provided by the participating students and English teachers, it is found that there are several factors responsible for unequal performance of different groups of students. Here the factors identified are: dissimilar living environment and standard, unequal facilities of different categories of educational institutions, parental education and family culture, additional investment for extra tutor assistance, self-motivation and personal effort etc.

This study has been initiated with a view to investigating some sociolinguistic variables that seem to affect the academic performance in English at secondary level education in Bangladesh. In this study, the first and second research questions are related to student's social identity, living standard, family lineage and family culture proved very much influential to the English performance. The researcher has found that students coming from urban area, urban school, solvent family, and scholarly family culture performed better than the other group. However, the better performance rates of such students are in few cases very marginal. With regard to the 3rd research question, the researcher has found that in some extents –when the learner is highly motivated and serious in his EFL/ESL learning, he can overcome any kind of social, economic and unfavorable social and family barriers.

Social stratification and social inequality are present in every society, culture and country. It can hardly be sidestepped, although many people tend to turn a blind eye towards such issues. In the curriculum development, Bangladeshi policy makers never think about such social and psychological barriers of poor and disadvantaged students. The study makes it clear that students' English performance varies according to their social identity. Therefore, some measures and steps should be taken by policy makers, teachers and parents to reduce the unequal performance of different groups of students.

Policy Recommendation

There are several affecting factors for uneven performance of different groups of students that were identified related to students' living area, educational institution, parental education and profession, family income and culture etc. Though the researcher has got plenty of suggestions from experienced English teachers, considering socio-cultural and socio-economic realities of Bangladesh, here he is recommending only a few of them:

- The facility of education must be decentralized. Logistic support should be provided to the rural educational institutions. In addition, rural educational institutions should be brought under strong monitoring and well-educated members should be included in the committees to ensure a better educational environment.

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- A qualified teacher supplies life-blood to teaching and language teaching is no exception. Hence, more qualified and motivated English teachers should be appointed where there is a shortage. Accordingly, regular professional development of the teachers is also essential. Regular in-service training for language teachers need to be arranged both from the Government and by the institutions themselves.
- Classroom teaching should be made more effective so the poor students can fill the gap of the family support for education. Again, we know that the poor guardians of rural areas cannot afford to provide necessary teaching materials for their son/daughter. So, students from poor family backgrounds may be provided with special scholarships of financial help from the Government.
- The authority can refurnish and replenish the existing library with modern technology and equipment facility so that language learning can be made easier for all kinds of students. If possible extracurricular activities relating knowledge of English (e.g. English debate, open discussion session etc.) can also be arranged.



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Annex- 1
Invitation Letter

Invitation to participate in a study entitled-

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“A sociolinguistic study of social stratification in Bangladesh and its impact on academic performance in English at secondary level education”

Dear participants,

I have undertaken a study on the topic mentioned above as part of the fulfillment of my MA in ELT [MA in English Language Teaching] under the Institute of Modern Languages, University of Chittagong. This research complies with the ethical standard for research with human participants' appearing.

The goal of this study is to investigate the sociolinguistic variables that seem to affect the academic performance in English at secondary level education in Bangladesh. At secondary level it is seen that though the students follow the same syllabus, read the same texts in academic years, get instruction from academically equal qualified teachers and sit for the same test, the performance of students in English varies considerably. In this regard, my research will address the following three questions:

- a. Is there any difference in the academic performance in English in terms of urban versus rural students, economically rich versus poor students, and students from educated versus uneducated family background?
- b. Does social stratification contribute to differential performance of different social groups of students?
- c. To what extent can an individual (coming from rural area, economically poor, and uneducated family background) show better performance in English overcoming such social stratificational issues?

Research of this type is very important for our national educational development because various social stratificational factors of Bangladeshi learners will be justified with the level of their academic performance in English. The findings of this study might well inform the concerned people about the uneven performance in English of the students from different social class, and family background; and suggest solutions to the problem.

You are invited to participate in this study voluntarily and your participation will include completion of a questionnaire. There is no known or anticipated risk to you for participating in this research. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, you may also withdraw from the research any time. However your anonymity will be protected.

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If you have any further query regarding this study please contact me by E-mail: ar.rashid20@yahoo.com, or my supervisor, Monjurul Alam, Associate professor, Institute of Modern Languages, Chittagong University.

Thank you
Md. Abdur Rashid

Annex-2

Students' questionnaire

[Students will fill in/give ✓ mark this form with the help of researcher]

Section A

1. Name (optional) :

2. Permanent Address : Post office /Village: Thana:

District/City:

3. Where do you live now? : a. Own house b. rented house

It's location : a. City corporation area b. Thana c. Union

4. If rented, then its monthly rent: Tk : .

5. Whom do you live with? : A. Your family b. Relative. c. Others

6. Father's information

Age (approximate year)	Educational qualification (maximum degree he obtained)	Profession (details)	Monthly income (approximate) Tk.	Total working hour(daily)

7. Mother's information

Age (approximate year)	Educational qualification (maximum degree she obtained)	Profession (details)	Monthly income (approximate) Tk.	Total working hour in office(daily)
		House wife	00	00

08. Which language did you mostly use in your family environment?

- a. English b. Bengali c. English & Bengali d. Local dialect

09. Who helped you more in learning English?

- a. Family Members b. School teacher c. Private teacher d. Friends.

10. Which one is given first priority in your family?

- a. Educational expenditure
b. Food expenditure
c. Social and family functional expenditure
d. Saving money
e. Investing money in land buying.

Section B

11. Which culture influences you most?

- a. Traditional Bangali culture b. Progressive Bangla culture
c. Hybrid Bangla culture d. Hindi culture e. American culture f. British culture

12. What is the maximum academic degree you want to obtain?

- a. PhD b. Master's degree c. Bachelor's degree d. H.S.C

13. How important, do you think, is English in your practical life?

- a. Highly b. Fairly c. A little d. Not at all.

14. Why do you need English?

- a. To get a better GPA
b. For my prestige in friend circle .
c. To read English books and newspapers, watch English movies, program etc.
d. To get better job.
e. For higher study in foreign country

Section C

15. Name of secondary school :.....

16. Its address : Thana: District/City:.....

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17. SSC passing year : a. 2012 b. 2011

18. Obtained CGPA in SSC :

19. GPA in English :

20. What were the approximate numbers of students in your class?

- a. 50 b. 75 c. 100 d. above 150

21. Which language did you mostly use in English class room?

- a. English b. Bengali c. English & Bengali d. Local dialect

22. Which language did your teachers mostly use at School?

- a. English b. Bengali c. English & Bengali d. Local dialect

23.A. What is your reason of getting poor GPA in English?

- a. Not getting support and help from my family members
b. My weakness in English.
c. Not getting enough help from subject teachers.
d. My home and surrounding environment.
e. I did not get extra tuition in English.

23 .B .What is the secret of your higher GPA in English than your CGPA?

- a. Getting support and help from your family member.
b. Personal effort.
c. The help of my subject teacher.
d. My circle and family environment.
e. I got extra tuition in English.

Section D

24. How often did you use English outside of your school?

- a. 75% b. 50% c. 25% d. 10% e. 5% f. 0%

25. Did you go to any private teacher/coaching center for reading English?

- a. Yes
b. No

26. How long did you study English under private /extra tuition?

- a. 6 months b. 1 year c. 2 years d. 3 years e. 4 years

27. What do you do usually at your leisure period? (After school)

- a. Play in the field b. Watch TV c. Read Bangla books, papers etc.
d. Read English books, papers etc. e. Spend time with friends f. Spend time with family

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28. What kind of TV/radio channel/program you like most?

- a. Bangla b. Hindi c. English d. Arabic e. All

29. Which modern amenities do have access?

- a. Mobile phone (call, sms, mms)
b. Internet in mobile phone
c. Internet
e. Satellite TV
f. Above all

30. Why do you have access in such modern amenities?

- a. For learning English
b. For face book, Email check etc.
c. For news
d. For You tube movie
e. For any kind of information

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Annex-3

Teachers' questionnaire

[English teachers will fill in this form with the help of researcher]

Section -A

1. Name (optional) :
2. Name of Institution (working institution):
3. Where is it situated? : a. City corporation area b. Thana c. Union
4. Educational qualification :
5. Experience : year
(Approximate)

Section-B

6. Give a rating point (1, 2, 3) in the right of the following hypothesis

(The most reasonable one will get rate 1, next one 2 etc.)

No.		point
a.	Urban students have more chances to show better performance in academic English at secondary level than the rural students.	
b.	One's social position can affect one's academic performance in English.	

c.	One's family condition (economic) can affect one's academic performance in English.	
d.	Students coming from educated family have more chances to show better performance in Academic English.	
e.	Student's living environment can affect his Second language (English) learning.	
f.	Local and family culture can affect one's academic performance in English.	

7. Give a rating point (1, 2,3) in the right of the following suggestions:

(The most reasonable one will get rate 1, next one 2 etc.)

No.		Point
a.	For better performance in English qualified subject teachers are needed.	
b.	For better performance in English favorable school environment is essential.	
c.	For better performance in English extra tutor assistance in English is needed.	
d.	For better performance in English better family environment is needed.	
e.	For better performance in English personal effort is needed.	
f.	For better performance in English student's lifestyle should be improved.	

Section-C

8. What are your suggestions in reducing such difference in the different learners?

a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

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