

**USE OF LITERATURE IN DEVELOPING LEARNER'S SPEAKING SKILLS IN  
BANGLADESHI EFL CONTEXTS**

**By**

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***Bismillah-ir Rahman-ir Rahim***

**In the name of Allah (SWT), the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful**

***Rabbi Zidni Ilma***

**‘O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge’**

***- The Holy Qur’an***

**Surah Ta-Ha (Chapter 20), Verse 114.**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**ELT: English Language Teaching**

**SSC: Secondary School Certificate**

**EFL: English as a Foreign Language**

**NCTB: National Curriculum and Textbook Board**

**CG: Control Group**

**EG: Experimental Group**

**ELTIP: English Language Improvement Project**

**TESL: Teaching English as a Second Language**

**TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language**

**FLT: Foreign Literature Teaching**

**L1: Language One**

**L2: Language Two**

**'O' Level: Ordinary Level**

**CANCODE: The Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English**

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation arises from an attempt to answer the question whether it is possible to teach conversational skills through literature; and, if 'yes', how any benefit can be made accessible to both privileged and non-privileged sections of society. The stimulus for the present study derives from the view that, in order to develop the capacity of students in the EFL language class, the teaching of language should be taught using literary pieces and should move away from a teacher-centred approach towards a student-centred one.

Having used an activity-based and process-oriented integrated approach as a framework, the present study illustrates the impact of the proposed way of literature teaching in an EFL context, specifically in the context of Bangladesh. It is designed to encourage students to experience literary texts directly as a part of a process of meaning creation that develops their thought processes, imaginative faculties and interpretative skills and ultimately has a strong impact on their speaking ability. Such a systematic approach to literature teaching in developing learner's speaking skills, therefore, is likely to enable teachers to have a more student-centred classroom. The present study also utilises the devised teaching activities based on prediction initiating personal growth, in an actual teaching/learning context in a selected research environment and explores students' responses to the proposed approach.

The study groups involved in the research consist of two comparable groups: an experimental group (EG) and a control group (CG). The EG was exposed to the proposed teaching approach, whereas the CG followed the usual traditional teaching methods. The data for the study were gathered through interviews, questionnaires, observation sheets and field notes. Qualitative and quantitative investigation techniques were applied to the data and they were compared and contrasted for both the groups. The analyses of the data revealed significant differences between the groups in the nature of the students' responses to the teaching approaches. It was observed that there was a considerable relationship between the teaching methodologies employed in both classes, and levels of motivation, involvement and appreciation of the literary text under study and finally in the development in oral expression. The findings suggested that application of the teaching approach proposed by the study notably changed the classroom dynamics in a positive way.



TO MY BELOVED PARENTS

*Khaleda Begum*

and

*Mansurul Huq Khan*

for being extraordinarily patient, caring, understanding  
and for being there throughout

AND

TO THE MEMORY OF MY PRECIOUS

*Saad*

and

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Education, the prime ingredient of human resource development, is the basic requirement for the socio-economic transformation and advancement of a country. In the changing global scenario, the study of English plays a vital role in education and it is accepted that everyday English has a far-reaching effect on all areas of everyday life. It has thus become an important vehicle for technical collaboration, industrial development and the formation of international relationships, as Graddol and Meinhof argue:

The increasing use of English arises from complex economic, technological and social processes. It is seen by some as an inevitable consequence of economic globalisation, by others as a legacy of colonialism and imperialism – both at an individual level as well as that of nation-states (Graddol and Meinhof, 1999:1).

English is used as a *lingua franca* for global communication, and English, as an international language, has a worldwide presence. The speed of its spread is unprecedented. According to Hindmarsh (1978), English is so widely used because the world has opted for it to satisfy its needs. English is now represented in every continent, giving it the status of the ‘global language’. However the observation made by Graddol regarding the future of global English and in relation to the status of English as a foreign language is interesting:

The competitive advantage which English has historically provided its acquirers (personally, organisationally, and nationally) will ebb away as English becomes a near-universal basic skill. The need to maintain the advantage by moving beyond English will be felt more acutely (Graddol, 2006:15).

As a medium of global communication, English also gives easy access to the ever-expanding knowledge of science and technology, arts and education, innovations and discoveries. In fact, the most important books, papers, etc., are either written in English or translated into English immediately after publication in other languages. The global demand for proficiency in English becomes even greater with the Internet being available to increasing numbers of users. English, also a major language of the international labour market and business, has an occupational and professional purpose in helping people find employment in other countries. It is often found that potential workers, even with requisite knowledge and experience cannot

succeed in the competitive job market because they lack proper communication skills in English. Norton (2000) therefore, introduces the concept of *investment* instead of the term *motivation* to describe the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their desire to learn and practice it, with the expectation or hope to have a good return on that investment.

Under the present circumstances, Bangladesh, as an independent and developing nation, has to maintain her political, commercial and cultural relations with the rest of the world through the medium of a widely used international language. She also has to deal with many international organisations involved in various developmental programmes in the socio-economic, education, health and communication sectors. Therefore, in Bangladesh, it is no longer sufficient for a schoolteacher to produce a few star pupils in an English class, while the remainder are relegated to the ranks of those who have no aptitude for languages. More opportunities for business, travel, studies, jobs, etc., within the country and abroad have made it necessary to shift the emphasis towards teaching communicative abilities, especially conversational skills.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

In Bangladeshi contexts, for many years, traditional ways of teaching literature and also language have included either lecturing students or giving detailed information about the author or the period in which the text was produced. As a consequence, the teaching of English has traditionally been a teacher-centred process, a common variation of which involves the teacher giving instructions, explaining the text, and asking a long series of questions where students act as passive recipients, perhaps improving their skills to some extent, in note taking. Furthermore, in the traditional approach, students are presumed to have mastered the skills and abilities for reading literary texts and are expected to respond intuitively as native students would do. The consequence of practising this approach, as observed by Widdowson (cited in Maley, 1989:11), is a ‘pseudo-competence in which students learn to manipulate an ego-vocabulary of critical terms without understanding’.

Due to the undesirable effects of the teacher-centred approaches in the Bangladesh teaching/learning context, the necessity and urgency of equipping teachers with different teaching methodologies and the importance of having a more student-centred learning atmosphere have been voiced recently more often than ever before.

### ***1.1.1 Teachers and Students: Deficits and Requirements***

Teachers of English in both rural and urban areas in government schools are non-native speakers of English and have little or no exposure to native English speakers or countries. They have studied English for ten years during their school education where they too have been taught by non-native teachers of English, resulting in a varied attitude towards the subject. Most have no training in ELT (English Language Teaching) and the ones who have face knowledge transfer problems with their qualification. They tend to relapse into the old way of teaching, which is still used and promoted by many of their senior colleagues. They also become reluctant to make proper use of their training because they are scarcely supervised. As a result, they fail to impart effective and enjoyable teaching by arousing students' interest in the subject, and thus turn English into a dull and difficult subject on the curriculum.

Most teachers have the requisite level of proficiency in grammar, reading and writing. However, many of them confess that they lack proficiency and fluency in speaking in English. The fault, they maintain, lies in their own educational background because, in post-liberation Bangladesh, the decision to make Bengali the only official language affected the general standard of English. Most teachers claim that the lack of proficiency in English on the part of the students requires them to explain English lessons in Bengali. In practice, students do not actually have to understand much in the class. Their need is to memorise essays and paragraphs or answers to textual questions and to regurgitate them for written examinations. The more meticulously they can do it, the higher the marks they are awarded, determining better results, which is the sole aim of studying.

So, why should the students be asked to practice language skills, especially listening and speaking which are not tested in the public examinations? And even if they are asked, why should they waste their time when it does not affect their grades in examinations? The same question pertains to the study of literature in English classes. Students do not have to answer any questions based on the literary texts that they have in their syllabus, so why waste time on studying them at all?

Literature, at present, is not used as a resource and means of learning the language in English lessons. Moreover, when English is used in a class, it is used mostly by the teachers as a

language which is confined to the lesson only, and not as a language for ordinary communication. They think that if students understand the textbook contents through translating them into Bengali, they will be able to write answers in the English needed for their examinations. This is how English is being taught in most secondary schools. This improvised method, which can be called the traditional method, is based on grammar-translation and teaching by this method, year after year, becomes an easy, less time-consuming job for the teachers. The time thus saved is spent on giving private tuition in return for good fees, which again is targeted at only preparing the students for examinations. The essential objective of teaching and learning in English is thus suppressed due to the lack of initiative and effort.

In an unfavourable situation, where the English teacher explains everything in Bengali, the students are deprived of an opportunity of listening to and speaking in English in a natural situation. Moreover, there remains no need for them to read a text and attempt to understand it by themselves. The use of the mother tongue in English classes, therefore, may not facilitate practice in language skills but may rather result in poor performance in speaking, listening and reading skills and hence hinders learning the language.

### ***1.1.2 The Examination System***

Although the aim of evaluation under the existing system is to assess the learner's proficiency in using English in practical life, in reality, the system fails to measure the student's ability to use the language skills. Two skills – listening and speaking – are not tested at all in the primary and secondary levels, leaving the students and teachers demotivated to practise these. However, when they are tested at the tertiary level, only language structure and grammar is evaluated. If these skills are tested as part of a literature course, then only literary knowledge is assessed. Therefore, both of these methods of assessment encourage the learners to memorise formulaic expressions. Hence, there is no correspondence between the syllabus objectives and the students' performance. The remaining two skills, reading and writing, are also not tested properly. The students merely have to obtain 'marks', which are required for their further study and employment. As previously mentioned, students are expected to memorise textbook contents for the examinations. Thus language practice is being replaced by rote learning, thereby hindering the learners from acquiring language skills for communicative use. Owing to systems of

evaluation and grading policies, as Fisher and Terry (1982) observe, many teachers are inclined to place a higher value on written work than on oral work.

The present product-based, and teacher-centred approach to teaching strongly encourages students to memorise facts and recapture them in examinations. This normally lessens students' concern about how to use their knowledge to read for themselves or how to learn to interpret for potential meaning. The outcome is that most students tend to seek 'ancillary literature' (Carter and Long, 1991:43) that provides targeted answers to their examination requirements. The approach, therefore, results in testing students' ability to memorise, rather than their ability to appreciate what they have read and learned.

In English examination papers, 'paraphrase and content' questions, 'describe and discuss' questions and 'evaluate' questions are among the most frequently used types. The problem however lies not with the question types but with the expected answers, which do not demand use of interpretation of the text from diverse perspectives. As a result, despite the considerable amount of time devoted to English teaching, the general proficiency and achievement of the majority of learners graduating from schools remain unsatisfactory and disproportionately low. The condition of students obtaining English education from Madrasa (Islamic schools) is even more pitiable.

## **1.2 Chronology of Teaching of English in Bangladesh**

To have a better understanding of the background situation of teaching English in Bangladesh, it is useful to have knowledge of the chronological development of the language in this country.

### ***1.2.1 British Era (1600-1947)***

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the British colonial rulers firmly established English as a compulsory curriculum subject, by introducing English education in the Indian subcontinent. The purpose behind this was clear from Macaulay's confident statement made in his Minute of 1835 where he stated that introducing the English language was good imperial policy, because it would ultimately 'form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern - a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but



English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect' (cited in Khub Chandani, 1983:120). Since then, English has been an important component of the national curriculum of the countries in this part of the world including Bangladesh.

### ***1.2.2 East Pakistan Era (1947-1971)***

During the Pakistan period, as a legacy of British rule, English was an official language in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan). The well-educated, or even moderately educated, person had to use and communicate in English for official, professional, educational and other purposes in everyday transactions as is reiterated by Alam:

I was then an East Pakistani boy who used to go to a school where English was the medium of instruction and where Bengali was taught extremely inadequately and rather half-heartedly (Alam, 2002:123).

Alam, thus, points out that quite naturally such an education soon made him fluent in English and rather weak in his mother tongue, Bengali. This scenario was accepted by middle class society, who believed that this was as it should be, since the best jobs would go to people who were the most fluent in English. It was expected and accepted that family members would also speak with each other in a mixture of English and Bengali, providing an environment for one to become quite competent and accustomed to speaking in English. At that time English language classes introduced extracts from modern English prose pieces, while in English literature, students were exposed to Shakespeare, Dickens or Golding and some other canonical figures of the English tradition.

The competent users of English were the beneficiaries of the remnants of colonial schooling growing up in independent Pakistan. They included learners from Bengali medium schools who were also adequately efficient in their use of English and were taught through the traditional 'grammar-translation method'. The method worked at a time when people were using English for public correspondence and were reading and speaking English voluntarily and spontaneously without having the benefit of the 'communicative method' of language teaching. During the Pakistan period, English enjoyed the status of official language and was used in the administration, higher education and also as a link language between educated speakers of Bengali and Urdu.

### ***1.2.3 Bangladesh after 1971***

After the War of Liberation in 1971, the official status of the English language in independent Bangladesh changed to that of a foreign language. With the rise of linguistic nationalism English was marginalised in public life. It was no longer taught beyond intermediate level, except in the literature departments in the universities, and was rarely spoken in public or used in official correspondence. Bengali, being the official language, now became the language of everyday transaction.

As far as formal education was concerned, English was regarded as a foreign language (EFL) in the curriculum. Without the widespread use of English, and with a new generation of teachers coming to schools and colleges who had not read the language at an advanced level, English language teaching suffered and ultimately began to affect the new generation to a great extent. More recently, in changing circumstances, the importance of learning English has regained momentum in the education system of Bangladesh.

## **1.3 The Place of English in the National Curriculum**

English is taught as a compulsory subject for a period of twelve years during school and college education. All universities in the country (both public and private) have introduced the English paper in all degree courses. During this time, both course contents and teaching hours extend from one stage to another. It is also a required subject in the country's Madrasa curriculum from Grade Three and enjoys the same status up to Grade Fourteen. The National and Madrasa curricula are centrally designed and developed, and used in all government and private institutions.

### ***1.3.1 Institutions: Government and Private***

In Bangladesh educational institutions belong to both government and private sectors. Under the National Education Board, the mainstream government schools prepare students for the SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examination, after ten years of schooling. Many private schools also provide the opportunity of taking the 'O' Level (Ordinary level) examination conducted by The British Council.

Making the study of English effective as a foreign language, from classes One to Twelve, requires much input and resources, such as trained teachers, communicative learning materials and financial, infrastructural and management facilities. These resources, however, are not equally available in all the educational institutions of the country.

Due to difficult transportation in the rural areas, many children have to walk great distances to school. Moreover, most government schools lack some, or almost all, necessary resources. Children are encouraged to memorise grammarrules and textbook contents in order to pass the compulsory examination paper in English. Consequently, English as a subject appears unnecessary and burdensome to the majority of learners, who do not obtain much benefit from studying the language for twelve years.

The situation is different in cities and towns. Once admitted, students usually attend regularly as transportation is available, and emphasis is placed on attendance. Outside the government-funded institutions, there are innumerable English medium schools with their own curriculum. They import and/or adapt books from abroad. Most of the urban elite schools tend to place special emphasis on teaching English in order to equip their learners better for the future. However, these institutions are designed for the children of wealthy families.

Teachers in government schools, in general, tend to follow the practice of utilising class time more for teacher-centred activities such as informative background lectures, guided questions for the understanding of the text, reading the text (mostly aloud) in class, and writing text-related essays. In the classroom, grammatical and structural forms and formulaic expressions are taught mainly through language drills. Later similar questions are set in examination papers and the students are expected to remember the formulae they have learnt during their course and now just to be able to follow the method during the examinations. The teaching/learning, therefore, is targeted at producing answers to essay-type questions which usually do not demand any imaginative use of language, and are designed to meet requirements of examinations and not to meet the requirements of everyday encounters.

Thus, the inappropriate ways of teaching English in the government institutions would affect a huge number of learners who would face difficulty in coping with the language at later stages in their study and life. They would not be able to compete with the high achievers coming from the privately managed English medium stream, as learners coming from these

institutions would still stand better chances of getting better jobs and foreign scholarships for higher studies. As a result, as Price (1991) points out, unsuccessful language learners, deprived of upper class facilities, would have lower self-esteem. In real life, their unsuccessful attempts at learning English might cause a threat to self-esteem by depriving them of their normal means of communication, their freedom to make errors, and their ability to behave like others around them (Horwitz, 1988; Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). According to Oxford (1999), people who suffer from communication apprehension are more reluctant to converse or interact with others, ultimately showing a tendency to avoid communication or withdraw from it as soon as possible. Thus, non-proficiency in English would ultimately result in widening the gap between the privileged and underprivileged sections of society in terms of achievement, prosperity and success in life and in conclusion, the policy of giving equal opportunity to everyone in society would not be ensured.

### ***1.3.2 Attitudes towards English***

The learner's attitude towards English in Bangladesh is a paradox. Students are eager to learn the language but find certain aspects or skills very difficult. As a result, there is both eagerness and fear. A few years ago, I dealt with a group of learners from a secondary school. During the first lesson, when they were asked a simple question like 'What's your name?' most of them hesitated to answer because they suffered from doubt, anxiety and shyness, mainly a result of the lack of environment for practicing the language. Whenever they were asked to produce something in English, they were immediately engulfed by social anxiety which as pointed out by Leary (1983) included, speech anxiety, shyness, stage fright, embarrassment, social evaluative anxiety and communicative apprehension. As a result, in most cases, as Aida (1994) points out, students tend to fail to take the initiative or participate only minimally in conversations.

In the classroom, the tendency is to keep silent, responding only when forced, being passive and, worst of all, avoiding class entirely. Nevertheless, students in general, are not willing to have English, as a subject, removed from the syllabus. They all understand and acknowledge the need for English in the present world and view learning the language as an excellent means of social solidarity, and of educational and professional advancement.

## **1.4 Attitudes towards Literature**

A good education is one which gives a strong academic base, self-confidence, a keen sense of responsibility, a polished attitude and behaviour, and encouragement to think freely and challenge adversity. Most educators in Bangladesh believe that literature can help develop all these faculties in a student, in addition to developing their overall language competence.

In general, it is believed that the teaching of English basically involves the study of literature, and that an English curriculum without poems, short stories and other such creative writings is unthinkable. The study of certain classic pieces of English literature is considered a *sine qua non* for the truly educated person. English literature is a main four-year degree course subject in both the government and private universities; however, finding qualified teaching staff for English language and literature departments still remains one of the biggest problems for these universities.

### ***1.4.1 Teachers' Attitudes to Literature***

In the current English teaching scenario in Bangladesh, as pointed out by Alam (2002), on the one hand, ELT experts, trained by The British Council, began to decry the traditional 'grammar-translation method', and simultaneously promote the communicative methods of language learning. On the other, they began to criticise books containing literary extracts. The language experts' promotion of textbooks that would contain 'relevant' and culturally appropriate texts tailor-made for language learning seemingly persuaded the government.

In a language classroom, as projected by the experts, literature usually embodies 'a static, convoluted kind of language, far removed from the utterances of daily communication' (Collie and Slater, 1987:2). The notion that literary materials get in the way of 'real' language teaching covers communication with a wide range of functions, grammar with a greater or lesser emphasis on learning the rules, skills development according to needs, vocabulary acquisition and a range of social skills such as turn-taking, politeness strategies and similar forms of interactional awareness (McRae, 1991). These are largely mechanical and measurable areas, which are, of course, necessary foundations for learning a language. But the policy-makers and some teachers tend to forget that all these components could be well taught by proper use of literary texts. As a consequence, the point made by The British

Council and local ELT experts was that English literature had no place in language learning strategies, the curriculum, or the textbooks in the Bangladesh context.

Nonetheless, the educated section, and teachers in particular, who had been nurtured by literary masterpieces from childhood, could not help thinking how literature had benefited them. Despite the enthusiasm and the logic shown by ELT experts, many educators remembered the vibrant world of literature that had encouraged them to fall in love with the English language. To them, the argument that literary texts were remote from everyday lives did not appear to be a problem.

The problem with traditional literature classes in Bangladesh, however, is that teachers usually teach literature with a capital 'L', and basically think that it cannot be integrated into language teaching. The dedicated followers of the grammar-translation method say, as McRae (1991:23) points out, 'We don't teach literature', or, 'We don't use that kind of thing'. Both of these mentalities, as McRae (ibid.: 23) adds, however, tend towards 'restrictive schematisation of language learning', which is very close to the 'follow the textbook' mentality and goes directly contrary to the proposal made by Bassnett and Grundy (1993:1) which states that 'literature should be part of a complete language learning experience'. The teachers dealing with literature with a capital 'L' see themselves as authorities imparting information about the author, the background to the work, and the literary conventions that have been followed in a particular text.

Moreover, in Bangladeshi contexts, literature sometimes is regarded as 'carrying an undesirable freight of cultural connotations' (Collie and Slater, 1987:2). As pointed out by Dörnyei (2001), 'motivation to learn' is already a complex construct, and the picture becomes even more complicated when it comes to learning a second language (L2), because the mastery of an L2 is not merely an educational issue, but is also an event that requires the integration of elements of the L2 culture. As a result, Gardner points out:

...the student's harmony with his own cultural community and his willingness or ability to identify with other cultural communities become important considerations in the process of second language acquisition (Gardner, 1979:193-4).

Learning a foreign language, therefore, is different to learning other subjects because the learning of an L2 involves, according to Williams (1994:77), 'an alternation in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has a

significant impact on the social nature of the learner'. So, in many cases, the teacher would try to avoid using literary texts which have implications of cultural imperialism, and would rather prefer materials that reflect a neutral and more functional kind of English.

#### ***1.4.2 Students' Attitudes to Literature***

Bangladeshi students in general are interested in and do read short stories, poems, novels, dramas, etc., enthusiastically, their motivation being:

- Cultural (out of interest, for personal or study reasons)
- Social (elitism, one-upmanship, 'have you read...?')
- Educational (education for life)
- Self-centred (for pleasure, enjoyment, entertainment, etc.)

Moreover, learners also read literary texts in order to become more familiar with the different patterns of social interaction and behaviour in the country of origin of the literary piece in the target language. Such keenness towards literature is usually the result of self-motivation, rather than of carefully planned and successful teaching. Self-motivation should not be undervalued in a context such as Bangladesh. Practically speaking, many people who can converse in English are able to do so mainly from their own reading and making use of the opportunities available to them.

#### **1.5 A Proposal for an Alternative Approach**

Keeping literature and language far apart, as entirely two different spheres, however, has produced a certain amount of unease and has also proved non-effective when the question of using the language arises. The undesirability of the effects of the traditional approach to English teaching, therefore, argues strongly for an alternative approach, an approach that will help learners acquire the language with interest.

This study is, therefore, undertaken in order to propose a rationale for introducing more literary texts in the English classroom, and also to propose an alternative approach to the teaching of literary texts in developing learners' thinking and speaking skills in Bangladeshi EFL contexts. It is argued that the introduction of more literary pieces into the language classroom would enhance the learner's motivation, thinking skill, imagination and language awareness which would eventually lead to an improved speaking ability. The aim is to make

the learners confident about handling the text; to enjoy it without being traumatised about the piece as something distant, and its language too literary.

The approach is learner-centred, topics and theme based, with activities based on prediction, initiating personal growth. It makes use of prediction activity in order to enhance communication in the hope of leading the students to have a more complete interpretation and appreciation of the text and also to enable teachers of literature to have more student-centred classes. It is argued that an approach comprising prediction based activities would be a more effective methodology and would contribute in generating language awareness and developing independent and critical learners. This, it is hoped would change the classroom dynamics in a positive way in terms of learner confidence, motivation, autonomy and output.

The present study is conducted in a genuine teaching context in Bangladesh and takes place in a city-based government school with standard resources available and with students belonging to the middle-lower class. The study includes recorded data obtained through questionnaire survey, interviews and some class observations. The classroom observation is conducted among two comparable groups - the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG). The CG is exposed to the traditional way of literature teaching, whereas the EG undergoes the proposed methodology of teaching. As there has scarcely been any exhaustive research into classroom use of the aforementioned approach in EFL situations, the present study aims to be empirical and would examine the possible effects of approaching literature in a different way. It would also investigate the students' and teachers' attitudes towards the proposed approach.

In the light of the collected and recorded data, it would be argued that the new approach based on prediction activity initiating imagination and interpretation, thus promoting learners' thinking and speaking skills, is both effective and appropriate. It is hoped that this approach to teaching literature will be able to contribute towards the achievement of having a pedagogical sophistication needed in creative language awareness, in order to develop students' confidence in engaging with texts, and making their own efforts and interpretations.

The study is however, conducted in a short time frame with a limited sample. Exhaustive study with a wide range of sample data would help in reaching more definitive conclusions. There are too many variables to control to get completely unbiased data, which sometimes become very difficult in such time bound study.



### ***1.5.1 Research Questions***

The study aims to address the following primary questions:

1. What are the experiences of Bangladeshi students with respect to English literature and their opinions on teaching strategies for literature used by their teachers?
2. What are the teachers' objectives, teaching strategies and methodologies in literature teaching in Bangladeshi EFL classes?
3. What are the students' and teachers' opinions about speaking skills in English and the standard of spoken English, in general?
4. Do the learners need/want to speak in English? What do they identify as the plus points /limitations that help develop/impece their achievement in speaking?
5. What are the views of the students and teachers regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills'?
6. How do students respond to the approach proposed by the study? What is the reaction of the experimental group teacher in this regard?
7. How does the proposed teaching approach affect classroom dynamics?

A few secondary research questions, which would also be addressed during the course of the study, are as follows:

- A. How about dealing with any 'literature', not only with those prescribed (before and after the treatment classes)?
- B. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of the students for learning literature and becoming confident in using the language orally?
- C. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of the teachers in teaching literature?
- D. What are the factors that could change the existing negative atmosphere from both students' and teachers' perspectives?

### **1.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has identified and discussed some areas of concern, including those of spoken skills being neglected, the improper use of literary texts and of the textbook, together with problems concerning teachers, the examination system and teaching methodology. The

chapter has also presented some research questions, which would form the basis of investigation in later chapters. The present study aims to address the issues identified in this chapter with evidence supported by research findings and to suggest recommendations based on the findings.

## **1.7 Organisation of the Chapters of the Study**

The present study consists of six chapters. Chapter One presents a brief introduction by stating the rationale, scope and background of the study and explaining the organisation of the chapters.

Chapter Two presents a review of the relevant literature. It discusses the theoretical framework underlying this study and gives background information about different approaches to literature teaching. It also gives an overview of the advantages that literature offers in foreign language teaching and learning.

Chapter Three suggests a pedagogical framework for the teaching of literary texts in the Bangladesh EFL context with the main aim of developing the learner's speaking skills. The proposed teaching framework is also applied to the teaching of one short story.

In Chapter Four a description of the research context, the participants, and data collection instruments and data collection procedure is introduced.

Chapter Five presents the results and discussion of both descriptive and quantitative data on students' and teachers' responses to both the traditional and the proposed teaching approach, generated through interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation sheets.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, Chapter Six, a brief overview of the findings is presented and discussed in relation to the stated research questions. The chapter also discusses the strengths and limitations of the study and the implications of the findings. Suggestions for further research are also discussed in this chapter together with recommendations that could improve the current situation of English language teaching in Bangladesh.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this part of the study, an attempt will be made to review related literature with regard to literature teaching in an EFL context, with particular reference to Bangladeshi contexts. First, the current teaching situation, in terms of English language teaching, the place of literature at the secondary level, and approaches to literature teaching are indicated. Then there is a discussion on different approaches to literature in general, aiming at identifying the relevant ones, the incorporation of which are thought to be a possible remedy. This is in order to ensure an improved language teaching atmosphere, with special emphasis on improved speaking skills through the use of literature in the EFL classes in Bangladesh.

The present teaching methodology and examination system in Bangladesh focuses on the use of referential language and developing reading and writing skills and does not test learners' speaking abilities. The review directly relates to the Bangladesh situation regarding the position of English, and the necessity of reintroducing literary pieces in the classroom with the view that they help develop learners' language efficiency and proficiency in speaking the target language.

#### 2.1 Teaching English at the Secondary Level in the Bangladesh EFL Context

The revised syllabus for Secondary and Higher Secondary Certificate Examination 2004, set by the National Syllabus and Curriculum Committee, mentions:

This syllabus aims to provide clear comprehensive guideline for teachers, students and all those who are concerned with the teaching and learning of English from Classes 9-10. In itself, however, a syllabus cannot ensure that communicative teaching and learning takes place in the classroom. It can only provide a set of criteria which, if properly implemented, would give the best possible chance for that to happen (2001:43).

This statement validates the actual classroom methodology that is being practised in government schools. The syllabus further indicates that the purpose of learning English is to acquire language skills, not to learn about any particular topic or to *study literature*. Regarding vocabulary, it indicates that word meaning should be defined in relation to use

within specific contexts. Students' attention should therefore be focused more on actual meaning, within particular contexts, than on potential meaning (s) as provided in dictionaries. With regards to poetry, this should be read mainly for enjoyment, understanding and practice of rhythm and stress. It should be borne in mind, however, that since poems do not involve communication, in the sense of responsive interchange, their employment in the language classroom should be limited.

In the section on introducing dialogues and drama, the syllabus mentions that dialogues and drama provided in natural informal speech are mainly for pair practice. A certain amount of memorising might be useful and valid here, especially because practising dialogue is one of the most natural and effective ways of practising spoken language within meaningful contexts. For teaching 'literature', the teacher is advised not to follow any particular method, but should encourage problem solving and creativity in class.

Apart from this compulsory course, there is a further course entitled 'Advanced English Language and Literature', which includes prose, poems and plays. In Bangladesh, textbooks at the rate of one title per class are produced centrally by the NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Board) and are used by all the mainstream schools. Students are required to prepare themselves bearing in mind that the ultimate goal is passing the school graduation examination.

The specific skill-related objectives of teaching spoken English at the secondary level as envisaged by the NCTB are that students should be able to:

- give a series of instructions and commands;
- express opinions and explain what they have read and written;
- tell narrative and descriptive stories and talk about themselves and
- speak intelligibly in clear, correct English appropriate to the situations.

### ***2.1.1 The Textbook for Classes Nine and Ten***

The textbook, 'English for Today', used in classes Nine and Ten, is divided into twenty-two units. Units Sixteen and Twenty have some literature. Unit Sixteen is entitled 'Let's Enjoy

Poetry’ with six poems by James Reeves, Charles Kingsley, William Wordsworth, Alfred Tennyson, Robert Frost and William Shakespeare. Activity types include some general warm-up pre-reading questions that require simple answers, reading aloud in groups of four to five with correct stress and pronunciation, and reading silently in order to answer questions based on the text. Post-reading activities include text-based short question and answers, writing compositions, matching pictures with description, writing dialogues on the imagined situation, and students interviewing each other to find out general information and to initiate discussion.

Unit Twenty, ‘Myths and Fables’, contains three stories, *The Fisherman and the Genie*, *Snow White*, and *The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse*. Activities are the same as for the poems, with the addition of role play, agreement or disagreement with statements giving reasons and examples for the choice made, free-writing and continuing the story line, ending in the way that the student wishes. To quote the chairman, NCTB:

[‘English for Today’] has been developed by English Language Improvement Project (ELTIP). 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, dialogue, pictures, diagrams, tasks and activities. These materials have been designed and developed for learners’ practice in the four basic language skills. As a result, classes are expected to be interactive with students participating actively in the classroom activities, through pair work, group work, as well as individual work.

... Also adequate grammar elements have been integrated with language skills so that the elements taught and learned in situations can be easily transferred to real life use and just not memorised as discrete items. It is expected that, if used properly, the book will facilitate learning English through various enjoyable skill-practice activities.

According to its preface (no pagination), it was ‘developed’ by ‘a team of writers trained in the UK’ for well over a year as part of the ELTIP. The preface also mentions that the book includes ‘some literary texts but emphasises that they are there not merely because of the strength of their content but are designed to exploit the texts to trigger a variety of language activities.’

### **2.1.2 A Critical Analysis of the Textbook: ‘English for Today’**

This, then, is the ‘state of the art’ ELT textbook, which contains mostly non-literary as well as a few English literary texts utilised appropriately for teaching English at Grades Nine and Ten in Bangladesh. However, as questioned by Alam (2002), how effective is it? Moreover,

what is to prevent examiners from setting questions that will test language skills and permit students to discuss, in English, issues relating to many practical issues, that could be explored, through literary pieces? He also questions what possible reasons could prevent the writers of 'English for Today' from devising more thought-provoking questions that would make students think of the dynamics of language in a literary text. Alam also observes that one key ingredient missing in the textbook is humour, and according to him, 'what can be a better way of applying the communicative method in language teaching than enlivening the classroom and relaxing learners through laughter?' (ibid.: 133). Finally Alam comments that the textbook represents 'an opportunity wasted and that a new kind of linguistic imperialism is embodied in the pedagogy and policies evident in the text and its exercises' (ibid.: 135).

As already discussed, the recent trend in communicative teaching in Bangladesh and the aims and objectives of NCTB syllabus only talk about the arguments of the 'experts' who promote the referential use of language, arguing that what students need in Bangladesh is to perform some functions. However, Carter and McCarthy (1995:309) note that the communicative approach to language teaching tends to highlight 'transactional uses of language (for example - the transactions of information, goods, and services) at the expense of interactional uses (i.e. for the creation and reinforcement of social relationships)'.

Although, the 'experts' appear to be quite sure that literature should be banished from the language classroom, it is, nevertheless, evident that the learners, when required, are unable to use the language with confidence. In real life, they obviously face a variety of different linguistic responses, but are often limited to using a couple of memorised statements that they have learnt from the course books. These textbooks generally provide examples of usable referential language, which students are encouraged to adopt, follow and manipulate in a given series of contexts or situations. In such a situation, however, the learners' powers of imagination and interpretation seem to be blocked at some point, which results in poor expression or no expression at all in real life situations. As McRae (1991) points out, language is used for much more than simply conveying information. The absence of imaginative content limits the learners' imaginative involvement with the target language and leads to a one-dimensional learning achievement. Generally, the learners may show the ability to negotiate some communicative/grammatical formulaic expressions in order to gain the requisite marks in written examinations, and to feel satisfied with such an achievement.

## **2.2 Achievement of the Aims and Objectives**

The dominant aim of the curriculum is to promote the learners' communicative competence. However, in reality, when it comes to achieving this aim, this communicative ideal too often vanishes and the teacher falls back upon a more traditional classroom role in which s/he sees her/himself as imparting information.

The National Syllabus and Curriculum Committee has also specified that the English language syllabus aims to focus on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are some activities on listening and speaking in 'English for Today'. However, as seen from the marks distribution on each paper, it is clear that there are no marks allotted to test these two skills in the examination, and therefore, in the classroom the skills are rarely practised. In reality, teachers are more focused on teaching reading, translation and writing, as these are the exam-oriented skills (Hoque et al., 1997).

Most teachers fail to recognise that the imaginative function of language is as important as the referential one. As Fisher and Terry (1982) point out, the teachers pay scant attention to the development of language in all its models or functions but just focus on the referential function. Moreover, the language skills and functions are also not properly practised, as there is hardly any situation, especially in rural areas, where English can be genuinely used. As a result, the study of English turns mainly into the study of the language forms – not as a means to an end but as an end in itself. The students learn the textbook contents without understanding what they mean. Their sole aim is to pass the compulsory examination papers in English in a situation, where marks are regarded as an opening to better possibilities and where students who get higher marks in different papers are treated as the meritorious ones. In other words, merit is equated with marks, which are given for memorised answers to the questions on the textbook contents. They, however, fail to realise that all these marks and grades are but pseudo-successes and achievements, and that they only pose hindrances to acquiring language skills for communicative use.

Teachers in government schools depend solely on the textbook contents and methodology for teaching English, and they have almost no choice in selecting textbooks for their classes. Again, for students, there are hardly any supplementary reading materials to reinforce the knowledge and skills they attempt to learn from their textbooks. Therefore, for both teachers

and students, the textbook is the only means of teaching and learning English. Moreover, lack of incentive and time also create difficulties in using the existing available materials in the best possible way. According to McRae (1991), the teacher who follows any course-book slavishly will inevitably bore him- or herself - as well as the students. The excuse of 'getting through the book by the end of the course' (ibid.: 23), is one of the most counterproductive and openly anti-learning attitudes and encourages rote learning at the expense of communicative use of the language.

### 2.3 Problems in Speaking

As observed by Bygate (1987: vii), 'Speaking is in many ways an undervalued skill... which deserves attention.' In the present circumstances, the students are able to read works in the original English version, but unfortunately are hesitant to ask for a glass of water in the language. Most language teachers agree that to get the students talking is both most difficult but also most satisfying.

Moreover, as pointed out by Wilkins (cited in Bygate,1987:6), when classroom activity is determined by the teacher, 'we are protecting [the learner] from the additional burden of having to make his own choices' resulting in the learner not being 'able to transfer his knowledge from a language-learning situation to a language-using situation'. The difference between '*knowledge*' about a language and '*skill*' in using it, as noted by Bygate (1987:3), is crucial in the teaching of speaking.

As discussed before, over-emphasis on rote-learning, grammatical correctness and translation skills in studying a foreign language may make the learner begin to experience language anxiety, with giving up as the most frequent reaction, rather than taking remedial steps. According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), language anxiety is fear or apprehension occurring when the learner is expected to perform in the foreign language. They also suggest that the strongest (negative) correlate of language achievement is anxiety and that one of the effects of this negative correlation is in the performance of speaking and writing tasks and in self-confidence in language learning.

In addition, there prevail some deep-rooted beliefs on the part of learners as well as the teacher, such as that in the classroom the teacher should be authoritarian rather than the



facilitator, and must correct every single error. Nonetheless, strict adherence to accuracy in any language use often prevents its users from communicating easily with others, which can also lead to language anxiety on the part of the learners (Young, 1991). Moreover, as observed by Oxford et al., (1991), harsh error correction, ridicule and the uncomfortable handling of mistakes in front of fellow students are among the most important teacher-learner interaction issues related to language anxiety. Teacher-student learning style conflicts have been shown to relate to lower grades for students, contributing stress and tension in the classroom.

If the speakers always think about the correct use of the verb forms, tenses, words and expressions, etc., while they are speaking, it is difficult for them to remain natural and spontaneous, thus fluency in speaking is inhibited and impaired. Possibly, that is why competent users of the mother tongue in real life may not always be grammatically correct, but nevertheless will speak naturally, fluently and communicate well. Therefore, the best way of using a foreign language may be to attempt to be fluent for the sake of natural communication, at the same time trying to avoid serious grammatical mistakes that may prevent or impede communication.

#### **2.4 A Definition of 'Literature'**

Traditionally, literature (with a large L) is defined as the 'best' writing produced in a given language or society and that which is considered as a literary canon for all times. This normally includes 'classical' writers belonging to the past, and often excludes contemporary writing. However, in the post-modern, deconstructionist age, the definition of literature took on a new shape to include texts such as advertising copy, graffiti and public notices which use literary devices like parallelism, rhyme, rhythm and metaphor (Maley, 2001). These are thought to be appropriate and relevant in the classroom because of their use of literary devices. They are considered to be worth interpretation, and more relevant than the canonical texts which sometimes pose difficulty for the students, because of the nature of language used. Therefore, literature now encompasses popular fiction, advertising and film in order to make the whole teaching/learning process more attractive and interesting. According to Scholes:

What students need from us...is the kind of knowledge and skill that will enable them to make sense of their worlds, to determine their own interests, ... to see through the manipulations of all sorts of texts in all sorts of media, and to express their own views in some appropriate manner (Scholes 1985:15-16).

However, a definition of 'literature' is not a homogeneous one. There remain problems in defining the term, especially once the socio-historical and cultural factors are considered. As pointed out by Williams, (1976:183): 'Literature' is a difficult word, in part because its conventional contemporary meaning appears, at first sight, so simple.' By the late twentieth century, 'literature' as a concept and as a term, has become problematic, either through ideological symbol of the high culture 'Canon', or, conversely, through demystification by radical critical theory. Therefore, as pointed out by Eagleton (1976:166), it is now a state when 'Literature must indeed be re-situated within the field of general cultural production; but each mode of such production demands a semiology of its own, which is not conflatable with some universal "cultural" discourse'.

The word 'literature' in itself can be used in a number of ways. As observed by Widdowson (1999), however, in normal usage, a distinction tends to be drawn and signalled by the fact that when reference is made to critical, theoretical or promotional literature, there is a tendency to put the definite article in front of the word, whereas, to refer to 'literary' writings, the use of definite article is left out. Again, 'Literature' with an upper-case 'L' and within inverted commas signifies the idea of that global body of literary writing which has been recognised with Matthew Arnold's famous utterance, as quoted in Widdowson (ibid: 4) – 'the best that has been known and said in the world'.

The modern Western concept of literature became securely established at the same time as the appearance of the modern research university that is commonly identified with the founding of the University of Berlin around 1810 (Miller, 2002). The sense of literature was strongly shaped by the university-trained writers so to shape citizens by giving them knowledge of the best that is known and thought in the world. Literature has thus been credited the highest achievement of aesthetic and moral merit, and has acquired the status of a universal resource of form and ethical modes for human kind. There are also collocations of such authors and texts as constituting 'The Classics', 'The (Great) Tradition' 'The Canon', and the standard 'Set authors/Books' on all secondary and tertiary education syllabuses. On the other hand, 'literature' with small 'l' and no inverted commas is used either in a neutral

discursive capacity, or to represent the writings which are 'literary' in the sense that they identify themselves quite self-consciously as belonging to the artificial discursive realm of 'creative' or 'imaginative' writing as opposed to the other, more quotidian forms of written communication (Widdowson, 1999).

Although, apparently there is not much difficulty in phrases such as 'English literature' or 'contemporary literature', until the question regarding whether all books and writing are 'literature' and what are the criteria set in selecting are raised. Widdowson (1999:8) elaborates the problematic areas in definitions of 'literature', definitions that have made entries in pioneering encyclopaedias and references. For example, the entry on 'literature' in The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia, reads: 'a body of written works. The name is often applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the excellence of their execution'. The distinction between 'literature' and 'drama' also poses problems, apparently because drama is a form primarily written for spoken performance.

The above definition introduces the notion of 'imagination' as the defining characteristic of 'literary' writing and discriminates in favour of those writings 'distinguished by the intentions of their authors'. The argument does not make it clear how an author's intention 'distinguishes' a work as literature. Widdowson adds that although it may seem natural for one to think that some works may be better than others, the problem is, however, that the 'canonising process is cognate with the discourse of evaluation: the criteria are imprecise, unexplained, tacitly assumed, and thoroughly naturalised' (ibid.:8).

Moreover, the reasons given for the received canon rely, on notions of 'beauty of form', 'emotional effect', 'artistic merit', and on the judgement of those who can 'recognise' these qualities when they see them. Once again, the criteria of identifying a canon is self-selecting, *given* – whereas, in reality, it is historically constructed on behalf of some powerful and resolute ideological imperatives. The questions regarding *who* constructed the canon, *when* and for *whom*, on *what* criteria and to *what* ends, readily destabilise the notions of 'Literature', 'canon', and 'literary value' (ibid: 13). This is supported and as pointed out by Eagleton (1983:11) that a literary work or tradition can not be valuable 'in itself' because the term 'value' itself is a transitive term equating to whatever is valued by certain people in specific situations, according to particular criteria and in the light of given purposes. It is thus quite possible that, through a transformation of history, in the future there may be the

emergence of a society which will get nothing at all out of Shakespeare. His works, full of styles of thought and feeling may simply seem desperately unfamiliar, limited or irrelevant to that society making him no more valuable than much present-day graffiti.

From a historical perspective, as noted by Williams (1976), the term 'literature' came into English from 14<sup>th</sup> century, in the sense of polite learning through reading. A man of 'literature' equated to a man of wide reading. Literature, corresponded mainly to the modern meaning of literacy meaning both an ability to read and a condition of being well-read. The general sense of 'polite learning', steadily attached to the idea of printed books, was laying the basis for the later specialization. Colet as cited in Williams (ibid), in sixteenth century, distinguished between 'literature' and what he called 'blotterature' – referring to books which were below the standards of polite learning.

However, Miller (2002) adds that the word comes from a Latin stem and cannot be detached from its Roman-Christian-European roots. Literature in a modern sense, however, appeared in the European West and began in the late seventeenth century, at the earliest. Even a definition of 'literature' as including memoirs, history, collections of letters, learned treatises, etc., as well as poems, printed plays, and novels, comes after the time of Samuel Johnson's dictionary (1755). The restricted sense of literature as just poems, plays, and novels is even more recent. From eighteenth century, the term 'literary' was extended beyond its equivalence to 'literate': probably first in the general sense of well-read but from mid-eighteenth century to refer to the practice and profession of writing: 'literary merit' (Goldsmith in Williams, 1976); 'literary reputation' (Johnson in Williams, 1976). This appears to be closely connected with the heightened self-consciousness of the profession of authorship, in the period of transition from patronage to the bookselling market. Yet 'literature' and 'literary', in these new senses, still referred to the whole body of books and writing; or if distinction was made it was in terms of falling below the level of polite learning rather than of particular kinds of writing. All works within the scope of polite learning came to be described as 'literature' and all such interests and practices as 'literary'.

The idea of a 'Nationallitteratur' developed in Germany from the 1770s. The sense of 'a nation' having 'a literature' is a crucial social and cultural, probably also political, development (Williams, 1976:185). As noted by Miller (2002) literature is associated with the gradual rise of almost universal literacy in the West. Literacy, furthermore, is associated

with the gradual appearance from the seventeenth century onward of Western-style democracies that allowed citizens more or less free access to printed materials and to the means of printing new ones although, this freedom has never been complete, with its various forms of censorship. However, according to Miller, literature as a Western cultural institution, is a special, historically conditioned form of literature in the sense that it is a universal aptitude for words or other signs to be taken as literature.

The attempt to trace a class of writing to be specialised as 'literature', however, has proved difficult just because it is incomplete. In relation to the past, 'literature' is still a relatively general word with a steady distinction and separation of other kinds of writing – philosophy, essays, history, and so on – which may or may not possess 'literary merit' or be of 'literary interest'. Although, they may be 'well-written', still may not normally be described as 'literature'.

As pointed out by Williams (1976), teaching of literature usually includes poems, plays and novels; other kinds of 'serious' writing are described as 'general' or 'discursive'. There is also 'literary criticism' – judgement of how a ('creative' or 'imaginative') work is written – as distinct, often, from discussion of 'ideas' or 'history' or 'general subject-matter'. However, most poems and plays and novels are not seen as 'literature' as they fall below the old distinctive feature of literature, of 'polite learning'. Therefore, they are not substantial or important enough to be called 'works of literature'.

Nevertheless, the major shift represented by the modern complex of 'literature', 'art', 'aesthetic', 'creative' and 'imaginative' is a matter of social and cultural history. 'Literature' itself must be seen as a late medieval and Renaissance isolation of the skills of reading and of the qualities of the book; this was much emphasised by the development of printing. Then 'literature' was specialized towards 'imaginative writing', within the basic assumptions of Romanticism. It is interesting to note that it was, primarily, poetry, defined in 1586 as 'the arte of making...to express the very faculty of speaking or wryting Poetically' (in Williams, 1976:187). The specialization of 'poetry' to metrical composition is evident from mid seventeenth century, although this specialization of 'poetry' to verse, together with the increasing importance of prose forms such as the novel, made 'literature' the most available general word. It had behind it the Renaissance sense of 'litterae humanae', mainly to distinguish between the secular from religious writing. 'Poetry' had been the high skills of

writing and speaking in the special context of high imagination. 'Literature' in its nineteenth century sense, repeated this, though excluding speaking. However, it still remains problematic, not only because of the further specialization to 'imaginative' and 'creative' subject-matter (as distinct from 'imaginative' and 'creative' writing) but also because of the new importance of many forms of writing for speech. For example, books and writings meant for broadcasting which the specialization to books seemed by definition to exclude.

However, in recent years the terms 'literature' and 'literary' have been increasingly challenged, on what is conventionally their own ground, by concepts of 'writing' and 'communication'. Moreover, in relation to this reaction, 'literary' has acquired two unfavourable senses, as belonging to the printed book or to past literature rather than to active contemporary writing and speech; or as (unreliable) evidence from books rather than 'factual enquiry'. This latter quality touches the whole difficult complex of the relations between 'literature' (poetry, fiction, imaginative writing) and 'real' or actual experience. The term 'literary' has also been a term of criticism in discussion of certain other arts, notably painting and music, where the work in its own medium is seen as inadequately autonomous, and as dependent on 'external' meanings of a 'literary' kind.

However, in an attempt to 'demystify' literature, McRae (1991:2-3), differentiates between 'referential' language, which communicates on the informative level only, and 'representational' language, which engages the imagination of the reader. He defines a literary text as any imaginative material that stimulates a response in the reader, including songs, cartoons, idioms and proverbs.

According to Halliday (1985), the text as an expression of experience can be the closest definition of 'literature', and if readers can identify with events or characters and project themselves into them imaginatively, then a certain truth to experience can be created. Carter and Long (1991) suggest that the imaginative and truthful re-creation of experience is often taken to be a distinguishing characteristic of established literary texts and to Halliday (1985:98), 'Learning is essentially a process of constructing meanings...involving cognition and interpretation'. Literature, a reflection of reality and of life, could have plural interpretations as individual experiences. Bearing this point in mind, the present study will attempt to assess the reaction of students to a story when they are given a chance to make use of their schemata, imagination and interpretative skills.

### ***2.4.1 Literature: Conventional Uses***

Traditionally in Europe, and also in Asia, the speech and writing of educated people was and still is furnished with direct quotations from older authors, and with an imitation of their styles. Until recent times the teaching of literature in foreign language classes was an activity whose role was assumed to be obvious. Literature was a fundamental part of English as a subject in the classroom in the 'Classical Humanist' paradigm, considered as presenting high culture and thought, which took precedence over mere competence in using the language. For a long period in many parts of the world including Bangladesh, literature remained integral to the teaching of the language.

Within the period of the grammar-translation method of teaching language, the role of literature was unquestioned. Literature was regarded as the highest form of expression of the target language and did not seem to pose a problem on the learner's part when it came to language learning, especially during the days of pre-liberation Bangladesh (1.2.2).

Maley (1989) however, points out that literature had lost favour with those who write 'about' teaching, with the structural/functional syllabus branding literature as elitist, remote, deviant and not authentic. After liberation, the place of literary texts in the language teaching arena seemed to take a new turn in Bangladeshi classrooms, and has tended to have a capital 'L', leading to the neglect of its necessity and usefulness. It was no longer handled properly and students, as pointed out by Widdowson (1975, 1992) and by others, were usually exposed to literary texts with the pre-formed idea that they already knew how to deal with them, often resulting in demotivation and, at times, in a kind of pseudo-literary competence (1.1). In most cases, the students were being fed ideas and opinions held by others, which they were expected to memorise, without having much chance to develop their own. However, both Collie and Slater (1987) and Carter and Long (1991) warn of the danger of encouraging memorising, without understanding, and of using demotivating mechanistic language activities in place of a genuine engagement with the work.

### ***2.4.2 A Rationale for the Integration of Literature in Language Classes***

Teaching of literature and/or using literature as a resource in an EFL situation, seems to have initiated arguments both for and against, with the undeniable fact that the themes and

contents literature encompasses are in most cases easily usable, and actually common around the world. These claims will be addressed in the present study.

With the TESL/TEFL (Teaching English as a Second Language/Teaching English as a Foreign Language) profession developing, the demand for English shifted to the mass production of large numbers of functionally competent users of the language, rather than focusing on a scholarly elite. Moreover, an emphasis on the spoken language challenged the place of literature in the teaching of English (Carter and Long, 1991). However, placing literature backstage as irrelevant, for practical purposes, resulted in a debate between the ardent supporters of literature, and the devotees of structural functions of linguistics. According to Bassnett and Grundy (1993), the division, which has arisen between the teaching of literature and the teaching of language, is an unhappy and false one.

When considering literature as a resource in language learning, it is useful to make a distinction between 'referential' and 'representational' language. According to McRae (1991:3), 'Where referential language informs, representational language involves'. Referential language communicates usually in terms of information and is almost exclusively limited to everyday situational and social use. On the other hand, representational language is concerned with the receiver's engagement in imagination while in decoding the meaning. It also opens up, calls upon, stimulates and uses creative/imaginative areas of the mind. Kramersch (1993) adds that referential texts are essential vehicles for conveying information, whereas representational texts require the reader to re-create in his or her own terms the imaginative world of the text.

Conventionally, much language teaching is usually devoted to the language used in the process of reporting, i.e. to be able to narrate events, describe situations and people. However, in practice language is used as much to *do* things, as it is simply to *inform*. One could learn a phrase book by heart in order to carry out the functional aspects of a language, yet one may not be able to speak/use the language appropriately. The materials that are used in language teaching are traditionally referential. The reader is seen here as the 'recipient' of information or as an empty vessel who brings nothing to the text. However, the notion of 'text as object' is somewhat like a one-way traffic system in which everything flows in one direction only. This notion is now frequently discredited in reading circles, as readers cannot



be entirely passive, and in more recent times, a gradual rehabilitation of literature in the arena of language teaching has been noticed.

According to Long (1986), current textbooks for language learning work in a monologic mode, whereas literary texts would be inherently more dialogic. Moreover, he notes that the language learning text allows mainly for the asking of what he calls 'lower-order questions' that test comprehension without engaging learners with the text in a meaningful way. In contrast, literary texts would allow them to ponder over 'the reason for a particular combination of words, and an appreciation of their special quality' (ibid.: 45). Long also argues that:

...Literature is by definition authentic text, and both verbal response and activity response are genuine language activities, not ones contrived around a fabricated text. Moreover, current methodology – for 'communicative' language teaching – favours group activities and language–learner interaction. Prediction, creating a scenario, debating topics on or around a text... all seem to develop naturally out of a literature text, while they are either difficult or impossible with the type of text favoured by 'English for Specifics Purposes' (Long, 1986:58).

Long thus concludes that literature could be of immense benefit for language teaching because of the way it could 'create a feeling for language' by engaging the student fully and uniquely.

Brumfit and Carter (1986) also stress that the materials to be used in language teaching should be capable of having interesting, enjoyable, and stimulating effects on the learner. In the introduction they quote Littlewood, in order to make a major distinction between 'the possibly static and unquestionable reality of the informational text' and 'the fluid, dynamic reality' of the literary text (ibid.: 14-15). A literary text is able to grip the reader's imagination allowing simultaneously for the examination of language at work and also 'for genuine opportunities in group work and /or open-ended exploration by the individual student' (ibid.: 15). However, Brumfit and Carter also point out that using literary texts in ELT situations could be alienating and would need 'due contextualisation to social, historical, biographical, and political background to text study' (ibid.: 20).

One of the strongest claims for using literature in FLT (Foreign Language Teaching) has been made by Widdowson (1979) who comments that literary pieces can assist students in the development of the sense-making procedures, which are required for the interpretation of

any discursial context. According to Widdowson, a text presents meaning potential, encouraging multifarious interpretations, which is achieved through the interaction between reader and writer. The reader's understanding of the text will be conditioned by his/her prior knowledge, schemata and also by the viability of that knowledge during the reading process. This observation has especial relevance to the present study. McRae (1991) also suggests that a methodology for the use of literature in language teaching will raise students' capacity for self-awareness, leading them to a wider knowledge of, and greater fluency in, the target language. Therefore, literature has the power of providing a special way of helping students interact with their surroundings, producing an immensely satisfying effect. This satisfaction comes from the fact, as Hook et al. (1970:39-40) put it, 'Literature is not factual as an encyclopaedia article is factual.... Literature is concerned with why things happen, on the motivations of man'.

It is also difficult to make a 'linguistic' distinction between literature and other kinds of language, both written and spoken, invalidating any firm ground for banishing literature from the language curriculum altogether. In order to bring out the awareness and similarity between the everyday spoken language and the language of literature and also instances of creative usage of language in everyday communication, Carter (2004:6) while researching through the CANCODE (the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English) corpus of spoken English concludes: '... creativity is a pervasive feature of spoken language exchanges as well as a key component in interpersonal communication, and that it is a property actively possessed by all speakers and listeners; it is not simply the domain of a few creatively gifted individuals'. Carter points out that the word 'creative' typically, involves a marked breaking of rules and norms of language, including a premeditated play with its forms and its potential for meaning, which he shows is much existent in daily communicative exchanges and interactions. He adds that patterns and forms of language, which have been classified as poetic or literary, can be seen regularly taking place in everyday conversational exchanges and essentially, creativity is a matter of dialogue with others in different social and cultural contexts.

His research combined practical analysis and theoretical debate, offering descriptions and analysis of the main patterns found in the CANCODE data, with particular focus on parts of speech and a whole set of figures of speech such as metaphor, metonym, idiom, and hyperbole are discussed in the context of the everyday discourses in which they most

commonly occur. Analysis across the corpus also reveals that creativity is to be located in a wide range of everyday communications, that it is closely linked to humour and word play, that it involves affective and interpersonal language choices, and that it occurs more markedly in certain social contexts than others. His main argument is that creativity involves both the creation of alternative realities and the reinforcement of existing realities, and involves some adjustment to the standard ways of seeing creativity, at the same time demonstrating the normality and commonality of creativity in everyday communication. In conclusion, ‘...linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people’ (ibid.:13) and as supported by Turner (1991:14):

Common language expressing common thought is anything but simple, and its workings are not obvious. Special language expressing special thought is exploitation of the common and to be analysed only in respect to it.

Therefore, as pointed out by Carter (2004), creativity is basic to a wide variety of different language uses, from everyday advertising language to the most elaborated of literary texts. For example, advertising language depends significantly on creative play with language and on the cultural discourses of the society of that particular language. Advertisements are designed to engage, initiating interaction on the part of the interpreter to interpret from multiple angles. Apart from providing entertaining, intrinsic pleasure, wordplay can be used to serve a social and critical purpose to the language. Thus, examples drawn from everyday life demonstrate how the ordinary, everyday discourse can be patterned creatively in order to make it memorable and striking.

Thus, Carter shows that creativity and cultural embedding are not the exclusive characteristics of canonical texts but are persistent throughout the most everyday uses of language generating effects such as irony, sarcasm, satire, understatement and hyperbole. They produce meanings which are non-literal and require listeners to make indirect, interpretative inferences, reinforcing the view that ordinary language can be routine and formulaic or pervasively unordinary and can involve, the creation and interpretation of patterns which enjoy a resemblance with those more usually designated literary.

According to Tambling (1988), all language is literary language because even supposedly referential language has no original reference point and because even a referential statement is rhetorical device, designed to persuade the listener or reader to act or to think in a particular way. Lecercle (1990) also argues that many models of language have been

impoverished by a failure properly to examine the more creative 'remainder' of language, where, the 'remainder' only becomes noticeable through the examinations of real uses of conversational language, or look at particular forms such as poetry, or explore everyday metaphors, puns, riddles, and verbal games. Lecerclé questions whether such uses of language can ever be fully formalised, however argues that linguistic systems would be all the richer for recognising their existence.

Studies by Gibbs (1994) and Stockwell (2001) also raise fundamental questions about the nature of literary language. For example, metaphor has always been seen as a literary property as a result of the apparent inclination of its users to create new insights into human experience and value. Gibbs offers an alternative mapping of creative metaphoric processes by illustrating the extent to which poetry can depend on basic underlying metaphors which structure the most fundamental, common everyday experiences. Carter (1987a, 1997) adds that there are close connections between literariness and creativity in language. One main aim of identifying literariness in language is to argue that literary language is not an exclusive phenomenon, to be located only in certain types of text, but also to argue that it is important to attempt to identify what is judged to be literary or creative within particular contexts. Literary and creative uses of language are everywhere but are also a matter of degree.

However, Carter (2004) suggests that literariness is a matter of patterning at the linguistic level and texts which are valued within many communities as literary certainly have these qualities and hence it is possible to draw points of comparison between a conversation, an advertisement and a lyric poem. However it should be noted as suggested by Carter (2004:81):

Creativity is both special and normal and is both ordinary and extraordinary. It is extraordinary in its ordinariness. Ordinary language, in so far as it exists, is the exception rather than the rule. It is problematic to make ordinariness a default condition.

Nevertheless, according to Carter (2004) the opposition of literary to non-literary language is an unhelpful one, and the notion of literary language as a yes/no category should be replaced by one which sees literary language as a continuum. In some definitions 'literary' is measured against the norms of 'ordinary' discourse; but other definitions illustrate that ordinary discourse has literary properties thus validating the argument that there is no simple definition of what is or is not 'literary' language.

Moreover, language and literature may appear to be distinct and two separate regions from a teacher's point of view; however, they may not be so to the learner, for whom literature is simply a reflection of language. Brumfit and Carter (1986:20) talk about an approach 'to the teaching of literature in which language study and literary study are more closely integrated than is commonly the case at the present time.' Therefore, literary texts in language classes could be used to identify difficulties that students experience in reading, especially imaginative texts. Similarly, during the literature lesson, a focus can be established on a part of text relevant to a previous language class, to deal with the language difficulties there (Carter, 1988), thus making literature and language complementary to each other.

The rationale for incorporating literature is thus well established and under the circumstances, it can be assumed that literature can surely help students develop their language skills with especial emphasis on particular areas. This will result in improved communication and language output, because representational materials, going beyond the purely referential, are capable of bringing imaginative interaction, reactions and response into play (McRae, 1991). Commenting on attempts to shift language teaching away from English literature in post-independence India, because of objections that Indian students had never seen daffodils, Chowdhury claims:

True, the Indian boy had not seen daffodils, but he has not seen a fairy either. To try to teach language without the help of literature is doomed to be ineffective (Chowdhury, 2001:16-17).

It is worth remembering that genuine learning achievement goes far beyond mere mastery of functions and grammatical rules. Hence, it can be assumed that literature needs to be re-introduced for many reasons practical to the situation in Bangladesh and it, therefore, can never go away for good.

## **2.5 The Importance of Literature in Language Learning Materials**

Up to this point, I have attempted to define and elucidate the place of literature in a global as well as in a Bangladeshi context. Attempts were also made to throw some light upon the conventional thoughts and uses that surround literature and, why it is necessary to incorporate literature in the language classroom of Bangladesh, bearing in mind the negative aspects that may need to be addressed before trying out texts in the classroom.

The following discussion will focus on the impact of literature on the learner as an individual, and what contributions literature may have towards the development of an individual language learner.

### ***2.5.1 Literature in Developing the Fifth Skill***

In addition to the four skills of language - speaking, listening, reading and writing, what every one needs but quite often ignores is the fifth skill: *thinking*. Unless one starts thinking in a language, one cannot possibly start expressing oneself fluently. It is obvious that the basic tendency to translate from L1 (Language 1) to L2 (Language 2) while communicating hinders one's natural flow in using the target language.

Referential language learning does not require much in the way of thinking, whereas representational material is likely to expand one's fifth skill by instilling curiosity and motivation to think *about* the context of the situation. Consequently, this leads to the awareness of the factors involved in the production and reception of any communicative act giving one an opportunity to examine contexts beyond the given situation in the text (McRae, 1991). Conversely, a memory for vocabulary and an ability to manipulate grammatical forms can easily lead to discouragement and demotivation.

### ***2.5.2 Literature and the World of Imagination***

According to Collie and Slater (1987), the vivid imaginative world of a text enables a learner to feel the codes and preoccupations that construct a real society, reflecting real language usage bounded by multifarious emotional expressions of any given period of time. Quite often, the reader associates him/herself with the experiences of the character on the page thus making a connection between the world of imagination and the world of reality. Fisher and Terry (1982) add that in the imaginary world of literature, the learner has the freedom to make the mental leap from the descriptive to the imagined, in order to share in, and make connection with, the created world of the writer to complete the effect. Imaginative engagement with a text arouses curiosity and stimulates a reaction that opens up interactive possibilities. To help to do so, learning has to be transformative in personal, social and political ways, with creativity grounded in social contexts, rather than measuring language in terms of competencies, skills or capabilities only.

### ***2.5.3 Literature and Emotional Intelligence***

In real life, language becomes alive when blended with emotion. Emotional Intelligence is the tool that evokes consciousness of the language being learnt, enabling the learner to understand, clarify and communicate ideas. Emotional Intelligence has its roots in the concept of 'Social intelligence', first identified by E. I. Thorndike in 1920. Mayer and Salovey (1993) define Emotional Intelligence as a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions. This is in order to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide ones' thinking and actions. As literature provides a variety of contexts, it encourages emotional development and helps maintain the link to emotional growth. More importantly, literature coupled with emotional intelligence retains students as readers as they grow into maturity.

Therefore, it can be said that emotional intelligence improves language acquisition, by stimulating the imagination, humour, and creativity in learners, leading towards the development of one's personal growth and autonomy in learning. Additionally, it bridges the gap and helps teachers manage the teaching of language in a more efficient way where, in Bangladesh, for example, many learners of English are unable to transfer their formal knowledge to effective use.

### ***2.5.4 Literature and Cultural Understanding***

Teaching literature within a cultural model enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space, and to come to perceive traditions of thought, feeling and artistic form within the heritage the literature of such cultures endows (Carter and Long, 1991:2).

A cultural model of literature enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own. McRae (1991) suggests that value judgments implicit in L1 cultural assumptions may be brought into question in an L2 learning context and make the learner more consciously selective in evaluating, recognising, accepting and rejecting aspects of the L2 society. English as a global language provides literary texts by authors from widely divergent cultures, reflecting 'rich and fascinating' diversities (Lazar, 1993:16).

Countering the view that literature, being culturally bound, is either too difficult or too remote from the learners' experience for regular use, Kramsch (1993) argues that, culture should be at the very core of language teaching as language is a social practice. There is no valid reason to separate language and culture, and literature-encompassing culture obviously would offer culturally authentic texts. Collie and Slater (1987) acknowledge the value of literature as a source of cultural enrichment, whereas Lazar (1993) points out the danger of identifying literature with the imposition of particular imperialistic views. Therefore, she suggests encouraging students to treat any description critically, so that 'underlying ideological assumptions in the texts are not merely accepted and reinforced, but are questioned, evaluated and, if necessary, subverted' (ibid.: 17). Carter's (1987:211) view on the fundamental factor that 'words contain and conceal ideology', relates closely to Halliday's (1978) view of language as social semiotic. Kress also takes the argument into the social sphere:

...texts are always and everywhere enmeshed in the social structures. It is that dynamic which gives rise to what we call style in text, and it is that dynamic which ensures that language is everywhere a part of social life. (cited in Birch and O'Toole, 1988:141)

The introduction of New Englishes and New Literatures in English present a multidimensional, cultural phenomenon in an even more diverse and dynamic way. Therefore, the use of literature will again lead learners to exercise the ability to distinguish and choose between issues of concern and divergence, giving rise to personal growth and autonomy.

### ***2.5.5 Literature and Self-motivation***

The basic purpose of teaching is to help learners to become self-motivated, so that they are able to operate autonomously, i.e. without teachers, although, sadly, many teachers, who equate autonomy with lack of control, disapprove of learner autonomy. However, the term 'learner autonomy' proposes that to be autonomous, 'a learner must decide for him/herself *what* to learn, and also *why, when, how, with whom* and *for how long* he/she should do it' (Sinclair, 1996: 140). Therefore, a growth in independent learner behaviour is likely to add to the student-centred learning atmosphere.



Bassnett and Grundy (1993:5) point out, 'Learners-by-choice are more motivated than learners-by-compulsion.' Maley and Duff (1989) draw attention to the motivating power of literary texts in terms of their universality and non-triviality. According to Carter and McCarthy (1995), suitably selected texts are able to provide a motivating and stimulating source of content in the language classroom, which can evoke new responses in students. Lazar (1993) adds that literature helps promote individual development and education of the whole person, providing materials beneficial for creating analytical and critical abilities. The following section discusses the direct connection that literature has in the development of language input.

### ***2.5.6 Literature and Language Development***

As already discussed in section 2.4.2, literature is a potentially useful aid to the language teacher because extensive reading is sure to increase a learner's receptive vocabulary. As observed by Widdowson (1975), different varieties of English in literary texts can be extremely useful in sensitising learners to linguistic variation and the values associated with them. According to Collie and Slater (1987), literature also provides a rich context in which individual lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable, and also helps to develop the student's ability to make inferences from linguistic clues, and to deduce meaning from the context. Littlewood (1986) adds that literary texts form the basis for explanations and for creating exercises, which can transfer linguistic structures to the learner's active repertoire. In addition, as McKay (1986:191) quotes Povey, 'Literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax'.

Fisher and Terry (1982) observe that literature provides opportunities for learners to work with usage patterns (formal and informal, between the formality of the situation and the appropriateness of particular usage items) within the framework of classroom discussions and presentations. Maley (1989) remarks that language in literature determines why a particular language form is used in a particular way because the language used there is embedded in social contexts.

Moreover, literature offers an extremely varied body of written material, which depicts fundamental human issues transcending time and culture, and opening up doors to the world.

Literature is authentic in the way that it is not written or fabricated for the specific purpose of teaching a language, but nevertheless reflects genuine examples of language in use. Brumfit and Carter (1986) observe that exposure to literature automatically reveals different possible types of language discourse, for example, the languages of business, law, parliamentary debate, domestic affairs, etc. Literary texts expose students to the language intended for native speakers, thus they become familiar with many different linguistic uses, forms and conventions of the written mode. The dialogic form of certain literary genres makes genuine use of the spoken forms as well. The following section will discuss the possible development of interpretative and discussion skills through literature leading to the development of speaking skills.

### ***2.5.7 Literature in Developing Interpretative and Discussion Skills***

As observed by McRae (1991), literary texts surely open up a whole range of interpretative possibilities, because of the uses of metaphor, or of ambiguity, which imply a process of defamiliarisation that creates an interactive atmosphere between the reader and the text. Lazar (1993) points out that ‘ambiguity’ makes literature a particularly good stimulus to incite student’s interpretative or ‘procedural’ (Widdowson, 1983) abilities, and thus is useful in interpreting any other discourse, as the learner employs interpretative procedures, makes inferences and deduces meaning from linguistic clues and the context. Carter and Long (1991) suggest that a literary representation of experience, being often an indirect one, incites the reader to make connections, to ‘read between the lines’ and to seek explanations and meanings.

Maley (1989) and Maley and Duff (1989) also note that literature, being highly suggestive, demands prediction and interpretation of a given text in different ways, by each individual, bringing out the necessary tension for a genuine exchange of ideas. They add that literary texts invite multiple interpretations, thus providing ready-made material for discussion leading to multifarious reactions and expressions. McRae (1991) supports their view by observing that intuitions in response to a text open up an almost endless series of hypothetical discussion possibilities, leading the learner firstly to think, then predict and talk, discuss, evaluate, accept or reject an idea and, therefore, learn. Additionally, literary texts can provide learners with ‘opportunities for the dialogic negotiations of meaning’ (ibid.: 131). However, for Kramsch (1993:130) ‘the main argument for using literary texts in the language

classroom is literature's ability to represent the particular voice of a writer among the many voices of his/her community and thus to appeal to the particular in the reader'.

Therefore, it can be said that, literary texts are capable of producing as many interpretations as there are readers. However, it is unproductive to claim that a text can mean anything to any reader. As pointed out by Alderson and Short (1988:72), differing interpretations can be discussed and agreed upon with the convincing ones retaining the sense of being 'more faithful to the text'. Readers may also offer arguments and logic to support their interpretation. This is asked of the learners in the current experiment.

### ***2.5.8 Literature in Developing Speaking Skills***

The various avenues provided in oral composition (e.g. dramatic activities, storytelling, etc., through prediction, interpretation and innovation), give one a chance to invent new words, while using familiar ones in new ways. This leads to imaginative and creative uses of language. Gilroy and Parkinson (1996) observe that literary texts are useful in the development of reproductive skills, such as oral or written skills, encouraging learners to become more creative and adventurous as they begin to appreciate the richness and variety of the language they are learning.

According to Collie and Slater (1987), literary texts serve as an excellent prompt for oral work, as they provide unexpected compactness of meaning leading to a variety of interpretations through imagination and discussion. Widdowson (1983) argues that the writer's deliberate attempt to keep readers in suspense encourages them to read on to find out what will happen next. The expectation-gap effect brings in the element of prediction that can be exploited further, and the element of discovery gives a new area of freedom of expression in the learning situation, which is a vital encouragement to communication.

Learners will develop the habit of looking forward to the unpredictable nature of the materials and have the opportunity to discuss them even more openly and elaborately - which usually contrasts with the fairly predictable contents in textbooks. Therefore, the uncertainty presented in the text will create an atmosphere for natural interactive discussion, problem-solving and opinion-gap activities, which leads to the idea that literature will actually assist in developing conversational skills.

I am in agreement with Bassnett and Grundy (1993), who suggest that literature leads to self-discovery by promoting effective learning, as learners find ways of expressing the meanings that are important to them and not repeating preset responses. Moreover, by demanding learners' personal response to the text, literature helps develop their confidence and independence in exploring their own reactions, ideas and emotions in English.

Thus far, I have attempted to make links between the use of literature in the classroom and potential learner development in terms of interpretative faculty, imagination, thought processes, and argumentative qualities in connection with speaking skills, etc. The above theory and discussion is particularly important for the present research. The study is mainly based on the hypothesis that any literary text should be able to create curiosity in the learner. Then as the learner's imagination and creative faculty develop, they will be likely to learn the language better and eventually think, and express (orally), the target language with more competency. Therefore, it is assumed that in an EFL situation, reading authentic materials such as literary texts in the target language would lead to better imagination and interpretation, to learner independence, autonomy and self-confidence that will eventually be reflected in improved verbal expression.

## **2.6 Approaches to Literature**

The traditional use of literature in a Bangladesh context has already been discussed in this chapter and in Chapter One. The following sections will consider the different approaches to literature in the classroom in various parts of the world. Maley (1989) distinguishes two main approaches to literature, which are literature as content, and, literature as a resource for language learning, or the language-based approach. In addition, this section will discuss the place of literature as a resource for topics and themes, literature and the personal growth model and literature in communicative language teaching.

### **2.6.1 *Literature as Content***

Maley (1989) suggests that the study of literature as content emphasises the 'special' status of literature and focuses on the text's aesthetic artefacts, that is dealing literature with a capital 'L'. According to Lazar (1993), this approach concentrates on areas such as literary movements, the social, political and historical background of a text, etc. and that methods

associated with this approach are traditionally teacher-centred. Carter and Long (1991) add that these methods have no systematic relation to the development of language skills however, this is the most popular approach in the literature classroom in Bangladesh.

### **2.6.2 *The Language-based Approach***

According to Carter, the language-based approaches are:

essentially integrative approaches and they seek to integrate language and literature study. They also offer approaches to literary texts which are accessible not just to more advanced students but to a wider range of students, from lower to upper intermediate levels. (Carter, 1996:2)

Carter and Long (1991) suggest that language-based approaches to literature teaching are usually more concerned with processes of reading rather than the literary text as a product. A process-centred, language-based pedagogy involves the teacher coming 'down from the pedestal' and requires a classroom treatment of literature, which does not view the text as a revered object for referential study. A basic principle of such an approach is that no hard and fast dividing line should be drawn between what is designated 'literary' and 'non-literary'. A language model of literature reading is generally related to language-based approaches. These aim to be learner-centred and activity-based, and proceed with particular attention to the way in which language is used. The language model for teaching literature allows the teacher to present some of the more subtle and varied creative uses of the language. In this model, Carter and Long (1991:9) point out, 'the importance of interpreting relations between linguistic forms and literary meanings and of learning to read between rather than in the lines of the text is paramount.'

Therefore the realisation that 'language is the literary medium, and literature is *made* from language' (Carter and Long 1991:2) will lead to a better understanding of a text. The language-based approach is important for the current study, as it uses literary texts in order to help students develop their language ability without taxing them with the concept of literature with capital 'L'.

### **2.6.3 *Literature as Resource for Topics and Themes***

According to Ur (1981), the topic is still seen by most teachers as the central focus of classroom discussions. However, she adds that it is certainly important, but not central; the

crux is not what to talk about, but why there is a need to talk about it. Nevertheless, holding a debate on topic(s) will be helpful because it will force the learners to examine the text closely in order to interpret and discuss it (Carter and Long, 1991). In the present study, an attempt will be made to introduce topics that are related to the learner's life, and thus make a connection between the textual world and the world they are in, enabling them to think and discuss.

In defending the theme-based approach, McRae (1991) is aware of objections that it can be reductive, as choosing one passage or extract can diminish the whole, resulting in misinterpretation of the work from which it is taken. For instance, the theme under discussion may not have been the major concern of the author in writing the text. However, for McRae, a theme-based approach is enormously flexible, as the juxtaposition of the most diverse texts can produce surprisingly interesting contrasts and comparisons. A theme-based approach can also help encourage learner autonomy and increase linguistic and communicative competence through classroom interaction, as pointed out by McRae and Pantaleoni (cited in Gilroy and Parkinson, 1996:219). The more students are able to interpret, discuss and open up, the more they will become eloquent in expressing themselves orally and be more communicative.

#### ***2.6.4 The Personal Growth Model and Learner Autonomy***

According to Sell (1995:16) literature elicits 'different areas of world knowledge and human life within a set of covers', and it also involves learners in a personal way, giving them the opportunity to express themselves, stimulating the imagination, developing critical abilities and increasing emotional awareness. The genuine feel of literary texts, according to Duff and Maley (1990), acts as a powerful motivator and touches on themes to which learners can bring a personal response from their own experience.

The personal growth model of literature teaching helps students to achieve an *engagement* with the texts, to be able to appreciate, evaluate and understand better the relationships with people and the institutions around them (Carter and Long, 1991). This model is, like the language model, more student-centred, and aims at motivating the student to read by relating the themes and topics depicted in a literary text to his or her own personal experience. The language model uses the text as an example of certain types of pattern and structure, whereas

the personal growth model stresses the personal enjoyment and emotional gain of the students through interacting with the text. This model is also relevant to the present study as it demonstrates that the growth of the imaginative faculty may well enhance prediction, leading to various interpretations that have relevance to the life of the learner.

### ***2.6.5 Literature in Communicative Language Teaching***

In the global scenario, introducing literature in the language classroom has been strongly influenced by communicative language teaching, and in Bangladesh, communicative language teaching mainly tends to be 'referential' language teaching. For the term 'communicative language teaching', Littlewood (1981:x-xi) introduces the concept complemented by Brumfit and Johnson (cited in Gilroy and Parkinson, 1996:215). The features of the communicative classroom include:

- Co-operative learning (pair work, group work, problem solving);
- Learner-centredness (learner choices in topics and activities, space for learners to express their own meanings, attention to affective and human factors);
- Real communication (information and opinion gaps, topics of intrinsic interest, authenticity of text and task);
- A functional, meaning-centred view of language;
- Tolerance of error, emphasis on fluency more than formal accuracy, development of strategies e.g. message adjustment, back channelling, negotiation of meaning.

Some of the principles of the communicative approach are either identical with, or lead in obvious ways to, the arguments for, and ideas within, literature teaching in FLT. Duff and Maley (1990:3) remark on the authenticity of literary texts which 'offer genuine samples of a very wide range of styles, registers and text-types at many levels of difficulty', and highlight the staying power of the literary text as a rich source of authentic material which does not become outdated. Duff and Maley (1990) and Lazar (1993) reiterate that through the possibility of multiple interpretations, literary texts provide scope for genuine interaction. Reading literature, and then talking/writing about it, can lead to strategy development and hence communicative competence. This issue of communicative competence is another key point noted during the study.

Bearing in mind the above observations, the present study attempts to explore whether literature can be helpful in engaging learners on personal grounds, by enabling them to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system. It is hoped that the new methodology explored in the classroom will help readers be involved with the text and make them eager to discover what happens as events unfold, while feeling empathy with characters and sharing their emotional responses.

As the study progresses I also hope to explore the motivating and stimulating effects that literature may have on the learners, and what impact literature may have on them in developing the whole person, capable of operating autonomously through the development of analytical and critical abilities. Prediction activities that will require thought and use of imagination on the part of the student will be used in order to see whether these create any curiosity in him/her, with regard to having a better understanding of the text in relation to the understanding of the world that surrounds them. This will allow them freedom of thought leading to different interpretations followed by proper arguments. The present study, therefore, focuses on a language, topics and theme-based personal growth approach, rather than on a content-based approach.

## **2.7 Literary Language: Does It Exist?**

Although many teachers and literary critics hold the view that literature is read in a different way from non-literary writing, evidence suggests that a 'linguistic' distinction between literary and other kind of text is difficult to preserve. This leads to the idea that there are no particular linguistic features found in literature that are not found in other kinds of texts.

To some extent, literary and language aptitude cannot easily be separated, for one will always be dependent on the other. According to Short (1983), writers of literary works use language creatively, whereas Brumfit and Carter (1986:6) suggest that there is no such thing as 'literary language' and it is 'impossible to isolate any single or special property of language which is exclusive to a literary work'. However, for Carter and Long (1991:108) the creative use of language is important in determining literary merit, but with reservations, as the nature of creativity is not clearly defined, particularly when it comes to classifying a piece as 'literature' or as 'good literature'.



Short and Candlin (1986) also find similarities between literary and other kinds of discourse. Carter (1988) determines from earlier works in stylistics that style is not an exclusively literary phenomenon. A comparison between the language of poetry and the language of advertising reveals that they are more or less similar in their use of the linguistic features such as rhyme, metre, ambiguity, metaphor, parallelism, linguistic deviation, fascinating examples of play between words, and formal patterns, which can be creative and entertaining. In Eagleton's view (1983:9), there is no 'essence' of literature whatsoever. Any text can be read pragmatically or poetically, be it literary or non-literary. However, one of the reasons for using literature, given by Collie and Slater (1987), is that because literary language is concise, it is aesthetically satisfying, and therefore memorable, echoing a traditional reason for teaching literature which is as a model of good writing as rhetoric (Gilroy and Parkinson, 1996).

Kramersch (1993), advocating the use of literary texts in foreign language teaching, refers to Bakhtin's (1895-1975) distinction between single-voiced and double-voiced discourse, with the literary text as the epitome of the latter. In her view, literary and non-literary discourse differ in degree, but not in kind, with the newspaper article, the essay and the short story on a continuum from single-voiced to double-voiced discourse. Pulverness (1996:26) also relates to and uses Bakhtin's idea that 'all fictional writing manifests the quality of dramatic discourse' to analyse voices in prose fiction. However, Carter and Long (1991) suggest that, in the language and literature classroom, it is necessary to approach such issues with an open mind.

## **2.8 Texts: What to Include?**

The appropriateness of the texts selected for a particular class remains a crucial factor in the success of the teaching approach followed in that particular class. Texts chosen should not be too long, too complex linguistically, and not too far removed from the world knowledge of the students. However, linguistically simple texts are not always 'simple'. It should be noted as pointed out by Carter (1988) that contemporary literature is generally not always the most accessible. This is especially for non-native, non-European students, because of its reflection of a world, which is usually based on an impersonal industrialised scenario where spiritual values are non-existent.

In addition, experimental usage of the language can give rise to complexity in understanding in many cases, whereas writings from the past may prove to be quite understandable in terms of their comparatively simple setting, theme and use of language producing more personal responses and more direct involvement. The argument regarding the language of a literary work, and especially of the ones from the past, not being typical of the language of daily life, could be overcome by using a proper methodology. Drawing parallel examples or converting old English to new English, for example, from Shakespearean English to modern day English would instil interest in the learner.

One main reason for using literature is to encourage students' creativity. However, when choosing a text, language difficulty has to be considered, so that access is not restricted and the learners can attain a basic level of comprehension. McKay (1986) however, cautions against simplification of text, since this may result in diluting information and reducing cohesion and readability. Students also need to be able to identify *with* the experience, the thoughts and situations depicted in the text, in order 'to make connection to personal or social significance outside the text' (Brumfit, 1985: 108). Therefore, as McRae (1991:126) suggests, a good choice would be any text that encourages or invites interaction with the world of ideas, a text that 'affirms, confirms and expands the indispensable human capacity to read the world'.

Texts should also provide good potential for a variety of classroom activities, in order to give students more chance to gain true familiarity with any work as a whole. Most importantly, the texts should have the capacity to engage the interest of the student. For example, as noted by Collie and Slater (1987), short stories offer greater variety than longer texts, offering greater chance of finding something to appeal to each individual's tastes and interests, whilst poems offer a rich, varied range and are a source of much enjoyment.

However, a poem may not always be a favoured item in the classroom mainly because of its deviant and densely metaphorical use of language. Teaching poetry becomes especially difficult when the emphasis is put on correctness in grammatical form. In the EFL teaching scenario, particularly in the context of Bangladesh, there was no place for literature, poetry in particular, with its deviations and deviant image uses, since 'it [poetry] is a misleading as a model [in teaching approach]...that insists on the gradual accumulation of correct forms' (Widdowson, 1984:162).

Use of poetry in teaching language has been seen as a road to learning making by ESL practitioners from both philosophical and practical perspectives (Bakhtin 1986; Carter and Long 1990; Widdowson, 1975). As pointed out by Hess (2003:20):

...poetry, seems to bring out emotions and entering a literary text, under the guidance of appropriate teaching, brings about the kind of participation almost no other text can produce. When we read, understand and interpret a poem we learn language through the expansion of our experience with a larger human reality.

According to Holten (1997) literature is quintessential language content and Collie and Slater (1989), in their practical approach to literature in language teaching, promote literature as authentic material that deals with universal human concerns, and invites personal involvement. They add that the brilliant concision and strong imagery of poetry enable the learner to experience the power of language outside the straightjacket of more standard written structure and lexis. Poems often explore themes of universal concern and embody life experiences, and thus initiate strong response from the reader. There is also the initial advantage of length as many poems are appropriate to a single classroom lesson. Provided that learners are given help with the personal and linguistic resources they will need, they are expected to attain the fuller enjoyment of a poem that comes from a sense of sharing the poet's created world and becoming, as reader, a new creator of meaning.

Widdowson (1989) also argues that poetry has characteristics as a use of language which make it especially well qualified to assist to develop in learners the ability to use language, to put linguistic forms to the service of meaning. He adds that in the interpretation of poetry, there is a necessary interdependence between the understanding of formal structure and the recognition of a communicative effect. Meaning is a function of a focus on form and an increased awareness of the subtleties of poetic representation inevitably entails an increased awareness of the signifying potential of grammar. Although, poetry and grammar, linguistic analysis and literary interpretation, have by tradition been seen as distinct polarities and in opposition, according to Widdowson (1989) however, they can be combined for mutual benefit, and can initiate practical pedagogy with a broader educational perspective.

According to Hess (2003) through its drama, intensity, and tightly controlled emotional context, a good poem is suitable for a close reading, with much language unfolding and, as a result much good language practice. In dealing with a poem in the classroom, she suggests a nine step technique that includes, trigger; vocabulary preview; bridge; listen, react, and share;

language; picture; more language; meaning and spin-off and provides a description of each step and demonstrates how they should work to initiate the best output. Hess claims that she had applied the formula to any number of poems, and always found it enjoyable, linguistically rich, and communicatively satisfying.

Moreover, Maley and Duff (1989) point out that although, for many years now, literature, in particular poetry has not been regarded as 'proper' material for foreign language learning, the rhythm and cadence of poetic language that we have had taste of during childhood, continues to flow as a deep undercurrent through our lives. The whole thrust of the structuralist approach tended to exclude literature, and the utilitarian favouritism towards the communicative approach deflected attention away from anything which did not seem to have a practical purpose. When literature is included in language programmes, the emphasis remains on the use of texts for commentary and analysis or merely for illustration. In the case of poetry, for teachers, it is simply an optional extra rather than an integral part of the language programme. However, Maley and Duff (1989:7) suggest:

Poetry offers a rich resource for input to language learning. As such it is at least as relevant as the more commonly accepted types of input (e.g. contrived dialogues, isolated texts for reading comprehension, simulations, etc.). So, it should be given at least equal weight.

They claim that the use of a poem as the centrepiece of a unit of material does not prevent the use of other types of language in relation to it. For example, they illustrate that the language used to agree and disagree about 'meaning' in a poem will not be essentially different from the language of discussion central to any interactional activity. Therefore, if poetry is integrated with other forms of language, and thus demystified through a direct approach, students will come to an understanding of what is special about poetry as a mode of language use. And to the further understanding that it is no more 'special' than any other forms of language (e.g. sports report, advertisements, labels, etc.).

Maley and Duff also consider the many advantages which poetry seems to offer. Poetry as a form of language use is universal among all human beings. The themes (e.g. love, death, nature, religious belief, despair, etc.) of poetry are common to all cultures, and the conventions (for example, rhythm, rhyme, metre, alliteration, repetition, etc.) governing the language of poetry are likewise familiar, which are readily recognisable to foreign language learners from their mother tongue experience. Therefore, the only unfamiliarity would be the

foreign language which they may not know, but will know the conventions. Although at first sight, poetry in the foreign language may appear impenetrable, however, the familiarity with the conventions of poetry in the students' mother tongue would make it more readily accessible to him or her. Moreover, the realisation that, though they may be relatively inexpert in the language, they can still appreciate (to a degree) what is thought to be a 'difficult' use of language, would work as an added advantage. The opportunity to play with language also helps the learner learning it and poetry is per excellence the medium as all poets stretch the language by coining new words, creating new collocations, experimenting with sound, using old words in new ways, and so on. The ambiguity of a poem evokes individual interpretations which are not necessarily shared by all readers, thus opens up opportunity for discussion.

Moreover, poetry deals with important experiences and heightens the readers' perception not only of such experiences, but also of the seemingly trivial or unimportant ones. Poetry thus provides a content which will appeal to learners because they are able to respond to it in their own way, adding to the motivating factor in learning. The possibility of having multifarious interpretation will also let each individual student feel that he or she has a valid contribution to make while discussing a poem. The suggestive, colourful and associative quality of poems suggests that each learner's personal interpretation has validity and because each person's perception is different, it initiates an almost infinite fund of interactive discussion and creates the necessary atmosphere for a genuine exchange of ideas. The development of a personalised reaction to texts engaging the intellect as well as the feelings is a very important part of the language learning process.

Moreover, the memorability feature of a poem offers the natural ability to unconsciously absorb language that enables the learner to retrieve grammatical and lexical information he or she did not know they had. In language teaching, stress and rhythm are often taught through the imitation of model sentences. According to Brown (cited in Maley and Duff, 1989:11), rhythm 'is not something extra...it is the guide to the structure of information in the spoken message', and therefore, even though poetry may not focus expressly on rhythm, it can help develop a sensitivity towards it. Moreover, some of the essential features of fluent speech, such as clarity of diction, phrasing, stress and rhythm, control and variation of pace etc. flow naturally from the reading of poetry aloud. Poems also offer a complete context in compact form and the meanings conveyed in poems are usually expressed very economically. In order

to retrieve these meanings and talk about them, it is necessary to expand and extend the words on the page, thus, from a small language input a large and varied output can be generated.

However, there may still remain some doubts about the value and practicability of using poetry as a major element in language teaching because of the conception that 'poetry' is equivalent to a special register which is characterised by archaisms, peculiar inversions, heightened vocabulary, and so on. Nevertheless, in the classroom, there is no need to choose poetry with these features, rather choose the ones which are closer to 'normal' language. Moreover, modern poetry does not necessarily use special language features and choosing this kind of poetry minimises the problem of the language that is 'too special'. When the teacher comes to select poems he or she will need to take into account which poems are suited to the learners' interests, language and maturity levels. Therefore, as far as possible, the level of difficulty of the poem should approximate the level of competence of the learners. Learners should be offered access to poems through carefully chosen activities and tasks that are designed to help them appreciate the lyrical and melodic qualities of poetry as well as its metaphorical richness in order to facilitate comprehension.

McRae and Vethamani (1999) observe that the growth of strong local literatures in English has triggered a corresponding interest in incorporating such texts into language teaching materials. Vethamani (1996) argues that new literatures are unjustly overlooked in many teaching contexts, whereas their inclusion in the classroom can broaden students' perception of the use of English in wider cultural contexts, thus will continue to fuel interest in using literary texts for cross-cultural exploration. As such, literature lends itself well to investigating similarities and differences between self and others, and to an awareness and understanding of 'the other' (Kramsch 1993).

However, in Bangladeshi contexts there are constraints/restraints on the teacher's part in terms of availability of books, or the set curriculum they are to follow. If the texts are imposed and used year after year, it becomes more and more difficult to maintain one's originality and enthusiasm, both on the parts of teachers and students. Goodwyn and Findlay (1999) point out that teachers teach best when they are enthused about a text/topic they are teaching. Nevertheless, it has already been observed that the available texts and materials can be successfully used to achieve objectives if used properly and systematically.

## 2.9 The Relevance of the Proposed Approach in the Bangladesh EFL Contexts

In Bangladesh the decision regarding methodologies to be used in classes has been largely affected by those considered 'fashionable'. Unfortunately most of the time, the decisions have been taken without testing their appropriateness to the teaching context. Although the textbook is concerned with communicative language teaching, in reality it is seldom practiced in the classroom, and the teachers lapse back to the more convenient traditional way of teaching.

The teaching of both language and literature in the Bangladesh EFL contexts has usually been a teacher-centred process. In taking centre stage, s/he often asks 'a long series of questions' and it is s/he who is 'working through the text' and not the students (Carter and Long, 1991:24). The teacher is the active transmitter of knowledge, whereas students are passive recipients. Such teacher-centred and product-based approaches are directed towards a development of knowledge *about* literature rather than the knowledge *of* literature (Carter and Walker, 1989).

Moreover, as observed by Carter and Walker (1989: Introduction), the traditional approach used in the classroom emphasises the text as a body of knowledge, which has to be imparted and conveyed to the students in the form of 'background'. This is to be memorised and reproduced when the situation, usually in the form of examinations, requires it. Such methods of presenting a text have done little to develop the students' skills in reading for themselves, or to learn how to make their own meanings.

In addition, English classes in Bangladesh also include translation exercises. It is generally believed that if students practice thoroughly the art of translating Bengali into English, and *vice versa*, they will have no difficulty in 'learning' English. According to Horwitz (1988), this trend ignores the fact that translation is not a basic language skill, but rather a skill in itself with a specific purpose, i.e. to make the content of a text, its depth and flavour, known to its readers through another language. The whole activity is mainly academic or literary, and has little or nothing to do with practice in language skills.

Moreover, when translation is overemphasised and practised as a language learning activity, consciously or unconsciously, a one-to-one analogy between the two languages is drawn.

This technique is, sometimes regarded as a useful one which in reality, hinders rather than facilitates the process. This is evident from the results students show in respect to the four language skills, especially listening and speaking. In real life, whenever they are required to use the language, first they think in Bengali, and then attempt to translate the whole into English. Throughout the endeavour, the process of translating is quite unnerving, as students constantly worry about the language they are going to produce, in terms of vocabulary selection and grammatical accuracy.

Therefore, when it comes to following a systematic approach to literature teaching for developing spoken skills, it can be said that in many teaching contexts 'meaning is established without method' (Carter, 1982:4). Usually the 'meaning' is established through translation of the text in Bengali, and does not go beyond the literal meaning on the page. Therefore, the students do not get a chance to expand their imagination, or their thought that can initiate better and varied understanding and interpretation of the text, thus broadening their views of the world around them.

This teacher-centred approach results in a belief that the student's personal opinion is not valued and there is only one correct answer which is supplied by the teacher. This focusing on the 'one and only correct answer', does not seem to take in the reader's role. The weakness of this approach is its refusal to acknowledge the appreciation of the language employed in the text through which messages are conveyed. Consequently, the students become completely dependent on the teacher, private tutor, or coaching centres, which are totally commercialised. They also become dependent on 'note books' written by so-called experts of the subject, books on literary criticism and 'exam guides' in order to memorise the answers for 'narrow instrumental purposes' (Carter and Walker, 1989: 4).

The effect of using the traditional method so extensively has proved to be counter-productive, merely encouraging rote learning. The students memorise the textbook contents without much understanding, and no attempt is made in using English for real life communication. They study it as a required subject, work hard to memorise the textbook contents and the language forms and get high marks in examinations. Speaking skills in particular have been badly neglected, firstly because the teachers and educationists have not considered it important. Of the oral skills reading aloud (which very few people are ever called upon to use) has had some attention in the classroom. However, the ability to



communicate properly, to create rather than to repeat, a skill which everybody is exercising most of the time, has not been regarded as worthy of serious attention. Therefore, in reality, the majority of students are unable to acquire even a minimum competence in the speaking and writing needed for effective communication.

The result of following the traditional methodology is that the students mostly read without taking hold of what they read, and they are too often at a loss in communicating what they wish to communicate in clear and simple sentences and in expressive and audible tone. This matter of communication affects all aspects of social and intellectual growth creating a gulf between those who have, and the many who have not, sufficient command of words to be able to listen and discuss rationally; to express ideas and feelings clearly; and even to have any ideas at all. Many people become frustrated in their lives because of the inability ever to express themselves adequately. Many of them never develop intellectually because they lack the words with which to think and reason. Failure in communication is a matter of utmost importance in all aspects of one's life.

Therefore, the incentive for the present study and the relevance of the proposed approach derive from the view that the teaching of language and also literature in most Bangladeshi EFL contexts is highly traditional and does not give proper attention to developing language as a skill based subject. Traditional language courses based on a structural syllabus tend to provide learners with an impoverished input. Through excessive control of lexicogrammatical items and contrivance, many of the features of natural language are lost and it is postulated that this inhibits learners' L2 development. A further belief is that authentic (or authentic-like) materials, for example, literary texts, whilst encumbered with different sorts of disadvantages, do at least provide richer input with greater contextualisation, visual and acoustic information, and samples of real language used by native speakers with all of their hesitations, repetitions, false starts, interruptions and misunderstandings; their fights, gossip, jokes, flattery and deceit. As well as being more interesting, it is suggested that these types of materials will encourage a more 'rounded' development of the target language, with the development of interpretative skills. Therefore, it is hoped that the proposed approach will help the development of linguistic competence as well as literary appreciation in Bangladeshi students.

## **2.10 Hypotheses of the Present Study**

On the basis of the preceding discussion, some hypotheses of the present study have been constructed, which are as follows:

1. Any literary text in English, (e.g. short story) handled properly, is capable of creating/evoking interest, curiosity, thought and motivation in learners and will result in improved spoken/speaking interaction in English.
2. A shift from the traditional methodology used in current literature classes to a more flexible, student-oriented methodology and also a shift in the teacher's traditional role as a dictator/lecturer will result in a developed performance both on the student's and teacher's part.
3. Enabling such personal engagement with literary texts will help learners shift from a passive role, dependent on teacher's views, to a more creative and pro-active role, thus promoting learner autonomy and increased independence of thought.
4. Prediction activities based on the text will trigger imagination in the learner that will enhance his/her spoken ability in English, particularly interpretative, argumentative and discussion skills.
5. Use of existing teaching materials, in a new activity-based and process-oriented manner, will help Bangladeshi students develop their confidence in spoken skills.

It is hoped that using literature in a different (but feasible) and interesting manner, in the context of limited resources and even less motivation, will be able to change the 'scary' atmosphere that generally exists in the English classroom. It is also hoped that the implementation of the proposed approach will lead to better understanding and enjoyment of different dimensions of literary pieces that will enable the students to 'break the ice' and get involved in discussion and interpretation of their own ideas.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

The above discussion has shown that literary texts can prove very useful in the English language classroom. They stimulate the imagination, offer learners specimens of real language use, allow for group discussions and individual exploration, and are intrinsically more dialogic. They can enhance reading skills, focus attention on combination of words,

create a feeling for language, and help draw attention to different types of language usage and levels of discourse. Moreover, a literary passage can be used not only for creative reasons but also for informational, grammar, and vocabulary development purposes. Literary texts can be exploited for language learning activities and will allow teachers to set questions that focus on much more than the retrieval of information and mechanical exercises.

All the advantages and approaches that literature offers for language learning and teaching are important in a foreign language classroom, especially in the light of the preceding discussion which focuses on the learner's development as a whole person, leading to an improved competency in expression, through verbal communication. The following chapter will comprise a discussion of the application of a pedagogical framework for the teaching of literary texts in Bangladeshi EFL contexts, with the aim of developing the learner's speaking skills.

## CHAPTER THREE

### PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND ACTIVITIES

#### 3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to review related literature with regard to literature teaching in an EFL context, with particular reference to the Bangladesh contexts. This chapter will consider a pedagogical framework for the teaching of literary texts in the Bangladesh situation. The integrated approach suggested in Chapter Two is adopted in order to teach a short story with the aim of developing learners' speaking skills. This chapter also presents the activities designed for the experimental group that are put into practice in a genuine teaching context.

#### 3.1 Introducing Literary Texts to the Students

For students in Bangladesh whose English language proficiency level cannot even be described as satisfactory in terms of expressing oneself freely, the first attempt in exploring and encountering a new literary work could be quite challenging and crucial. Learners are likely to approach the text with a mixture of fear (of the foreign language), curiosity (what is there in the text) and excitement (of getting to know the unknown). The teacher's role should be one of facilitator, able to handle a domain having frightening language barriers for students who are taught English with the sole aim of passing the written examination paper. Therefore, in order to help them develop their oral skills, in particular, the teacher in the classroom achieves much by instilling a sense of adventure, with the reassurance of the pleasure and fun that is embedded in the text. The foremost concern is therefore, to look at the text 'as process – the processes of how texts work' (McRae and Vethamani, 1999: xi). The background, context, history and criticism of the text should come later.

##### 3.1.1 *Why Short Stories?*

The importance of stories, as expressed by Steiner (cited in Ainy, 1999:46), is that no tribe on earth is so desolate that it does not express its dreams, its hopes, its ambitions and fears in stories. As for the present study, short stories were chosen for a number of reasons. Stories

are a fundamental part of human experience and are generally capable of offering greater variety than longer texts. They offer a wide range dealing with different themes and this provides a greater chance of providing something to appeal to each individual student's tastes and interests.

Short stories are also compact and condensed in theme and idea, which is useful for arousing curiosity. They are capable of offering open discussion, inviting divergent, multifarious interpretations concerning the story line. They also encourage and motivate further exploration promoted by curiosity of 'what will happen next?'. With prediction exercises, characters and events are brought to life, and begin to exist in students' minds. They can be referred to again, in order to lead into an ongoing episode, which eventually builds towards the development of interpretative, and discussion skills, together with conversational skills and strategies.

Carter and Long (1991) divide prediction into two groups: short-term prediction and long-term prediction. Short-term prediction refers to students' involvement with the question 'what is going to happen next?'. Long-term prediction requires students to ask the question 'what will happen in the end?'. Since long-term prediction is a feature of many short stories, it is particularly fruitful to employ prediction practices in dealing with short stories in the literature classroom.

A further key element of many short stories is an abrupt and open ending, inviting one to probe into further imaginative thoughts, giving rise to the question of 'what else could it be like?'. Also the universality of the theme of a story can be transferred and transformed into any setting, thus allowing the recipient to draw parallels with her/his world.

### ***3.1.2 The Processes of Reading and Schema Theory***

The broad aims of this research stem from insights from classroom management and teaching methodology, and changes in attitude towards English teaching and learning in Bangladesh. They are based on a belief that current classroom materials, and the reintroduction of pieces of literary discourse, could be better exploited. A more effective learning would result if a different, friendlier approach and methodology were followed, 'one which enables us to be more faithful to what language is and what people use it for. The moment one starts to think

of language as discourse, the entire landscape changes, usually, forever' (McCarthy and Carter, 1994:201).

Reading is a constant process of guessing, and what one brings to the text is often more important than what one finds in it. Reading is an active process by which the reader tries to create meaning from the text. It is a communication between the writer and the reader, who reads the text with the purpose of getting the meaning. According to Wallace (1992), reading as interpreting means reacting to a written text as a piece of communication. While trying to make sense of the text, a reader gets involved in a process that Goodman calls a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (cited in Ainy, 2001:425).

One major contribution to the knowledge of reading, with many implications for the classroom, is provided by schema theory. This psychological perspective in reading has been noted as early as 1932, in the work of Bartlett with his notion of 'schema' which refers to 'an active organisation of past reactions or past experience' (Anderson and Pearson, 1988:39). The term 'schema theory' is used to describe how the knowledge that one has or has acquired about the world is structured into interrelated patterns, based on one's previous knowledge and experience. Schemata may be thought of as 'interacting knowledge structures stored in hierarchies in long term memory', as point out Rumelhart and Ortony (cited in Ainy, 2001:428).

According to schema theorists one comprehends something only when one can relate it to something one already knows. In the process of interpretation, every input is mapped against existing schema and all aspects of that schema must be compatible with the input information. These 'schemata' also help one to predict what may happen in a future perspective. This theory takes the idea of interactive reading process (between the reader and the text) a step further by proposing that efficient readers are able to relate 'texts' to their background knowledge of the world. Moreover, through the top-down approach in reading, the interaction process between the reader and the text involves the reader in activating knowledge of the world, combining past experiences, expectations and intuitions, to arrive at a meaning of the text.

The analysis and description of the reading process advocated by Fish (cited in Gilroy and Parkinson, 1996:216) is highly significant. It includes predicting what is to happen, storing

information that may help explain later events, and continually reassessing that which has gone before, while at the same time trying to make sense of it all. Iser argues (cited in Gilroy and Parkinson, 1996:216) that involvement of the reader with the text is a dynamic process where the reader continually adjusts his or her viewpoint while processing new information. To do so, the reader makes use of schemata, a stock of experience to help decode contradictions and uncertainties.

### ***3.1.3 The Classroom Methodology for EG***

The question of students' motivation becomes clearly important when they are expected to make an effort to personally engage with the texts. In this study, a three-phase approach to the text is considered, where students' existing content schemata can be activated in an attempt to enhance motivation to read. In doing so, an attempt has been made to base the activities mostly on prediction, choosing a text that has a definite, interesting and universal theme, but that is also humorous in nature, in order to capture the students' attention (3.1.1).

In doing prediction activities, the students can make inferences from what they have read and use these as a basis to predict other elements in the text. With the help of prediction practices the teacher can help the students to come to grips with the author's intention of creating a feeling of suspense as 'in a written text the author may intentionally withhold what happens, either to create a feeling of suspense, or to give the reader a deeper insight into the action' (Carter and Long, 1991:58). Moreover, the learner-centred approach would suggest the development of self-access reading schemes, so that readers with different interests may read different texts.

The methodology for the EG classroom has been adapted from a number of books concerned with the teaching of literature in the ELT classroom. The activities are divided into before reading (pre-reading), during reading (while reading) and after reading (post-reading). Regarding answers to the questions/activities it is decided that all suggestions should be accepted, and noted down for future reference and further discussion. The questions are not designed to test if the learner is right or wrong; rather they focus on issues they may want to think about and to explore further. Therefore, the students will be encouraged to offer their own ideas and opinions, not just to memorise the views and concerns of other people. In this area of study, there are a lot of possible answers to any single question.

Moreover, the integrated approach proposed in Chapter Two would give the learners more tools to handle the more 'traditional' questions. This approach does not ignore them; rather it would reach them through more careful, aware reading that would help the learners to answer any questions about the text in a fuller way. According to McRae and Vethamani (1999), as long as the students can justify their answer from the text, basing their judgement on objective criteria as well as some of their own subjective views, they should be able to answer any kind of question.

### **3.2 The Pedagogical Framework**

One of the goals of the present study is to ascertain whether it is possible, by using open-ended prediction activities, to raise students' interest in the text, to evoke their curiosity and imagination, leading to self-confidence and learner autonomy. Through the process, they are likely to produce improved performances, especially with regard to speaking, which is the most neglected component in the language-learning context in Bangladesh.

The task of English teachers, therefore, should not aim at handing over pre-digested meanings, but at teaching students to read and interpret for themselves. Thus, they should become reasonably skilled and sensitive readers, who should be able to feel and judge for themselves, with conformity to the textual facts. In order to achieve the goals outlined, a literature teacher needs to be equipped with an adequate approach, and be acquainted with the method through which the approach can be utilised, in order to exploit the potential and to achieve a maximum return in terms of successful teaching and learning outcomes. The focus is on language-based approaches, giving learners 'procedural' rather than 'declarative' knowledge – they learn 'how' to read rather than learning 'about' the text they read (McRae and Vethamani, 1999: xv).

As discussed previously, the process-oriented approach to reading tends to pay greater attention to the role of the reader in the ongoing processing of written language and the strategies that she or he draws on in constructing meaning from text. As pointed out by Wallace (2001) process accounts of reading are sometimes termed top-down, because they give greater emphasis to the background knowledge and values, characterised as 'schemata', which the reader brings to reading (3.1.2).



In the classroom, the role of the teacher, therefore, is to ensure a situation where students read a text because they are interested in it and eventually interested enough to play the guessing games in order to develop their faculty of imagination and interpretation. An important factor in generating motivation can occur in the pre-reading phase, which should, in turn, be linked to the reading and post-reading phases. It may be useful to review the aims of each phase, together with indications of the ways in which teachers may help themselves and their students to meet these aims.

In order to facilitate students' interaction with the text, and to encourage them to search into the meaning of the words in the text, a model has been developed for the teaching of literary texts in Bangladeshi EFL contexts. This model is an adaptation of the stages in teaching literature as advocated by McRae (1991). After the discussion of the stages mentioned, the model is formulated into a framework for planning activities in the teaching of literary works with the aim of developing the learner's thinking ability, leading to improved speaking ability.

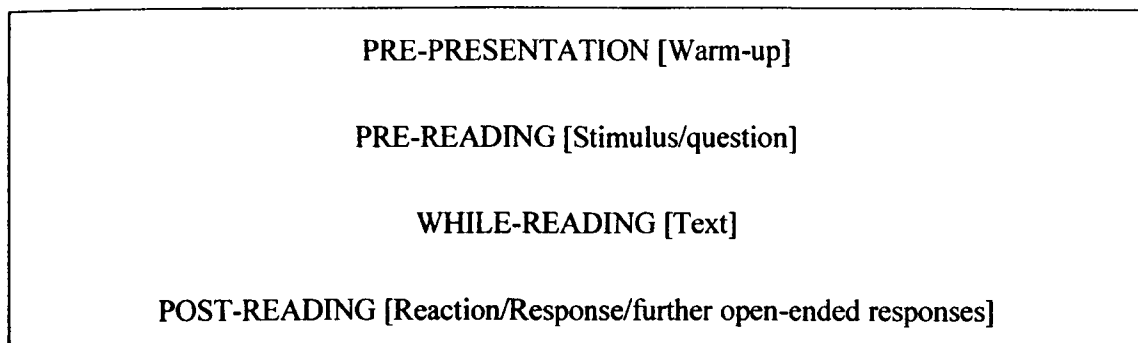


Figure 3.1: Stages in teaching literature (adapted from McRae, 1991:95)

### ***3.2.1 Description of Stages***

When the students are clear about the reading purposes of the text they will be in a position to consider the most appropriate type of reading to adopt. For the purpose of the present study, a number of wh- and open-ended questions, mainly based on prediction, were set. These stages are crucial in the development of the process of reading and then understanding the text through the development of imagination and interpretation that is likely to lead to improved spoken ability. Following is the description of the stages mentioned in Figure 3.1.

### ***3.2.1.a Pre-presentation Stage***

The pre-presentation stage can be considered as a preparatory stage since it involves preliminary work and acts as a 'warm-up' exercise to the text. Warm-up activities can be designed to set the mood, create interest, or spark curiosity. Thus a piece of text can be taken out of the classroom context removing the capital 'L' from literature, and replacing it with a small 'l' to give it an essence of a more naturalistic setting. They aim at making the task familiar, easier and more fruitful, and at arousing the learners' curiosity and involving them in the text's themes; therefore, it is useful to spend extra time on orientation and warm-up sessions.

In this stage, the stimulus for the tasks can vary from some simple literal comprehension questions to those which involve imaginative cognitive procedures with numerous possible answers. One of the main principles for incorporating this stage is that students will be motivated to read if the process of reading is related to them as individuals (Carter and Long, 1991). As a result, the students' own ideas, feelings, attitudes and opinions can be elicited based on their perceptions and experiences.

As pointed out by Collie and Slater (1987), the significance of this stage is that it not only sets the mood of the students and prepares them for the text, but also establishes a purposeful context for the reading of the text. At this stage, the teacher can arouse a sense of adventure while providing a supportive atmosphere that will be reassuring to the students.

### ***3.2.1.b Pre-reading Stage***

McRae (1991) defines the pre-reading stage as the single most important stage accompanying any text, as the appropriateness of the task set will enable teachers to capitalise on it 'in order to go deeply into the text' (ibid.: 99). It also gives a precise indication of what the students are to do with the text. Pre-reading questions are also useful because they focus the learners' attention on the types of information that they are about to encounter.

During this phase, students can be encouraged to become oriented to the context of the text; tune in to the content of the text; establish a reason for reading; express an attitude about the topic, add their own experiences in relation to the topic, activate existing cultural knowledge,

or become familiar with some of the language in the text. Pre-reading activities are lead-in activities that give access to a text. In this stage, the 'point of entry' to the text is identified and the communication between the student and text is initiated (McRae, 1991).

The pre-reading activities can provide the basis for subsequent readings, so that the initial insights and reactions can be confirmed or reconstructed. In addition, they complete the foundation for the development of a subjective response, which can be built upon, in the next stage of reading. Wallace (1992) and Lazar (1993) further assert that these activities can help students with cultural, conceptual and linguistic difficulties. Carrell et al. (1988) postulates that carefully planned pre-reading tasks that anticipate cultural and linguistic problems can pave the way for an enjoyable interaction between the student and the text. As it can be foreseen that Bangladeshi students will face difficulties with cultural and linguistic issues, these pre-reading tasks can assist in developing and utilising comprehension prompts. What a person knows about a topic is sometimes referred to as a content schema (Carrell, 1983). In these terms, what the pre-reading phase attempts to do is to activate existing schemata, and thereby enhance interest in the reading phase. Moreover, these activities involve making the whole class participate.

### ***3.2.1.c While-reading Stage***

From the perspective of reading as an interactive process, generally the aim of while-reading activities is to encourage learners to be flexible, active and reflective readers. According to Wallace (1992) these activities may require them to follow the order of ideas; react to opinions in the text; understand the information; ask themselves questions; make notes; confirm expectations or prior knowledge; or predict the next part of the text from various clues. Many while-reading activities attempt to promote a kind of dialogue between the reader and writer of the text.

The while-reading phase itself draws directly on the text aiming at enabling the reader to extract relevant information. At this stage, the specifically designed prediction tasks will focus on significant, and also problem areas in the text, such as vocabulary, syntax, contrasts, special and complex effects and ideas (McRae, 1991). All these features can be highlighted through language-based activities.

Moreover, as this stage is often a build-up to the post-reading activities, the reading is thus directed and focused. The student has now specific reasons for reading and the reaction during the pre-reading activities acts as a useful basis for this stage, directing the student's attention and interest in a specific way, in order to objectivise his/her response. The range of prediction activities can promote active engagement with the text as well as among the students in the classroom. Subsequently, as Carter and Long (1987) point out, an important feature of this stage is that the activities should aim to make explicit what is implicit in the reading of a literary text. Therefore, through stylistic analysis, students can be helped to explain how language is used to produce effects and responses.

### *3.2.1.d Post-reading Stage*

Post-reading activities will reflect upon the reading purpose set so that the students can check and discuss activities they have done while reading and make use of what they learnt from reading. The post-reading stage encourages the students to explore and express their own response to the text. This stage brings about a continuing process of interpretation, understanding and appreciation. The aims of the post-reading phase are to consolidate or reflect upon what has been read, and to relate the text to the learner's own knowledge, or opinions. As McRae (1991) points out, through subsequent readings and tasks, more meaning will emerge from the text, and subjective reactions can become more informed and objective responses. Therefore, the post-reading activities carried out should create a critical awareness and appreciation of the text and motivate the learner to think about the text beyond the classroom and should encourage them to read further.

Following the teaching stages discussed above, a pedagogical framework is proposed, which will be utilised for teaching literary texts in Bangladeshi EFL contexts. However, it should be pointed out that, the proposed framework is flexible and can be modified. Therefore, it should be perceived as being descriptive rather than prescriptive. Figure 3.2 illustrates the pedagogical framework and the contents of the framework are arranged in four boxes:

**THE TEACHING OF LITERARY TEXTS IN  
BANGLADESHI EFL CONTEXTS**



**INTEGRATED APPROACH**

Activities:

- Open-ended questions initiating prediction
  - Initiation of intuitions
- Student-centred and language-based approaches, associated with learner autonomy and personal growth model



**STAGES OF PRESENTATION**

Pre-presentation → Pre-reading → While-reading → Post-reading



**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- to develop students' imaginative interpretative faculties
- to develop students' personal response and justified interpretation
- to understand themes and messages in the text
- to describe characters and interpret their interactions and relationships
- to recognise and discuss issues of life as presented in the text
- to relate the story to one's personal life
- to make use of the events and messages of the story in real life situations thus making representational material valuable and usable for real life
- to develop students' self-confidence
- to achieve specific aims of the syllabus, i.e. improved speaking skills/ability

Figure: 3.2 The pedagogical framework

The top box of the framework (Figure 3.2) indicates that this study aims at teaching literary texts with the aim of developing learners' spoken skills by using learner-centred language-based approaches, and promoting personal growth and learner autonomy in the Bangladesh EFL contexts. The vertical arrow running from this box downwards to the second box suggests that with a suitable approach and adequate stages of presentation, the learning outcomes, mentioned in the final box, can be achieved.

The second box of the framework illustrates the steps of the approach, which will be used in teaching practice. They are: questioning techniques, presenting an intuition and student-centred, language-based approaches.

The third box indicates the various stages of presentation which will be used in the actual teaching process. The horizontal arrows running across the stages of presentation indicate sequence of order.

The fourth and final box, 'Learning outcomes' presents the list of skills the students would have achieved, having undergone the proposed framework.

The arrows running vertically from the boxes indicate that an integrated approach is used in all stages of presentation and that for all the stages, the activities suggested will be used eclectically.

It is hoped that the systematic student-centred, language-based personal growth approach to literature teaching will provide Bangladeshi EFL students with a starting point, which will enable them to begin to overcome the silences, prevalent in any English lesson, when they are asked to 'comment' on the text (Carter and Walker, 1989). It is also hoped that this approach will develop Bangladeshi EFL students' linguistic and literary competence as they become more and more conscious of how meanings are derived from literary texts. They will also be able to enjoy the motivating effects, better appreciate a literary text by making connections with their own lives, and express that verbally. In summary, it is hoped they will develop the ability to enjoy a piece of literature at the same time as learning the language, especially in order to be able to use it verbally when required.

### 3.3 Pedagogical Practice

In order to illustrate how a teacher can use the approach proposed by the study, some activities, which follow the suggested framework, will be considered in this section. These will be modelled on the literary text: 'The Luncheon' by W. Somerset Maugham. This story was included in the syllabus previously. So, the teachers are quite familiar with it whereas the students are not. The control group (CG) teacher will develop her own methodology and activities, whereas the experimental group (EG) teacher will follow the proposed one. The same text is selected for both CG and EG in order to observe the outcomes of using different methodologies, especially whether the alternative teaching approach helps in developing the students' speaking skills.

The tasks for each activity in EG are developed sequentially from simple to difficult which are basically presented in the following way:

- Level 1 activity will initiate answers to 'what' questions. These will demand observation on the learner's part, and the words and short phrases used will link to his/her prediction based on 'what happened' and 'character observation'.
- Level 2 consists of 'what next' and 'why' questions, answers, which demand higher prediction on the learner's part. The answers based on prediction will require sentence level competence, linking to 'what happened next', based on characters, and also will require greater narrative organisation.
- Questions based on 'how', 'why', and 'how well' will be classified as Level 3. The learners will need to use argumentation in order to support their prediction. The discourse level will be linked to the theme, based on interpretation and evaluation of a character. This level will also require narrative organisation, and inference of symbolic uses of language.

Thus, the activities, which hope to initiate more speaking in the learner, are categorised into three levels of difficulty, demanding simple to difficult output. Therefore, in the proposed set of activities compiled for EG, the stimulus for the tasks can vary from some simple literal comprehension questions to those which will involve imaginative cognitive procedures with numerous possible answers. The students will be able to think and jot down points (where necessary) before speaking up and their responses will be recorded on the observation sheet

and also on paper. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. The emphasis is given on interpretation, discussion, argumentation and negotiation skills. For the reading aloud activity, the learners will be expected to focus on pronunciation, fluency and expression. Each task is aimed at encouraging students to get closer to the text and to interpret it for its potential meaning. Each session will have questions, which will allow 12 possible scans on each student. The detailed grading criteria for the tasks on all three levels are presented in Appendix 1.

### ***3.3.1 General Aims and Objectives of Activities Devised with Regards to the Text***

This section of the study discusses the general aims and objectives of activities devised with regards to the text. The detailed aims and objectives of handling the text for the present study are presented in Appendix 2. The suggested activity types for the EG are adapted from Collie and Slater (1987) and are provided in Appendix 3.

As discussed earlier, when reading there is expectation regarding what will follow. Therefore, it is usual to predict, with a reasonable degree of certainty, the following word or words, and, with less certainty, the following paragraph, pages, and so on. Therefore, usually, when one is in the middle of any text, one's mind generally refers back to what has already been read, and projects forward to what one is about to read. Without prediction, the reader would lack orientation and reading would be more difficult. Prediction and reading fluency are, therefore, inseparable. When predicting a word or words, the process is partially linguistic and partially involves one's 'knowledge of the world' (3.1.2). Prediction differs from summarising. As pointed out by Carter and Long (1987), readers cannot summarise without having the whole text in front of them, however, they do make mental summaries of what they have read and use this as a basis to predict what will happen in the future.

Activities based on these characteristics are likely to invite the individual reader to note different things and react differently, opening up a range of possible elements that can be further explored and exploited. Analysis of this kind is likely to take students more deeply into the mechanisms of a text, helping them to justify their interpretations and reactions. The students are encouraged to look for the meaning themselves in order to interpret, discuss and reach their own conclusions. To quote Ur (1981:13), 'Language use implies thought; and a task involving talking must also involve thinking out'.



Ur adds, ‘The most natural and effective way for learners to practise talking freely in English is by thinking out some problem or situation together through verbal interchange of ideas; or in simpler terms, to *discuss*’ (ibid.: 2). The word ‘discussion’ here may broadly include anything from the simplest question-answer guessing process, to exploration of situations by role-play, aiming at efficient fluency practice, achieving an objective, e.g. exploring the implications of an idea, learning from content, e.g. consider new points of view, and finally participating constructively and cooperatively in a discussion, that involves clear, logical thought on the one hand, and debating skills on the other. What Ur (1981) means by logical thought is the ability to generalise from examples, or the converse, to draw analogies, judge priorities and infer causes. However, what is important in discussion activity, as Weston (1996) puts it, is that it lets students become involved in creative language production.

The proposed teaching approach, the activities and methodology for the EG classroom, provide a basis of preliminary and pre-literary techniques and procedures, which, it is hoped, will give students increasing confidence in their own understanding and appreciation of the text. The learning techniques and exercises mainly involve individual work and ensure the participation of the whole class. The activities are not a test as such, and invite open ended multiple answers. They are designed to improve the learners’ language competence, especially that of speaking, but all are directed to help learners to enjoy reading a variety of literary texts in English. The exercises should help them to learn how to explain their responses with direct reference to features of the text.

### **3.3.2 Teaching Somerset Maugham’s ‘The Luncheon’**

The story ‘The Luncheon’ by W Somerset Maugham is divided into nine sections for the sake of convenience (Appendix 4). The activities for CG and EG which have been trailed in the classroom are presented in sections 3.3.3 and 3.3.4.

One of the aims of teaching ‘The Luncheon’ in an experimental way was to help learners become more confident in their responses to literary texts and gain more direct enjoyment from a recent text. It is expected that the text they study will be enjoyable and interesting, that it will stimulate their thoughts and feelings, and that the methodology will help them discuss and express their reactions in English. If the research results in the students wishing to continue reading literature and expressing their thoughts orally in English, after working

through these introductory activities, then it will have been a success. A synopsis of the story is provided below:

***Synopsis:***

‘The Luncheon’ is a depiction of a small but interesting event that happened in the life of the writer when he was young. He was then living in Paris and, being flattered by one of his female readers, was compelled to invite her to Foyot’s, one of the most expensive restaurants in Paris, although he did not have the ability to afford that. However, he was to some extent interested to meet her and she also convinced him to treat her to such an expensive luncheon. The predicament of the writer during the lunch is the main focus and matter of interest in the story.

It can be assumed that the lady guest, who was not at all concerned for anyone but herself, managed to convince the young writer to satisfy her own desire. On the other hand, the writer admits that he very well knew about the poor condition of his purse and yet was unable to avoid his admirer, a lady of forty, who enjoyed the most costly lunch at Foyot’s at the expense of the writer’s bankruptcy.

However, after a long gap of 20 years they happened to meet again, and the writer found the lady had gained so much weight that he considered justice had been done to him by nature itself.

***3.3.2.a A Rationale for Choosing W S Maugham and ‘The Luncheon’***

W S Maugham and ‘The Luncheon’ were chosen for the present study because of the following reasons. A successful writer is able to encapsulate experience with a masterly economy of language and imagery. W Somerset Maugham was considered one of the most popular and the highest paid author in the world in the 1930s and in many of his fine works the surroundings are international and the stories are told in a clear and economical style. He is well reputed for his numerous interesting short stories which are condensed in form and full of character.

Moreover, the chosen text, 'The Luncheon', was included in the syllabus previously, therefore both the author and his works were familiar to the teachers in the present context whereas they were not familiar to the students. This familiarity with the text was assumed to be an advantage for the teachers in regards to their teaching, as they would feel comfortable to teach the story. A completely new story would not be a good choice because they may not feel at ease with that and will have to spend more time in firstly reading it and then devising activities for the students in a tightly time bounded situation.

The unfamiliarity of the story on the part of the students was considered an advantage because they will be introduced to a new author and his work outside the syllabus helping them to come out of the monotony of the syllabus-oriented classroom. This, it was hoped, would create a sense of suspense and interest in them. Moreover, a recognizable story might not be a good choice, because it might limit the students' choice of interpretation as they may bring along some pre-conceived ideas to the lessons that they had already gathered from previous lessons on the same story.

The setting of the story was considered to be exciting to the learners, for example, Paris being the emblem of high culture, society and fashion. The cultural elements in the story will give students a chance to make comparisons between the foreign culture and their own. The genuine, dialogic form of this story was a convenient component for the classroom, as the learners would be exposed to language that was genuine and undistorted. They would have to cope with language intended for native speakers but which is not too intricate, although they would have the scope to gain additional familiarity with many different linguistic uses, such as irony, exposition, argument, narration and so on, which could be explained to them by the teacher in a simple way. This particular story also incorporates a great deal of cultural information which is important in deepening the learner's understanding of life in the country where the language is spoken. In this regard, 'The Luncheon' offers a vivid context with characters emerging from different social backgrounds giving the reader a chance to 'discover their thoughts, feelings, customs, possessions; what they buy, believe in, fear, enjoy; how they speak and behave behind closed doors' (Collie and Slater, 1987: 4) and in this particular case, a chance also to look into a character's inner thoughts.

From the language enrichment point of view, 'The Luncheon' was thought to be a good resource because it is a comparatively contemporary work using contemporary English and

also because of the author's use of dialogic forms and the use of common, day-to-day phrases and vocabulary. This ensured an increase in the receptive vocabulary in the learner facilitating a more active form of knowledge. The writer used short sentences and simple language and the use of the simple narrative style without complication that dealt with universal themes, such as, conflict, flattery, sense of revenge, etc, were thought suitable for the target group.

The theme and plot of the story were thought appropriate particularly because of the element of suspense in it. The opening of the story permitted mystery which will enable the learner to be drawn into the text and create an eagerness to find out what happens as events unfold, thus initiating the sense of prediction in the learner.

The characters of the story were also drawn from everyday surroundings, and thus were able to stimulate a kind of personal involvement, helping the reader to feel close to the characters and share their emotional responses, and affording them opportunity to draw parallel examples from their own life. The elements of relevancy to life experiences and emotions, giving opportunity to have a fresh insight into issues which are felt to be close to the heart of people's concerns, were thought suitable in arousing interest, appeal and curiosity in the learner.

The learners' level of proficiency in the language was also considered while choosing the story. As students of Grade Nine, the language and cultural aspects, along with the theme and plot of the story, seemed to be just right and not too much above the students' normal reading proficiency. There still remains a difficulty that some learners might not yet possess the richness and subtlety of vocabulary and structure in which to phrase their response in the target language, however, it was felt that activities could be devised in ways that would allow the students to express themselves by making a limited linguistic repertoire go a long way.

The length of the selected story was another criterion for selection, as sheer length of some works could prove daunting. As observed by Collie and Slater (1987), reading or translating a work in class over a long period may become a routine and monotonous experience leaving the learner demotivated to open a foreign language book again. On the other hand, an exposition to 'bite-sized chunks' (ibid: 11) only may not be satisfactory to a student as they would not know the overall text. Therefore, the length of 'The Luncheon' seemed a good

choice as it is neither too short nor too long, and can be presented within a few lessons which is rewarding and motivating for teachers and students alike.

For the reasons stated above, it can be justified that the introduction of 'The Luncheon' was the proper choice. Its practical length paved the way for both students and teachers to handle it entirely within a few lessons. It is less daunting for the learner to reread the story on her own, and s/he may get that feeling of achievement at having come to an end of a whole work, much sooner. Moreover, the element of humour will have an added appeal to the learner's interest in addition to the compactness of the story that will work as a delight as the reader is allowed to see the universe within it and respond to it on an emotional level.

### ***3.3.3 Activities Devised for the Control Group (CG)***

The activities that were used in the CG classroom included:

Reading aloud; translating the sections into Bengali; text based short questions; word-meaning; identifying parts of speech; fill in the blanks; paraphrasing; statements: true/false; making sentences with words and phrases; rearranging sentences.

#### **DAY 1**

1. What is 'literature'?
2. What do we call the morning meal?
3. What is the main meal of the day called?
4. What do you understand by the word 'lunch'?
5. What do you understand by the word 'luncheon'?
6. Who are the characters?
7. How many characters are there in the section?
8. What is the meaning of the word 'play'?
9. What does 'Did I remember?' refer to?
10. What is meant by 'beyond my means'?
11. What is meant by 'I was flattered'?
12. What is meant by 'cut off coffee'?
13. Why did the writer agree to go to the restaurant?

## DAY 2

1. Who said this?
2. What is the meaning of the word 'senator'? (Asked by the student)
3. How much money did the writer have?
4. Can you tell me how old the lady was?
5. Who are the characters?
6. How many characters are there in the section?
7. What is meant by, *bill of fare*, *by all means*, and *quite pale*.

## DAY 3

1. Who are the characters?
2. How many characters are there in the section?
3. What do you understand by, '*My heart sank a little*', '*I asked, hospitable still, but not exactly effusive*', '*I fancy I turned a trifle pale*'?

## DAY 4

1. What is asparagus?

## DAY 5

1. What is the name of the writer?
2. What information do you have about the writer?
3. Name one of his famous writings.
4. What do you understand by the word 'appetising'?
5. Who had the 'innocent blush'?
6. What is the meaning of 'humorist'?
7. What is the meaning of 'vindictive'?
8. What does '21 stone' refer to?

## DAY 6

1. What is the name of the writer?

2. How did you find the lady guest?
3. How many sections have we been through?
4. What was there in section 1?
5. What happened in section 2?
6. How was he living at that time?
7. How did she know the writer?
8. What is the name of the restaurant?
9. How did you know that it was an expensive restaurant?
10. How much money did the writer have at that time?
11. How many items did the lady eat?
12. What was meant by the expression 'my heart sank'?
13. Who expressed 'Lord knew what they cost'?
14. Fill in the gaps with suitable words and phrases

It was the incident of \_\_\_\_\_. At that time the writer was living in \_\_\_\_\_. He had a \_\_\_\_\_ apartment in the \_\_\_\_\_. His \_\_\_\_\_ was then \_\_\_\_\_ enough to keep body and soul together. One of the writer's \_\_\_\_\_ readers wrote him a letter about his \_\_\_\_\_ writing. The writer \_\_\_\_\_ her.

15. True/false. If the statement is false then give the correct information.
  - a. W S Maugham was the best novelist.
  - b. Luncheon is the formal word for lunch
  - c. The writer met his lady guest again after 20 years
  - d. The writer thanked her for her letter.
  - e. The lady was slim after the long gap.
16. Make sentences with the following phrases: (homework)  
 To keep body and soul together; a modest luncheon; too old to...; by correspondence; by all means.

### **DAY 7: Test paper**

1. Give word meanings to the following words:  
 Mortify, seized, asparagus, waiter, expensive, effusive: 6
2. Rearrange the following sentences according to the sequence of the story: 8

- a. How time does fly!
  - b. She addressed me brightly.
  - c. Did I remember?
  - d. She had read a book of mine and had written to me about it.
  - e. It was twenty years ago and I was living in Paris.
  - f. She was passing through Paris and would like to have a chat with me.
  - g. I made up my mind and decided to cut off coffee for the next two weeks.
  - h. I was too young to say no to a woman.
3. Answer the following questions in short: 6
- a. The lady enjoyed and ate the costly items at Foyot's. What were the items that she ate?
  - b. How was the lady as a guest? (In 2 sentences)
  - c. How was the writer as a host? (In 2 sentences.)

#### ***3.3.4 Activities Devised for the Experimental Group (EG)***

The activities that were used in the EG classroom included:

Guessing games; simple prediction based on photographs; answering simple prediction questions initiating interpretation of the text in many different ways and also initiating text based information; grouping words to follow a story line; reading aloud with proper expression/gesture, and looking for word-meaning.

#### ***Pre-presentation Stage/ Pre-reading Activities:***

**Aim:** To develop an immediate appeal to the students' imagination and create interest and motivation to be involved in the following activities. Through prediction activities students are to make use of their knowledge around them, their schemata. The idea is to start by encouraging them to think and guess about the issues that will be discussed in the coming extracts and to predict about the story, in order to improve their interpretative, discussion, argumentation and negotiation skills.



As a pre-presentation initiation of student response activity, the teacher asks students to work individually and come up with possible answers with logic behind their choice by looking at the picture cuttings. They were also asked to relate the event they are imagining to their own experience. The title of the book could be kept undisclosed at this stage.

### **DAY 1: Initiation of student response**

1. Can you guess what we are going to read? (Pre-presentation activity)
2. Have a look at the pictures (set 1). Let us try odd picture out (group and pair discussion and response) (Level 1)
3. Look at the pictures (set 2). What are the pictures about? (Level 1)
4. Can you describe the place? (Level 1)
5. How do you know it is expensive? (Level 3, 2 scans)
6. With whom would you like to go to a restaurant? (Pre-presentation activity)
7. With whom do people generally go to a restaurant? (Pre-presentation activity)
8. What could the story be about? (Level 1)
9. What could the theme be? (Level 2)
10. Can you think about the characters that might be involved in the story? (Level 2)
11. Now, imagine the setting and try to describe it in one sentence. (Level 2)

### **DAY 2: Using key words and phrases from the story**

1. What could be the title of the story? (Level 1)
2. Why so?/ How did you infer that? (Level 2)
3. Here is a list of key words/phrases from the story:  
Play, interval, many years, luncheon, 20 years, Paris, earning barely, book of mine, Foyot's, restaurant, French senators, far beyond my means, manage, well-enough.  
You can use a dictionary, discuss with a friend or teacher for word meaning. Now, make a list of the words group-wise (in 3 groups maybe), this will help in formulating narrative links. (Level 1)
4. Try to find out possible narrative links between the words/phrases (the story line). (Level 2)
5. Who do you think has written this? A male or a female writer? Why? (Level 1)

Prompt: Here is a statement from the 1<sup>st</sup> section of the story uttered by one of the characters: 'if someone had not mentioned her name I hardly think I would have recognised her. She addressed me brightly'.

6. Who could be the 'I' in here? (Level 1)
7. Who is 'her'? (Level 1)
8. Try to build up your image/impression of the writer's personality/habit from the statement. (Level 1)
9. Try to build up your image/impression of the lady's personality/habit from the statement. (Level 1)
10. What could be his expression about her? (Level 1)
11. What could be her expression about him? (Level 1)
12. Why did the writer give the title of the story, 'The Luncheon' and not anything else? (Level 3)

***While- reading Activities:***

Aim: To lead the learners into the text. Questions can be given beforehand so that the students' thinking process is triggered before encountering the text. As they proceed they can make notes from the text and can be encouraged to discuss the answers they already had in mind and those they have now read the text...what difference does reading make?

**DAY 3:** Giving the 1<sup>st</sup> and last sections: predicting and inferring after reading these two sections

1. Who do you think wrote this? A male or a female writer? (Level 1)
2. Why do you think so? (Level 1)
3. Can you guess the age of the narrator? (Level 1)
4. Can you guess the nationality of the narrator? (Level 1)
5. Can you guess anything else about the story or the author? (Level 1)
6. What do you learn about the narrator's personality? (Level 1)
7. What do you learn about the lady's personality? (Level 1)
8. Can you guess the age of the lady? What else can you guess about her? (Level 2)
9. What do you think is the relationship between the characters? (Level 2)
10. How do you infer that? (Level 3)

11. Can you predict what is going to happen in between the first and the last sections? (Level 2)
12. What direction is the relationship between the characters likely to take? (Level 2)

**DAY 4:** Questions devised on sections 1, 2 and 3: predicting and inferring after reading these sections.

1. Read aloud: Sections 1 and 2
2. Where is the story going to be set? (Level 1)
3. What do you think it will be about? (Level 1)
4. Who is going to pay the bill? (Level 2)
5. What do you predict the narrator is going to remember? (Level 2)
6. What would be the possible reactions and impacts on their relationship if they were a young woman and a young man? (Level 2)
7. Read aloud: Section 3
8. Have you heard of any of the places listed below? What sort of association have you got with them? Can you deduce meaning from the context about the words? (5 scans on 5 words) (Level 2)
  - Latin Quarter,
  - Cemetery,
  - Paris,
  - Foyot's,
  - French senators

**DAY 5:** Questions devised on sections 4 and 5: predicting and inferring after reading these two sections.

1. Read aloud: Section 4
2. What foods of delicacy would be served in a restaurant in Bangladeshi context? (Level 1)
3. What food would you be preparing for your foreigner friend at home? (Level 1)
4. What was the first impression about the lady? (Level 1)
5. What are the other noticeable characteristics of the lady? (Level 2)

6. ‘...she gave me the impression of having more teeth’ – what could be the implications of this impression? (Level 2)
7. What is your opinion about the writer at this stage? (Level 1)
8. What would possibly have happened if the situation were reversed – a pretty woman meeting an elderly person who had appreciated her work and invited her to lunch? (Level 2)
9. Read aloud – Section 5 (up until ‘for myself...mutton chop’).
10. In what direction is the relationship developing between the writer and the lady? (Level 2)
11. Compare and contrast these characters. (Debates: friendly persuasion) (Level 1)
  - The lady’s
  - The writer’s

**DAY 6:** Questions devised on sections 5 and 6: predicting and inferring after reading these two sections.

1. Read aloud: the rest of Section 5
2. Put your arguments for and against each of them at this stage (based on observation that was made in last class). (Level 3)
  - The lady
  - The writer

After being through the whole section:

3. What are your feelings towards the lady at this point? (Level 1)
4. Why so? (Level 2)
5. What are your feelings towards the writer at this point? (Level 1)
6. Why so? (Level 2)
7. Put yourself in the writer’s shoes – what’s going on in your mind? (Level 1) (Thought bubbles)
8. Read aloud: Section 6
9. How is the writer feeling at this point? (Level 1)
10. What is your feeling towards him? (Level 1)

11. Put yourself in the lady's shoes – what's going on in your mind? (Thought bubbles) (Level 1)

**DAY 7:** Questions devised on sections 7 and 8: predicting and inferring after reading these two sections. Using key sentences: point of view

1. Read aloud: Section 7 (2 scans)
2. What was the writer thinking about when he said 'Panic seized me'? (Using key sentence/ Thought bubbles) (Level 1)
3. What else could the writer do if the bill was higher than his pocket? (Level 2)
4. 'I was past caring now.' Why is that so? (Using key sentence) (Level 1)
5. What would be your reaction in a similar situation? (Improvisation) (Level 2)
6. Find out the words describing foods. (Using cultural references)(Level 1)
7. What sorts of words/images would you use for describing some specific Bangladeshi cuisine? Name some and describe it. (Level 1)
8. Read aloud: Section 8
9. What do you think the writer could possibly do to manage the rest of the month? (Level 2)
10. What would you have done? (Improvisation) (Level 2)
11. 'Humorist!'...'You're quite a humorist!' – how and why did she find him to be a humorist? Is he? (Using key sentence) (Level 3)

**DAY 8:** Questions devised on section 9 and the whole story: predicting and inferring after reading the section. Debates: friendly persuasions.

1. Are you happy or sad about the lady's predicament? (Level 1)
2. Why so? Explain? (Level 2)
3. If you feel a bit sympathetic towards her, what could be done, do you think to prevent this. (Level 3)
4. How would you describe the personality of the narrator? (Level 1)
5. How would you describe the personality of the lady? (Level 1)
6. Would you like to be like him or her? Speak from your heart. (Level 2)
7. Try to evaluate both of their stands from different perspectives. (2 scans) (Level 2)
  - Lady's

- **Writer's**

8. 'The writer is too polite a person' – agree, disagree, don't know? Why? (Level 3)
9. 'The lady is after all innocent' – agree, disagree, don't know? Why? (Level 3)
10. 'The writer is cruel to say he had had his revenge at last', agree, disagree, don't know? Why? (Level 3)

### ***Post- reading Activities:***

**Aim:** Once the students have read the text there is a range of activities that can be used including discussion, drama and role-play. This is to let them carry on thinking on the theme and to come with new ideas and expressions using their imaginative faculty.

### **DAY 9: Retelling the story, improvisation, debates: friendly persuasion**

1. Make a gist/summary of the story stating the key points/statements (scan 1, 2 and 3) (Level 1)
2. What are the general characteristics of a Bangladeshi? (Level 1)
3. How would you, from a Bangladeshi's point of view, describe the character of the writer and of the lady? (2 scans) (Level 3)
4. How did you find the story? Boring? Amusing? (Level 1)
5. Why? (Level 3)
6. Did you find the text easily accessible? (Level 1)
7. Why and why not? (Level 3)
8. Do you find the theme thought provoking? If yes, why so? (Level 3)
9. Do you find it interesting enough to be called 'universal'? If yes, why so? (Level 3)

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, a pedagogical framework has been introduced, the practice of which will be analysed in the proceeding chapters of the study in order to observe students' responses to the proposed approach and activities in a genuine Bangladeshi EFL context. The activities designed for the teaching of 'The Luncheon' for the experimental group will serve as an example of how language based approaches, incorporation with a personal growth model to

literature teaching, can be utilised in an actual EFL context, in order to help learners achieve self-confidence, leading to learner-autonomy and improved speaking ability.

A brief context of Bangladeshi students has also been presented together with reasons for choosing a short story, which has been widely discussed in Chapter Two. This chapter has mainly been concerned with the validation of the proposed approach to be implemented in the classroom. In doing so, the general approaches and the objectives of the activities to be used in order to initiate speaking have also been discussed. The pedagogical framework was devised in order to see whether the data collected based on it would reflect certain observations and predictions made during the creation of the hypotheses for the current study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

Chapter Three suggested a pedagogical framework for the teaching of literary texts in Bangladeshi EFL contexts with the main aim of developing the learner's speaking skills.

This chapter makes an attempt to describe the design and data collection methodology for the present study. It also presents a description of the selected sample, data collection instruments and data collection procedures.

#### 4.1 Preliminary Considerations with Regards to the Research Methodology

Prior to the actual field research, the researcher needs a research design, which will enable him/her to conduct the research in an organised and systematic way. According to Frankfort and Nachmias (1996:99) the research design is the 'blueprint that enables the investigator to come up with the solutions to the problems and guides him in the various stages of the research'.

In conducting any research in the humanities and the social sciences, some fundamental problems regarding the issues, such as research questions and testing the hypotheses of the study, should be solved before the actual research begins. Questions such as, whom shall we study? What shall we observe? When will observations be made? How will the data be collected? How will the hypotheses of the study be tested? are all among the preliminary questions that occupy the researcher at the beginning of the research. It was equally important for the current study to explore these questions before the actual proceedings of the study started to take place.

Due to the empirical nature of the present study, it was vital to have a research design and follow it as closely as possible throughout the actual research. Moreover, it was also important to be aware of the main stages of the research process which is the overall scheme



of activities in which researchers engage in order to ‘produce knowledge, it is the paradigm of scientific inquiry’ (Frankfort and Nachmias, 1996:20).

The research process of the current study consists of six main stages: problem, research questions and hypotheses, research design, data collection, data analysis, and generalisation. It is of a cyclic nature starting with a problem and ending with a tentative empirical generalisation. This cyclic process continues indefinitely, reflecting the progress of a scientific discipline indicating that the solutions are only ever interim solutions. The first two stages of the process have already been explored and presented in chapters One and Two.

Since the proposed approach necessitates the teaching of literature to move away from teacher-centredness to greater student-centredness, it also implies that the teacher is a facilitator rather than a judgmental authority. As facilitators, teachers need to engender genuine interaction between reader and text in order to enable students to respond to, and reflect on, the meaning by themselves. It is hoped that the prediction activities devised for the study will encourage students to explore and express their own individual perceptions and understanding without teachers dictating to them what to see and what the meaning is. This will lead to a learner-centred classroom atmosphere and to greater learner autonomy.

Apart from the aim of providing a ‘way in’ to a literary text in order to develop response and to derive a more complete interpretation and appreciation, the present study also tries to illustrate the impact of the proposed way of literature teaching on Bangladeshi Grade Nine students. To this end, qualitative and quantitative data gathered in a genuine teaching/learning context will be presented.

## **4.2 Research Design**

Before the actual field research starts, issues and some justifications regarding choice of location for the study, the formations of the observed groups and the researcher’s role during the data collection phase need to be addressed. The following sections discuss the related issues.

#### *4.2.1 Locating a School in which to Conduct the Study*

Locating a school in which to conduct the study was one of the most important decisions to be taken in terms of the availability of resources. Those included class time, students, teachers, etc., together with mapping out a plan for additional classes and allocating time for undertaking interviews. All the classes taken and observed had to be between regular periods, and sometimes after school, for which special permission had to be obtained. The researcher also had to persuade teachers to work with these additional classes using the traditional and the proposed methodology.

The first and foremost difficulty was to find a government school, which was willing to tolerate the planned study which would occupy a substantial period of time. It should be noted here that it was more difficult to find time in the government schools, because of shortage of staff, excessive class sizes, and excessive lesson periods taken by a single teacher. More importantly, there was the lack of incentive to undertake anything outside the regular school period, owing to overwork on the part of the teachers. Moreover, most English teachers were engaged in private tuition, after school, generating additional income. Therefore, spending any extra time in school for the sake of research was quite challenging.

In order to solve the problem of finding the proper research environment, I contacted some government High Schools explaining the nature of the study and the degree of possible involvement for teaching staff and students. Most schools politely showed interest in the research, however, due to practical reasons, for example examinations, were not able to help.

It was a disappointing start, however, but eventually one of the leading government schools in the capital city Dhaka, Dhanmondi Government Girls' High School, agreed to help. I explained the research to the head teacher of the school, who put me in touch with the other teachers, especially the two who would be teaching the classes for me. The academic ranking of the school was average, a fact that has also been very convenient for the purpose of the current study. My research is focused on learners from average backgrounds who have minimum resources available to them. The intention is to explore how under such a circumstance they can aim at better performance in developing their oral expression and presentation, by making best use of the available materials and resources. Therefore, the

academic ranking of the school being average was ideal since, neither a very good nor a very poor sample can be considered as a good sample.

#### ***4.2.2 Meeting the Teachers and the Students***

During the initial appointments with the teachers, it was noted that they themselves had also complained about having few literary texts in the syllabus provided by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). They all felt that literature should be reintroduced in the class in order to generate and stimulate better involvement on the part of the students. The teachers expressed their willingness to take part in the study, and to be introduced to teaching methodologies other than those currently used in the classroom. Therefore, it was also felt that this particular school would provide easy access and appropriate research opportunities, although I was not at all familiar with the environment. Many social science researchers emphasise the importance of being familiar with the research setting; for example, Frankfort and Nachmias (1996:287) point out that ‘investigators who are outsiders to the research setting may have more difficulty gaining access and information’. However, I was hopeful in overcoming this limitation through my visit and conversation with the faculty and the students.

I had more sessions with the subject teachers, as they were the main coordinators of my study. Initially one, in her capacity as class teacher, introduced me to the students to whom I outlined the activities to be undertaken during the next few weeks. They were all very enthusiastic, young girls aged between 14 and 16. They were preparing for their Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination a year later.

#### ***4.2.3 The English Classes***

The school followed the national curricula centrally provided by the NCTB; therefore they devoted equal time to Bengali and English classes. Learners preparing for SSC examination had to take a pre-test before the final, and pass the subjects, otherwise the school authorities had the right to withdraw them from the examination that year. However, this was rare because students were provided with special coaching classes, which cost extra, in order to improve weak areas before the final. As mentioned in Chapter Two, English is one compulsory subject which students must take and pass.

Each class usually had around 60 to 80 students with a single subject teacher taking care of them. Teachers had undertaken some teacher training courses and hold a Master's degree. They, of course, abide by the syllabus, and as nothing was tested from the literary part of the syllabus during final examination, they tended to ignore that section in class. Therefore, it came as no surprise when students demonstrated their ignorance regarding literary pieces included in the textbook. Class time was, thus, mainly occupied by the language content and activities surrounding this. All government schools in Bangladesh use Bengali as the medium of instruction throughout.

#### ***4.2.4 Formation of the Study Groups***

The study groups consisted of two comparable groups: an experimental (EG) and a control group (CG), matched for age, sex, and social class, on the principle that if two identical groups are selected, one of which (the EG) is given special treatment and the other (the CG) is not, then any differences between the two groups at the end of the experimental period may be attributed to the difference in treatment (Bell, 1993). The features of the experimental situation or external events that occur during the experiment are likely to influence the two groups equally. Frankfort and Nachmias (1996) also emphasise the necessity of having groups, which were similar in nature because, if the experimental and control groups were relatively equivalent, then the researcher can feel fairly confident that everything except the treatment was the same.

The present study was conducted with a total number of forty students, twenty in each group. The EG teacher offered her class for the entire study with the hope of having better control over the students. In the school the students' roll numbers are allocated on the basis of their merit in final examinations. So, it was decided to choose the even numbers in one group and the odds in the other to maintain a balance between 'good', 'average' and 'comparatively poor' students in each. It was hoped that assignment of subjects in this way would help establish a causal relationship. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that all possible causes were considered. Therefore, both groups were fairly similar with regard both to their socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and in language competence. Thus, the experimental style allowed conclusions to be drawn regarding cause and effect if the experimental design was sound.

#### **4.2.5 Teachers and Students: Initial Problems**

In carrying out any research it is very important that strict ethical standards are maintained at all times, informing the students as well the co-workers of the exact procedure to which they must agree. To quote Simons:

However harmonious relationships in a school appear to be, however democratic the organization, trust does not automatically exist between professionals. It has to be created (Simons, 1984:127).

Therefore, the preparation for data collection proceeded on the following lines. Informal discussion was made with the head teacher to obtain agreement in principle. Refinement was completed of the activities on the text, statement of the objectives of the study and preparation of a project outline. Discussion also took place with the teachers to make adjustments to the project outline and the methods to be used. Formal submission of the project outline to the head and teachers involved was also done, together with names of colleagues and students I wanted to interview, and certain guarantees and conditions under which the research would be conducted.

The conditions and guarantees under which the research would be conducted included that all participants would be offered the opportunity to remain anonymous, and information obtained would be treated with the strictest confidentiality. The research would attempt to explore educational management in practice, with the hope that the final finding would be of benefit to the school and to those who participated.

To be able to administer the study within allocated research time, it was decided to minimise the number of students interviewed. However, I tried to keep a balance between the two groups for the pre-treatment interview. Students from the EG took part in a post-treatment interview in order to provide feedback on the treatment lessons. This was undertaken in the interests of the specific research purposes, and for practical reasons.

The initial discussion with the teachers suggested that the CG teacher tended to teach literature using a more traditional approach, whereas the EG teacher tended to be more innovative in her classes and was willing to try new methodologies. Detailed analysis of the data is presented in Chapter Five.

#### ***4.2.6 The Course and the Classroom Setting***

The course, during which the EG and CG were observed, was short story appreciation which involved making best use of existing language input and schemata. The selected story was 'The Luncheon' by W. S. Maugham. The CG teacher was to deal with it in her own way, devising her own activities, etc., whereas, the EG teacher was to teach the class following the proposed method and using the activities compiled by the researcher. The aim of the study was to see the impact on, and reaction of the learners, with respect to the story on the basis of the methodologies that they had been exposed to during the lessons. If any impact was observed, how did this affect learners' speaking ability in particular?

Both the teachers stated that they were ready to help with the main study and both were asked to provide the researcher with a lesson plan. The CG teacher was given the copy of the text and was requested to conduct her lessons in the usual way, the one that she had been using for years. The students in CG were given the copy of the text whereas it was decided to provide text bit by bit to EG as they were to be exposed to the world of imagination and prediction. The researcher, during the lessons, marked the observation sheet and took field notes based on her observation.

The classroom setting was a typical one with students' desks in rows and a table and a chair for the teacher on a slightly higher podium at the front of the room. Behind the teacher's table was a blackboard. The room was big enough to accommodate 60-80 students. A further chair and table were brought in. As an observer, I stationed myself in a corner of the room undertaking my own work and attempting not to distract the teachers and the students in any way. However, it was necessary to move to another room later on because of noise coming from adjacent rooms during breaks. The second room was quieter, but there was still disruption because of the ongoing construction work nearby.

#### ***4.2.7 The Role of the Researcher during the Field Research***

Since the qualitative nature of the present study requires the researcher to make many observations during the research process, it was crucial to decide what type of role I would adopt in the classes. At the initial stage, two types of field research were considered: complete participant and participant-as-observer. In a complete participant type of research,

observers become participating members of the group of interest without revealing their identities or research goals to the group. However, as pointed out by Frankfort and Nachmias (1996), this type of research poses several methodological problems. First, since researchers may become so self-conscious about revealing their true selves, they may easily lose the research perspective. Second, it is difficult for the researcher to decide what to observe because s/he cannot evoke responses or behaviour and must be careful not to ask questions that might raise the suspicions of the persons observed. Third, recording observations or taking notes is impossible on the spot. These have to be postponed until the observer is alone, and time lags in recording observations may cause selective bias and distortions through memory.

On the other hand, in a participant-as-observer form of research, observers become participants during the treatment of the group by revealing their identities and the goal of their research. In this type of observation method, as Cohen and Manion (1994:110) observe, researchers are able to 'discern ongoing behaviour as it occurs and are able to make appropriate notes about its salient features.

In view of the limitations of the complete participant type of field research, contemporary field workers most often assume the participant-as-observer role. Considering the qualitative nature and goals of the study, it seemed more appropriate to adopt for myself the role of participant-as-observer during the field research.

### **4.3 Data Collection Instruments**

The following variety of qualitative data collection methods were utilised to facilitate validation and triangulation (5.2.4) of the present research:

1. Pre-and post-treatment questionnaires for students (Appendix 5 & 6)
2. Pre-treatment questionnaire for teachers (Appendix 7)
3. Pre- and post-treatment interview questions for students (Appendix 8 & 9)
4. Pre-treatment interview questions for teachers (Appendix 10)
5. Post-treatment interview questions for experimental group teacher (Appendix 11)
6. Observation Sheets 1 and 2 (Appendix 12 & 13)

All the interviews, questionnaires and classroom data on performance were transcribed and translated into English later.

#### ***4.3.1 Pre- and Post-treatment Questionnaires: The Students***

All forty participants in both CG and EG were given a pre-treatment questionnaire consisting of open-ended as well as multiple choice questions, in order to compile information about their educational background and their attitudes towards literature teaching methodologies employed in their classes. The questionnaire took about thirty minutes to complete.

A post-treatment questionnaire, taking between five and ten minutes to complete, was administered to both groups after they had experienced the lessons, in order to get their responses to that particular teaching. The data gathered in EG revealing the students' responses and attitudes towards the lesson and the teaching approach were compared with that of the CG and also with the data gathered from the pre-treatment questionnaire. The participants, however, were reminded that the purpose of the post-treatment questionnaire was to assess the value of the teaching methods and materials, which were used in the class, not to assess the performance of the students or the teacher.

#### ***4.3.2 Pre-treatment Questionnaire: The Teachers***

A pre-treatment questionnaire was administered among teaching staff in order to gather data about their background and teaching experience, their view on the existing English syllabus, their familiarity with current literature teaching methodologies, their views regarding the necessity of developing speaking skills, and their objectives in literature teaching. They were also asked to comment on the relationship between language, literature and spoken skills and to suggest ways for improving the teaching of English literature in Bangladesh.

#### ***4.3.3 Pre- and Post-treatment Interviews: The Students***

Several of the students in CG and EG were interviewed before and after the treatment classes. Semi-structured questions were used for the interview and they were solely based on the researcher's views. Interviews were initially conducted in the classroom, but owing to noise problem, the head teacher allowed the use of one of the rooms in her house, which was



located on campus. Girls came in groups of two or three to take part in the interview. Each recording session took between forty-five minutes and one hour and was conducted in a mixture of Bengali and English. Students were selected on the basis of their availability after school. Pre-treatment interviews were conducted in order to discover students' motivation, and the nature of their contributions in class. Questions were also asked concerning their attitudes towards literature and teaching methodologies employed in their classes.

The post-treatment interviews were conducted among the EG students, in order to find out their overall impression of, and reaction to, the proposed methodology and teaching atmosphere that prevailed in their class. The students were asked about their motivation in, and contribution to, the class. In addition, they were asked to comment on the positive and negative aspects of the proposed approach, and to describe how they would teach the same course if they were the teacher. Samples of both pre- and post-treatment interviews are presented in Appendix 14.

#### ***4.3.4 Pre- and Post- treatment Interviews: The Teachers***

Four teachers including the CG and EG teachers were interviewed individually at the beginning of the research. During the interview, they were asked to describe their objectives and approaches in teaching literature. They were also asked about the difficulties they encounter during teaching, and their opinion about the integration of language and literature in the lessons of English. Most of the teachers decided to conduct the interview at their own time and convenience. Audiotapes and interview questions were therefore provided.

The EG teacher, whose class was exposed to the treatment, was interviewed again at the end, in order to obtain her responses regarding the performance and attitudes of the students towards the teaching approach proposed by the study. She was to comment on the proposed teaching approach and whether or not it was systematic, beneficial for students, and worth adopting for her classes. Samples of interviews are presented in Appendix 14.

#### ***4.3.5 Observation Sheets and Field Notes***

A structured observation schedule was followed in the study. Two observation sheets, observation sheet 1 (adapted from Hopkins 1985, and Peacock, 1997) and observation sheet

2 (adapted from Nunan, 1989, and Peacock, 1997) were utilised in each classes to measure the hypotheses of the study, and to enable comparison of the performances of CG and EG. Observation Sheet 1 was used to quantify learner on-task behaviour. The observer entered 'Two' if participants were on task and 'One' if they were off-task, until all participants had been observed 12 times. Observation Sheet 1 also aimed at finding the frequency of English use during the lessons in order to calculate and quantify the EG learners performance in English. This will allow the study to draw a conclusion about improved performance in English, if that was found so. An indication was clearly made within brackets if the answer was produced in Bengali. Observation Sheet 2 was used to assess overall class motivation generated by the materials in use, as manifested by levels of learners' interest, enthusiasm, activity, and persistence with the learning task, concentration, and enjoyment during class. Each item was scored on a scale of one (low) to five (high). Observations on Observation Sheet 2 were made when the lesson was drawing to a close. A daily analysis of each class was thus produced.

#### ***4.3.6 Justification for Using the Data Collection Tools***

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) observe that a major difficulty in data collection is the individual's awareness of being studied (participant reactivity), which can affect the accuracy of the data and the internal validity. An individual might take different 'roles' in reaction to his or her awareness of being a participant in research. Some of these possible roles as advocated by Tashakkori and Teddlie are: (a) 'good' or 'helpful' participant, (b) 'apprehensive' participant, (c) 'faithful' or 'honest' participant, (d) 'suspicious' participant, and/or (e) 'antagonistic' participant (ibid.:99). Although it is usually impossible to determine what exact role a participant has taken, obviously, the researcher requires the participants to respond, as honestly as possible and/or to behave in as natural and an uncontrolled manner as they do when they are not under observation. This can be achieved to some extent by making the subjects at ease both with the researcher and the methodology to be employed. The following discussion attempts to justify the uses of the different data collection tools for the present study.

- ***Interview Technique***

The interview, a powerful method of data collection, is more frequently used in qualitative research. It provides one-to-one interaction between the researcher and the individual

subjects, providing an opportunity to ask for clarification if either an answer is vague or a question unclear. Whereas questionnaire responses have to be taken at face value, a response in an interview can be developed and clarified. Interviews can be classified into qualitative and quantitative, although there is actually a continuum ranging from unstructured and open-ended to highly structured and closed. The qualitative interview is usually non-directive and very general ('Tell me about your school'). Interviews used in the traditional quantitative approach are more structured and usually closed-ended (Which one of the following would you say describes the food in the school cafeteria: 'Very good', 'good', 'bad', or 'very bad'). In traditional qualitative research, unstructured interviews are used extensively and responses are usually recorded (audio, video or both), transcribed, and subjected to 'content analysis'. Interviews are, however, time-consuming and expensive, with the risk that the interviewer will unknowingly affect the responses of the interviewee through gestures, mannerisms or verbal feedback. If the researcher is also the interviewer, there is the danger of displaying subtle signs of agreement with statements and/or responses. However, it is well established that interviews can yield rich material and can often expand upon questionnaire responses. Bearing these points in mind, I decided to try out both questionnaire and interview tools in order to gather data, which would also contribute to triangulation.

- *Questionnaire Technique*

According to Oppenheim (1966:vii) though common sense and the ability to write plain English will help, that will not be sufficient in producing a well-designed questionnaire. Therefore, care should be taken in selecting question type, in question writing, in the design, piloting, distribution and return of questionnaires. As observed by Anderson and Arsenault (1998), if well constructed, a questionnaire permits the collection of reliable and reasonably valid data in a simple, relatively inexpensive and timely manner. While time-consuming, constructing a questionnaire is a good way to sharpen what the researcher really needs to know, and if done thoroughly, it will greatly facilitate the data analysis phase of the research.

Similar to interviews, questionnaires may combine closed and open-ended items. Open-ended items have different levels of 'openness'. Some may ask for a one-word response to a specific question while others may ask for many sentences. Moreover, questions may be in different formats, for example, multiple-choice items ('Please circle one of the following that

best represents [...]’). They may also be in the form of checklists, with respondents asked to check all options that apply to them.

While framing questionnaires for the present study, due to time constraints, the nature of the study and also in order to avoid confusion among the respondents, it was at times necessary to frame questions that would require the respondent to be precise, focused and definite in her choice. These types were meant to be objective and work as supporting data for the initial questioning. Therefore, some closed-items typically involving more structured elicitations were included because they offered narrower but more precise and comparable selections of what the respondents knew, or were able to do. The open-ended items aimed at eliciting diverse data and points of view with the awareness that they are more demanding on time and may be off-putting to respondents and also that they may not be the most effective ways to target precise information (Allison 2002). The other concern was that, if open-ended questions carried not much interest for respondents, only a small amount of data would be elicited in any case. However, Nunan (1992) points more optimistically to the wealth of data that open-ended questions can elicit. Moreover, respondents were invited to add comments on items that were otherwise closed with the hope that the added information might serve as a positive force against frustration on the part of the respondents who might find it difficult to fit what they wanted to express into the pre-determined confines of closed-option items. Open questions help discover the respondent’s priorities and frame of reference. They tend to be easy to answer and pose little threat since there are no right or wrong answers. Closed questions, on the other hand, are specific and frequently restrict the options available to the respondent. Nevertheless, as supported by Anderson and Arsenault (1998), in general, open and closed questions are complementary and often work together to provide a balanced, smooth-flowing and yet controlled flow of data. Therefore, it was thought best to include both open-ended and closed items in order to obtain maximum data, as the researcher aimed at eliciting as much information as possible from the respondents to avoid finding herself in a void with an urge to return to the research setting, once the data collection procedure had been completed. This would not be possible in the case of the present study.

However, it should be acknowledged here that the designing of questionnaires is problematic in that the questions themselves may be geared towards eliciting the answers required. As pointed out by Bryman (2001) leading or loaded questions are ones that appear to lead the respondent in a particular direction. The obvious problem with such questions is that they

suggest a particular reply to respondents, although customarily they do have the ability to disprove any implied answer. It is not always easy to spot a leading question, but the use of emotive language or the way a question is put can lead respondents to answer questions in one way. While constructing the questions, care has been taken not to precede questions with a position statement, because this may tend to lead the respondent in a given direction. This awareness was taken into account while designing the questionnaires for the present study and therefore care has been taken to avoid the inclusion of leading questions as far as possible and also by avoiding value judgements and agreeing or disagreeing with the respondent. However, in conducting the research, it was necessary to design questions in order to be able to procure the information that was needed, and that will be acceptable to the subjects and that will give the researcher no problems at the analysis and interpretation stage. There were probe-questions designed to fill out the picture of whatever it was the researcher was trying to understand and also to encourage the respondent to elaborate a point and not necessarily to lead her to a desired conclusion. Proper care has been taken to frame neutral questions as much as possible rather than value-laden or leading ones.

Questionnaires are normally paper-and-pencil methods of data collection where the drawback is the need for follow-up reminders and possible lack of response. To minimise these drawbacks participants in the present study were asked to hand in the completed questionnaire directly to their class teacher, which had positive impact on response.

Attitude scales are commonly used in survey research. These scales include measures of attitudes, beliefs, self-perceptions, intentions, aspirations, and a variety of related constructs. Researchers who use one type of such scale in their research typically employ a Likert-type or an Osgood-type (semantic differential scale).

Likert-type scales ask the respondents to express their degree of agreement/disagreement with issues on response scale consisting of four or five options ('strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree'). A number could be assigned to each response (e.g., +2, +1, -1, -2, according to the direction and magnitude of agreement). All item scores are then added up to obtain an overall attitude score for the whole questionnaire, or for each section of it. Alternatively, percentages can be calculated to see the trend of the response. This latter method has been chosen for the present study using Likert-type scale.

- ***Observational Methods***

Observation is a technique that can often reveal characteristics of groups or individuals, which would have been impossible to discover by other means. Interviews, as Nisbet and Watt (1980:13) point out, provide important data, but they reveal only ‘how people *perceive* what happens, not what actually happens’. Direct observation may be more reliable than what people say in many instances. It can be particularly useful to discover whether people do what they say they do, or behave in the way they claim to behave (Bell, 1993). ‘Participant’, ‘naturalistic’, and ‘ethnographic’ observation have been used to identify a variety of data collection methods in which researchers observe behaviours or events in their natural setting and record them. In all of these observational methods, the researcher is an active participant in the interpersonal environment of the unit that is being observed.

Observations eliminate the need to ask individuals about their behaviours or tendencies, and reduce the possibility of controlled responses. However, reactivity problems still persist as an awareness of being observed might have social-psychological effects on individuals. Nevertheless, to serve the purpose of the present study, two different observation sheets were used in order to quantify learners’ on-task behaviour according to their responses to the lessons and also to find out their level of motivation and participation during this time.

#### **4.4 Piloting the Data Gathering Instruments**

Initially it was intended to pilot all of the data gathering instruments. However, after reviewing the circumstances, it was decided that piloting would take place only once with the teachers and the students, after confirming that they were sure of their task and what was expected from them. Before the final study took place, instructions were made clear to everyone through an hour-long question session. Time constraints and difficulty with availability of classroom and students, as well as teachers, were among the main reasons for not undertaking a pilot study. However, while the students were completing the questionnaire, they were asked if the instructions, questions and layout of the questions were sufficiently clear.

The observation sheet, which was designed to quantify learner on task behaviour, required the observer to enter specific numbers. To make the task systematic, the students were asked

to take their seats according to their roll numbers in order to track their answers. Twenty different answers supported by appropriate logic were expected from the twenty students on each question.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the design and data collection methodology of the present study have been described. It has also presented the description of the selected sample, data collection instruments and data collection procedure. The next chapter, Chapter Five will look at the data obtained from the control and experimental groups and then make an attempt to analyse them, mostly based on qualitative data analysis methods. Finally, the concluding chapter, Chapter Six, aims at summarising the findings in connection to the previously identified research questions (1.5.1) and hypotheses (2.10) made earlier.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

#### 5.0 Introduction

Chapter Four presented a description of the design and data collection methodology of the present study. It also described the selected sample, data collection instruments and data collection procedure. This chapter mainly focuses on data in the form of words, that is language in the form of extended text. It attempts to analyse and present the results, together with interpretations of the data collected through tape recordings of interviews, observation sheets, field notes and questionnaire surveys.

The chapter takes into account the data analysis methodology which will mainly be qualitative. However, there is a discussion and justification of the benefit and adequacy of linking qualitative and quantitative data analysis methodologies for the present study.

As the present study involves empirical research, it is small scale and oriented to particular classroom contexts. Most empirical research projects are qualitative and ethnographic in their approach, and are welcomed for their focus on specific, local contexts. This makes their conclusions difficult to generalise with confidence. They, nonetheless, offer avenues for application and variation in other specific contexts. A successful study, therefore, is likely to provide the reader with a three-dimensional picture to illustrate relationships and patterns of influences in a particular context. In the case of the present study, dealing with one government school enhances the chances of providing suggestions and recommendations that may be equally workable in any other government institution in Bangladesh.

#### 5.1 Data Analysis Methodologies

Traditionally, research (in the 'human sciences' at least) has been composed of two approaches. The first is quantitative and aligns itself with the 'pure sciences'. It is known as *psychometry*, and is defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary as 'the science of measuring mental capacities and processes'. The second is qualitative, and is usually termed *ethnography* and



involves the study of the culture/characteristics of a group in real-world rather than laboratory settings. The researcher makes no attempt to isolate or manipulate the phenomena under investigation, and insights and generalizations emerge from close contact with the data rather than from a theory of language learning and use (Nunan, 1992:55).

### ***5.1.1 Qualitative Data Analysis: Underlying Issues***

This chapter of the study mainly focuses on data that are based on observation, field notes, interviews and questionnaires, and therefore are, usually in the form of qualitative data, in other words, generally in the form of words rather than numbers. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data, one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events lead to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations. Moreover, good qualitative data are more likely to lead to ‘serendipitous’ findings and to new integrations. They help researchers to get beyond initial conceptions and to generate or revise conceptual frameworks. Finally, the findings from qualitative studies have a quality of ‘undeniability’ (Miles and Huberman, 1994:1). Words, especially organised into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid and meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader, another researcher, a policymaker, or a practitioner – than pages of summarised numbers.

Most forms of qualitative research have the following main features:

- Naturalistic (non-interventionist)
- Limited pre-conceived ideas
- Theory forming
- Large amounts of data collected
- Small amount of total data included in final account
- Difficult to analyse independently (low internal reliability)
- Difficult to replicate (low external reliability)
- Subjective evidence
- Contexts resemble those the researcher wants to generalise (higher external validity)
- Intervening variables, meaning causal relationships cannot be ascribed (lower internal validity)
- Focuses on the social context of learning

According to Woods:

Qualitative research is concerned with life as it is lived, things as they happen, situations as they are constructed in the day-to-day, moment-to-moment course of events. Qualitative researchers seek lived experiences in real situations.... This is an attempt to ensure that data analysis will closely reflect what is happening (Woods, 1999: 2-3).

For the current study, the researcher carried out the data collection activities in close proximity to a local setting for a sustained period. However, qualitative data are not usually immediately accessible for analysis and require some processing; for example, there remains the need to correct raw field notes. This is mainly due to the limitations that surround any qualitative research and qualitative data analysis, which must be admitted and acknowledged.

### *5.1.2 Limitations and Strengths of Qualitative Data*

There are some implicit concepts that inevitably frame the descriptions of fieldwork experiences. As Counelis (1991:267) suggests, 'a written description (data) of someone clenching a fist and grimacing as 'angry' is a conceptual substitute for the direct experience of one's own feelings and perceptions'. The processing of field notes is problematic because they are really texts constructed by the field-worker based on observation and participation. What may be generated as 'data' is affected by what the researcher can treat as 'writable' and 'readable'. Similarly, there are many different ways to transcribe tapes, which produce rather different texts. For instance, some researchers in social sciences prefer a hands-on approach and transcribe their own data; others may prefer to have their data transcribed for them.

In other words, qualitative data are not so much about 'behaviour' as they are about actions (which carry with them intentions and meanings and lead to consequences). Some actions are relatively straightforward; others involve 'impression management' – how people want others, including the researcher, to see them (Miles and Huberman, 1994:2). Thus, the apparent simplicity of qualitative data masks a good deal of complexity, requiring much care and self-awareness on the part of the researcher. However, one major feature of adequately collected qualitative data is that they focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, providing a firm grasp of what 'real life' in the research environment is like.

A further feature of qualitative data is their richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity. Such data provide 'thick descriptions' which are vivid, nested in real

context, and have a ring of truth that has a strong impact on the reader (Miles and Huberman, 1994). However, the level of competency in analysis is the main strength of any kind of data.

### ***5.1.3 Linking Qualitative and Quantitative Data: An Integrated Approach***

The issue is not between quantitative and qualitative methods (or rather, tools), but rather open-mindedness about different ways for arriving at understanding, without assumptions of differential scientific value. Such open-mindedness can lead to a fruitful combination of research methods to address particular problems and questions (van Lier, 1988:12).

Traditionally qualitative and quantitative research approaches are two opposing methodologies. However, it is useful to view qualitative and quantitative research as complementary and promote their joint use whenever possible, since these are the ways of looking at the research environment from different perspectives. Godwin and Godwin (1996) examine the similarities and complementarities between qualitative and quantitative research. From their point of view, the knowledge generated by each approach and the measurement methods of each are complementary. They also suggest that each approach can inform and assist the other. Qualitative research produces knowledge that emphasises process, extrapolation, understanding, and illumination, whereas, quantitative research produces knowledge that focuses on outcomes, generalisations, predictions and causal explanations. Borg and Gall (1989) share similar views by seeing the approaches not in opposition, but each fortifying the other. To quote Tsui:

As Hammersley (1986) points out, a good understanding of classroom interaction would require both quantitative and qualitative studies. Classroom interaction studies have benefited and will continue to benefit from an open-minded attitude to an eclectic combination of research methods as well as to insights from a number of disciplines (Tsui, 2001:125).

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), combining the two approaches provides richer data than either approach as each approach either validates or complements the data collected through both.

So what might an integrated approach involve when investigating the effects of authentic materials on learning? The first thing to note is that a true experimental approach is impossible with classroom-based research. In addition, the non-randomisation of subjects before they are put in groups weakens the formation of statistical generalisations for the wider population. A comparison between a control and an experimental group may make it

difficult for the researcher to ensure that all the variables, except the ones being investigated, are kept constant since each classroom is composed of individuals who together create a unique environment.

In my own teaching at a university in Bangladesh, I am often required to teach the same material to more than one class and rarely do they unfold in identical ways. However, by careful control of the variable (learner age, language ability, learning context, class size, teacher, etc.) and by making explicit those factors, which are less controlled, it may feel worthwhile to carry out a study. In these situations, the experiment would be termed *quasi-experimental*. When investigating the effects of authentic materials on learners, a quasi-experimental approach will seem valuable, because of the expectation to see quantifiable differences between a group receiving experimental materials and another receiving standard input.

However, at the same time as setting up a study to test pre-conceived hypotheses, an adoption of an ethnographic approach is quite reasonable. This would involve careful observation of both experimental and control classes, using a range of ethnographic tools: video-audio recording, transcription of classroom interaction, field notes, interviews, and so on. It would be possible to resist the temptation to come to premature conclusions; instead, it would allow the data to speak for themselves. The integrated approach thus requires the researcher to have a 'psychometric head' and an 'ethnographic head' which are quite distinct and never really come together until the post-study stage when the results are contrasted and reconciled. It would seem more productive, therefore, to see quantitative or qualitative approaches as being the two extremes of the same continuum, each seeking to reach the truth but through different means.

Therefore, the issue is one of knowing when it is useful to count and when it is difficult or inappropriate to count at all. The present study seeks to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative paradigms where possible. For the research objectives of the study and the present researcher, as Saloman (1991) points out, the issue is not qualitative-quantitative at all. It is about whether to take an 'analytic' approach to understanding a few controlled variables, or a 'systematic' approach to understanding the interaction of variables within a complex research environment.

## **5.2 Components of Data Analysis of the Study**

The present study adapts Miles and Huberman's (1994) definition of *analysis* as a process consisting of three concurrent streams of activity after data collection. They are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. A brief discussion follows below.

### **5.2.1 Data Reduction**

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes and transcriptions. It is not something separate from data analysis, but is rather part of it. The decision of the researcher with regard to which data chunks to include and which to remove, which patterns best summarise a number of chunks and which evolving story to tell, are all analytic choices. As supported by Miles and Huberman (1994), data reduction is an essential form of analysis that sharpens, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. According to Tesch (1990) data reduction equals 'data condensation' and is crucial for a healthy analysis. It keeps the analysis manageable and burden free.

### **5.2.2 Data Display**

The second major stream of analysis activity is data display. Generically, a display is an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Looking at displays helps to understand the events in the research environment, which form the base of the analysis. As with data reduction, the creation and use of displays is not separate from, but again part of, analysis. Designing a display, and deciding in which form the data should be organised are also analytic activities.

### **5.2.3 Conclusion Drawing and Verification**

The third stream of analytic activity is conclusion drawing and verification. From the very beginning of data collection the researcher needs to figure out what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows and propositions. Miles and Huberman (1994) liken conclusion drawing to a Gemini configuration. They maintain that the verifications of conclusions proceed with the analyst. They also suggest that

verification may be 'as brief as a fleeting second's thought crossing the analyst's mind during writing, with a short excursion back to field notes, or it may be thorough and elaborate' (ibid.: 11).

#### **5.2.4 Reliability and Validity**

Another important issue in analysis is testing the plausibility, sturdiness and confirmability, that is, validity, of the meanings emerging from the data. The selected procedure for data collection should always be examined critically to assess to what extent it is likely to be reliable and valid. Reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions. Validity is an altogether more complex concept. It tells whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe. If an item is unreliable, then it must also lack validity, but a reliable item is not necessarily also valid. It could produce the same or similar responses on all occasions, but not be measuring what it is supposed to measure.

The examination of the research context from a variety of perspectives brings in results that require to be related to each other in a process known as *triangulation* (Denzin, 1970), or *the principle of convergence* (Labov cited in van Lier, 1984: 120). This allows the researcher to enhance the credibility of the work. A definition of this multi-method approach, is given in the Study Guide of the Open University course E811:

Cross-checking the existence of certain phenomena and the veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible. (OU course E811, Study Guide 1988:54)

Denzin (1970) describes four types of triangulation:

- *Data triangulation* uses different sources of data (teachers, students, researchers etc.) that contribute to the investigation.
- *Theory triangulation* makes use of different theories applied to a study.
- *Researcher triangulation* deals with more than one researcher contributing to the investigation.
- *Methods triangulation* makes use of more than one method to collect data (test scores, diaries, questionnaires, classroom observation, etc.).

It may not be possible to incorporate all of these into a single investigation. However, where feasible, *multiple triangulation* (van Lier, 1988:12) should be used to enhance the study's credibility. According to Denzin (1970:472): 'the greater the triangulation, the greater the confidence in the observed findings'. For example, the reinforcement and modification of information gathered at interview by study of documents, or by further interviews. Eisner (1991:110) uses the term 'structural corroboration' for triangulation; 'a means through which multiple types of data are related to each other to support or contradict the interpretation and evaluation of a state of affairs.'

For the present study, the researcher decided to use the following triangulation methods:

1. Data triangulation: with learner, teacher and researcher participation.
2. Methods triangulation: with a wide variety of methods exploited to collect data, such as audio recording, transcriptions of classroom interaction, questionnaires, interviews, and observation of progress on speaking ability, using observation sheets.

In order to validate the findings of the present study, pre- and post-treatment interviews (both with teachers and students), observation sheets, field notes and pre- and post-treatment questionnaires (both with teachers and students) were employed. Some of the data gathered from the questions were descriptive rather than quantifiable. Therefore, while analysing, it was thought better to present those in a textual form instead of a tabular form. Also due to the repetitive nature of obtained data on some questions, it was necessary to omit such data and present the results in a condensed form through the process of data reduction and condensation. Therefore, some repetitive data along with their corresponding questions were not included during the presentation and analysis of the data. Nevertheless, as the process of data collection has been thorough, there is no reason why the material cannot be 're-visited' later by other researchers who might wish to look in more depth at a specific issue, or to validate the study's conclusions themselves. The interviews (both with students and teachers) were conducted in a mix of Bengali and English and it was decided to translate all of them into English later on. Therefore, the transcripts were translated into English and some sample transcripts are included in Appendix 14.

### **5.3 The Teachers' Personal Approaches to Literature Teaching**

This section of the study presents the personal approaches of the teachers who have been teaching English in the school in which the research took place. Semi-structured questions elicited the information and there is inclusion of some extracts from the interviews, including those of the 'control group' (CG) and 'experimental group' (EG). The information on the actual teaching methodologies employed in CG and EG was gathered through structured observation sheets and field notes.

#### ***5.3.1 Pre-treatment Interview with the Teachers at the School***

Two among the four teachers who took part in the pre-treatment interviews (Appendix 10), conducted the interviews at their own pace. Therefore, they were provided with the interview questions and audiotapes. The researcher conducted the interviews with the head teacher and the experimental group teacher. All the teachers interviewed were all the English teachers working at the school. In the following section transcribed data of pre-treatment interviews with the teachers who are coded as T1, T2, T3 and T4 for the sake of anonymity, are presented and discussed together with the results of pre-treatment questionnaire for teachers which will follow.

#### **Teacher 1**

When the interview commenced, T1 stated her understanding of literature as 'the words of life'. As for the importance of introducing literary texts in the English classroom, she said:

**T1:** These children are loaded with studies, which relate to modern life, but going beyond the harsh reality, they need to see the actual meaning of life.

She saw literature as important in contributing to humanistic education and long-term benefit. On the subject of using materials outside the syllabus, she noted that, due to the language inefficiency of her students, she had to spend most of her time in making English easier for them. Time constraints and weak language output resulted in non-introduction of literary texts in the class. However, she noted that literary texts, as authentic materials, had the motivating quality to make her students read more, which helped them to express themselves better in English. Regarding her experience with English literature in the classroom she observed:



**T1:** The current syllabus has a very small amount of literature. English studies are mainly related to language learning. So there is almost no scope to have any experience with English literature in the classroom.

Regarding her own strategy in the classroom, she made an interesting observation:

**T1:** My teaching strategy cannot be my own. As schoolteachers, we have to follow the selected strategies.... As a teacher of English, I discuss literature if the situation allows.

With regard to any problem that she encountered in literature classes, and the possible solutions to them, her observation had some connection to her previously stated experience regarding English literature in the classroom:

**T1:** I am in a Bengali medium school. My students study English in order to pass examinations. It is sometimes difficult for me to guide them into literary texts.

However, she suggested that a gradual introduction of literature might help overcome this specific problem. With regard to the methodology currently used in the classroom, T1 observed that the methodology was insufficient for learning either language or literature properly. She also observed that the general standard of spoken English was very poor.

With regard to the plus points that help develop students' achievement in speaking skills and also the limitations that may slow the progress, T1 observed that the existing materials served as plus point only if used properly and systematically. The use of Bengali during English lessons, however, slowed the progress.

Regarding whether literature had any positive effect, in terms of teaching the language, she said:

**T1:** Yes, through literature I can make the students motivated to read books in English, from where they will be able to learn different aspects of the language with interest.

She made some interesting observations regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills', and what sort of materials/activities would work effectively in teaching English:

**T1:** To be honest, I don't think literature is directly connected to speaking. Literature is more formal and the language is literary language, whereas, speaking is more informal.... Materials need to be entertaining and lively....

In respect of the environment that would work well in teaching English, T1 noted that a friendly and free environment was necessary for making teaching and learning effective. Her overall impression regarding the textbook, prescribed by the NTCB, was that it was entirely language-based. She felt that it would be better to introduce literary texts because of their motivating effects on students.

As can be seen from the transcribed quotations of Teacher 1, some of the problems in English classes were related to the entirely language-based syllabus, and lack of proficiency in English on the part of students. The examination-oriented mentality and time constraints gave almost no scope to introduce literature in the lessons of English. In a teacher-centred classroom, the students expected the teacher to do everything for them. The students' sole aim of passing examinations, in addition to the faulty methodology, contributed to the poor learning outcome. However, from the rest of the interview T1 seems to reaffirm that literature, if handled properly by skilled and qualified teachers, would be beneficial in developing students' language skills. Her proposal of selecting study materials with the students opened up the possibility of having a student-centred learning atmosphere.

## **Teacher 2**

Teacher 2, at the beginning of the interview stated that literature was an authentic and artistic reflection of the society, as did T1. As for the importance of introducing literary texts in English classroom, she agreed with T1 and commented that literature was a rich resource for language, and projected moral values contributing to humanistic education and long-term benefit. She mentioned the motivating quality of literary texts and that literature opened up a wider world in front of the learners that would help them to learn more of life and the target language.

On the subject of using materials outside the syllabus, she agreed with T1's observation that time constraints made it difficult to introduce additional texts in the classroom. Regarding her experience with English literature in the classroom and the teaching methodology there, she made an important observation:

**T2:** I think our students must have a stronger background in English from early school days... so that when they start studying subjects like literature they are able to follow....

The problems that she faced in literature classes were mainly the lack of English proficiency and understanding on the part of the students. Regarding her strategy in the classroom, she commented:

**T2:** I usually follow lecture-method in the class; I do not think it is very effective in terms of learning the language and enjoying literature. I wish the class could be a student-oriented one.

The current methodology, she observed, was insufficient for learning either language or literature. She was of the same opinion as T1 regarding the standard of spoken English in general, which was poor. She identified the problems behind the weakness to be the non-practice and non-encouragement of its use.

Regarding the plus points that help develop students' achievement in speaking skills, and also the limitations which slow down the process, T2 observed:

**T2:** I think the design of the course materials needs to be able to encourage students to talk about it. The limitations are the lack of motivation and encouragement....

T2 observed that literature had a positive effect on her, in terms of teaching. By using literature she could help students understand and learn the language better and to have a broader realisation about life. Her views regarding a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills', and the sort of materials/activities that would work effectively in teaching English were opposite to that of T1.

**T2:** Spoken skills can be taught very usefully with the help of literature, especially if we incorporate contemporary English. More interactive study materials should work effectively in teaching English.

T2 observed that it was important to maintain a friendly environment in the class and added that a good faculty, efficient teacher, a reasonable number of students in the class, interesting materials, and adequate teaching hours were necessary in order to ensure an improved teaching and learning atmosphere.

Teacher 2's responses to the interview questions corresponded with a view that Bangladeshi students in EFL classes were not able to close the gap between their developing intellectual ability and their ability to logically express their thoughts. They were to finish the syllabus with the sole aim to sit for the examination paper. The interview with her reaffirmed the existence of a teacher-centred classroom, where the students were used to lectures and were comfortable being spoon-fed. Lack of proficiency and understanding were the main reasons behind non-introduction of literary texts in the class. Speaking skills, in particular, remained the weakest area because of non-practice on the students' part and the non-encouraging attitude on the teachers' part. Some other major problems identified were the lack of a trained faculty, over-crowded classrooms, uninteresting materials, and time constraints in using literature in the language classroom. Nevertheless, T2 confirmed that literary texts were helpful in shaping the whole person, by opening up the world before the students. She still followed the lecture-method, a teacher-centred strategy, however, truly believed that a student-centred classroom would be a better choice in terms of learning.

### **Teacher 3**

Teacher 3 defined literature as the mirror of one's personal, social and national life, representing emotions and feelings, culture and tradition. Regarding the importance of introducing literary texts in the classroom, and her own interest in literature, she commented:

**T3:** ... when we teach English...we teach it as a language that is to be learnt. Now, to understand any language better, one has to read literature written in that particular language. Literature would ... enrich the knowledge of the language, and would make the class vibrant and pleasant.

Regarding the motivational quality of literature, T3 observed that the introduction of literary texts only, might not be helpful, for example, if there was lack of practice.

**T3:** I can say without doubt, that reading literary texts would enrich one's language ability and knowledge. But I wonder, without giving enough scope to practice ... whether literary texts would be helpful enough to enhance one's ability to express in that language [English].

Regarding her experience with English literature in the classroom, she noted that it was nearly impossible to make the students understand the text without having it translated into Bengali. The main reason behind this trend was that the students did not get enough

opportunity to practise the language outside classroom. The problems that she encountered in literature classes were as follows:

**T3:** Students are not at all competent in this foreign language. ... It doesn't become clear even after translating the whole thing in Bengali. Students become demotivated to read literary texts when they are unable to understand and thus become frustrated. They read for the sake of examination, without having much interest in their study. A further problem is the large class size besides time constraints.

Regarding her own strategy in the classroom, she commented that in the classroom she herself did not follow any particular method. There was a shortage of English teachers. Therefore, sometimes, other subject teachers, who were not aware of the different methodologies, had to take English lessons and ended up translating the text into Bengali, in the usual manner. Moreover, she added:

**T3:** ... adopting a new method in the class becomes something experimental and not applicable due to syllabus and time constraints.

T3 shared the same opinion with T1 and T2 regarding the standard of spoken English in general which was termed as 'poor' and thought that it was necessary for the students to improve their spoken skills in English. She also observed that proper utilisation of time and available resources could contribute to the improvement of speaking skills and that non-practice in English was a major factor which slowed the progress. On the question of whether literature had any positive effect on her, in terms of teaching the language, she said:

**T3:** Literature is a ...very rich language resource. It is true that literature, along with bringing pleasure and variety to the students, helps enhance their language ability.

Regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills', T3 observed that literature and speaking skills were not directly interdependent, literature, however, would help improve language skills. She added that the introduction of audio-video materials and activities that were able to initiate oral presentation could be quite effective to enhance learning.

From the interview with Teacher 3, it was clear that she also supported the idea of introducing literary texts in the classroom. However, she mentioned that it was equally important to make plenty of scope for language practice in the class. She had reservations

about the idea of adopting a new method which, due to syllabus and time constraints and lack of a proper atmosphere, might not be practical. The students, after all, studied for the sake of examination only. T3 noted the importance of using English in everyday life in order to be able to cope and compete with the world. She added that it would be better to have an expanded class time with a limited number of students. She sounded optimistic in saying that proper and systematic use of the available resources could have a positive impact on the learners' language skills.

#### **Teacher 4**

When the interview commenced, Teacher 4 defined literature as the reflection of life, having universal value that set one to think about people and society around. Regarding the importance of introducing literary texts in English classroom, she said:

**T4:** ...If they (the students) read quality literature, ... they are likely to be motivated to read further. From books in English, they will enrich their stock of vocabulary, sentence pattern, etc. .... They will develop their language ability, and will know about cultures of different societies apart from their own. They will be able to compare between cultures around the world....

T4 reiterated the motivating quality of literature and said that from literary texts students would acquire grammar, vocabulary and other language components that would help them improve their spoken language skills.

Regarding her experience with English literature and the ways of teaching, she claimed her experience to be good, because of the teacher-oriented classroom environment. The emphasis was on the teacher's thoughts and points of view, and students listening to her made her feel that she had managed the class well. She was concerned only about issues related to syllabus-based examination and taught in order to prepare students for that. Her experience as a teacher, therefore, was satisfactory. T4, however, seemed to be concerned about her authoritative role, although the students preferred to be spoon-fed.

Regarding her strategy in the classroom, T4 commented that she tried to follow the guidelines mentioned in the Teachers' Guide that accompanied the textbook. The problems that she could identify regarding teaching literature were:

**T4:** ... Students are interested to prepare for examination. So, when I am teaching literature, they may consider that to be a waste of time, as they need not attempt any questions on literary texts in their final examination.

T4 attempted to defend the use of the current methodology. She said that the teacher, being overworked and having inadequate time to finish the syllabus with a large class, needed to follow the grammar translation, teacher-oriented methodology, which was sufficient for the current situation. However, she maintained that it did not provide any scope for thinking or innovation. Students were encouraged to memorise answers, in order to score high marks in the examination paper, proving the method's effectiveness for examination purposes.

T4's observation regarding the standard of spoken English in general was similar to those of T1, T2, and T3:

**T4:** The standard of speaking language and skills in English is not good in general, although we learn English from the primary classes, where English is given equal time and weight as Bengali.

T4 observed shyness and non-practice as the main hindrances that may slow the progress of students' achievement in speaking skills. A negative attitude towards one's effort added to the discouraging atmosphere which often resulted in the students deciding not to try at all. Finally, the lack of testing and assessment of speaking skills in the final examination encouraged them to think that writing correct English was equal to achieving competency in the language. She identified the plus points that the students already had as:

**T4:** The students know English grammar well.... They know how to write correct sentences. Their vocabulary stock is also good. ... The main problem is that they don't practice. They do understand English programmes on radio and television and learn a great deal of English from there. Now, if they were able to make use of their learning, they would surely have development in their speaking skills. Students are interested to speak in English, which is another plus point.

Regarding whether literature had any positive effect on her, in terms of teaching the language, T4 felt that in the class she was able to use and apply her thoughts and ideas gathered from good books. She, however, mentioned that it was unlikely that the students would achieve anything better if the traditional method continued to be followed in the classroom because it only encouraged rote learning.

The views of T4 regarding any possible connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills', were that having achieved overall language development through literature, the student

would grow in self-confidence, that would lead to improved speaking ability. She added that interesting materials that were suitable for the students' age and taste would work effectively in teaching English. She also pointed out the necessity of having a friendly teaching/learning environment where the students would be encouraged to discuss and argue matters freely. It was equally important that the teacher herself spoke in English and persuaded the students to do the same, with the acknowledgement that they were likely to make many mistakes.

Concerning the relationship between subject/faculty and performance, she made the following observations:

**T4:** If the teacher is qualified but not efficient to teach effectively, then her performance will not be good enough, although she is good in her subject. ...If study materials are too difficult and not interesting ...both teachers and students will find them boring .... If teaching hour is either too long or too short, in both the cases it will pose problem. Inadequate number of teachers and staff result in heavy workload on each of them affecting their performance. ...Large class size is another problem....

Regarding the current textbook and its contents, T4 commented that the book was user friendly, and the Teacher's Guide was quite clear. However, the poor selection of subject matter was not sufficiently good to provoke the students' interest or pleasure. She concluded that the syllabus was neither good nor bad, and that, although it included many language activities, the amount of literature included there was small. She completed her interview making a remarkable comment on the teacher's ultimate attitude towards teaching the literary texts that were included in the syllabus:

**T4:** 'Never mind...it's not important for exam, anyway.'

It is apparent from T4's interview that she placed emphasis on the development of thinking skills, cultural understanding, and language development using literary texts. She reiterated the motivating and attractive quality of literature that led one to read more. She was satisfied with her experience in the classroom, which aimed at the syllabus and examination system. However, she felt the necessity of introducing a more student-oriented classroom atmosphere to ensure improved learning outcomes. She mentioned faulty examination system, where speaking skills were not tested at all, made their practice unnecessary in this examination-oriented situation. T4 also observed the importance of having skilled teachers and proper study materials, and an improved infrastructural facility to facilitate the teaching/ learning atmosphere.



The transcribed interviews with the teachers confirm that they tended to encourage the traditional approach to literature that presented the text as a body of knowledge to be imparted and conveyed to the students in the form of 'background' and expected that the knowledge should be memorised and regurgitated during examinations. Consequently, however they noted, students became dependent on them and examination guides, without having the chance to explore their own potential in understanding the text.

All four teachers agreed on the importance of introducing literature in English lessons as contributing to linguistic development, humanistic education and long-term benefit. They also agreed that the use of Bengali during English lessons prevented the learners from focusing on improvement in the target language.

I would argue that, due to the habit of translation method, students in their later life face communication problems in English. They tend to first think in Bengali, and then go through the process of translating it in English before they are actually able to produce it verbally. Despite the fact that the students learnt a lot of grammar and vocabulary, they were still unable to think and communicate on their own due to their language competence problem. This prevented the teachers from introducing literary texts in the language classroom. This problem, I believe, closely relates to the teacher-centred and examination-oriented methodology.

In the class, the teacher worked through the text, not the students and in such a traditional classroom, as Collie and Slater (1987:7) also indicate, the teacher 'takes on the role of an imparter of information'. The teachers confirmed that in the process of teaching, they explained and made comments on the parts underlined by themselves. In the class, most students were passive recipients and were habituated to memorising facts about the lesson, and not to making efforts in suggesting their own interpretation and understanding of the text. However, this content-based approach, as pointed out by Carter and Long (1991:24) is very likely to lead the teacher usually to focus 'deeply and agonisingly' on a single word, which indeed may have no great significance in an appreciation of the whole work.

Some teachers tried to change the existing situation however, without the application of systematic literature teaching, their attempts were very likely to become futile. They still ended up offering the explanation, and preparing students for examinations, making the

whole teaching process once again a case of ‘remembering what the teacher said’. This is one of the important reasons why I believe that the teaching/learning process needs to move away from a teacher-centred atmosphere to a student-centred one. It is also important to incorporate literature into English lessons in order to have improved language ability, especially in the area of speaking. I hope all of this can be achieved in the ways proposed by the present study.

### 5.3.2 Pre-treatment Questionnaire for Teachers

A pre-treatment questionnaire (Appendix 7) was administered in the research setting in order to gain both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the teachers’ backgrounds and teaching experience and their familiarity with the current literature teaching methodologies. It also aimed at collecting data on the teachers’ evaluations of the students’ performance and motivation in their literature classes and their objectives in literature teaching. The pre-treatment questionnaire data worked as support data to the teachers’ interviews.

Section A of the questionnaire was designed to obtain general information about the participant teacher. The responses to the questions in Section A reveal that all five teachers were either educated to MA/MEd or MSS level. The most number of years of teaching experience was twenty-three, the least was nine and the age group of their students varied between eleven and eighteen years.

The aim of Section B was to elicit some general information on the preference of models of English, the education system and literature teaching methodology. The information gathered from Q.1 and Q.2 are presented below:

Table 5.1 Q.1 Which classes do you teach? Q.2 How many hours a week do you teach? What is the ratio of teaching hours between English and Bengali classes?

		T		T		T
Grades	6-10	3 (60%)	8-10	1 (20%)	6-8	1 (20%)
Teaching hrs/week	28	3 (60%)	6	1 (20%)	25	1 (20%)
Ratio between Bengali and English	1:1	5 (100%)				

Data gathered from Q.1 and Q.2 show that the majority of teachers (3 out of 5) taught grades 6-10. A further majority (3 out of 5) taught twenty-eight hours per week, whereas the head teacher, owing to her administrative responsibilities, taught six hours, and the other teacher

worked up to twenty-five hours per week. The data demonstrate that the workload was relatively heavy. All teachers confirmed that the ratio between Bengali and English was 1:1, showing that the subjects were given equal teaching hours.

Q.3 attempted to elicit the teachers' overall impression of the existing syllabus. Q.4 asked if they ever had the opportunity to attend any literature teaching methodology seminar/ in-service training.

Table 5.2 Q.3 Your overall comment on the existing English syllabus.

The syllabus is completely language-based	4 (80%)
It has very little literature	4 (80%)
It provides adequate activities	4 (80%)
There is a big gap between the syllabus objectives and classroom practice	1 (20%)

Table 5.3 Q.4 Have you ever had the opportunity to attend any literature teaching methodology seminar/ in-service training?

Yes	No
1 (20%)	4 (80%)

Data received from Q.3 and Q.4 show that the majority (4 out of 5) considered the syllabus to be language-based, having adequate activities but very little literature. They added that non-inclusion of literary texts resulted in a mechanical atmosphere, leaving students unable to answer broad questions or discuss, explain and express their feelings and opinions. One teacher mentioned the big gap between the syllabus objectives and classroom practice. Data also reveal that the majority (4 out of 5) did not receive any training in literature teaching methodology.

Table 5.4 Q.5 What do you think about using of mother tongue Bengali, in the English classroom?

Beneficial	1 (20%)
Not beneficial	4 (80%)

Data gathered from Q.5 show that the majority (4 out of 5) expressed the view that it was best to use English throughout English lessons in order to achieve overall language development. However, they admitted that, due to practical reasons, students in reality found it difficult to follow the lessons if delivered in English only. The use of Bengali was helpful in making the lesson easily accessible to the learners who had a weak foundation in English.

Q.6 tried to elicit the teachers' views regarding similarities or differences between teaching Bengali literature and English literature.

Table 5.5 Q.6 Do you think there are any similarities or differences between teaching Bengali literature and English literature?

All literatures talk about life	5 (100%)
The main difference is of the languages	1 (20%)

The above table shows that all five teachers agreed that literature, in every language, talked about life. The difference between Bengali and English literature was that they were written in different languages. English being a foreign language, as pointed out by one teacher, posed difficulty to the students who were weak in the language and thus called forth the implementation of different techniques and methods in teaching. Q.7 asked about their preference for models of English instruction in order to discover whether their preference was in line with the preference of the students.

Table 5.6 Q.7 Your preference for models of English instruction.

British English	4 (80%)
American English	1(20%)
Local variety/New English	-

Data from Q.7 show that the majority (4 out of 5) preferred British English as the medium of instruction, whereas only one (1 out of 5) preferred American English. This led to an assumption that none were aware of the growing varieties of other Englishes. In reality, spoken English in Bangladesh is generally a mix of American, British and some Indian English, thus giving rise to a new type, an area that calls for further research.

The questionnaire asked the teachers to mention three reasons for teaching English in Bangladesh (Q.8).

Table 5.7 Q.8 Give at least three reasons for teaching English in Bangladesh.

An international/world language	5 (100%)
In job sectors/better job opportunities	3 (60%)
To compete with outside world	2 (40%)
Higher education	2 (40%)
Other/ in trade, to communicate with foreigners	2 (40%)

Data in the above table show that all five teachers acknowledged that it was necessary to learn English, the language having reached the status of an international language. English

was required to have access to, and correspond with, the outside world especially for business and trade, education and jobs.

Table 5.8 Q.9 How is literature usually taught in the classroom?

Ask questions about characters, plot, setting and explain the important points	5 (100%)
Involve the whole class in discussion	-
Group students in pairs and let them discuss	2 (40%)
They are asked to express their feelings and support them through linguistic evidences in the texts	-
They are asked to do projects/ write essays/make presentations	5 (100%)
Prepare for exams	5 (100%)
Others (please specify): We discuss questions that are in the lessons	1 (20%)

Table 5.8 indicates that all five teachers agreed that they followed lecture method and spoon-fed students. While teaching literature, they asked questions about characters, plot and setting and explained important points from the teacher’s point of view. Only two teachers said that they involved students in group discussions. All five commented that they asked students to write essays, although two among them mentioned they asked students to make presentations. All five of them prepared their students for the examinations.

Table 5.9 Q.10 Is there any difference in terms of facilities between the government and private schools? What impacts of schooling do the learners have in their personal and future life/career?

Government schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination and syllabus-oriented teaching</li> <li>• Large class</li> <li>• Time constraint</li> <li>• Lack of trained faculty</li> <li>• Lack of academic facilities</li> <li>• Dependent on government aids and facilities</li> <li>• Students come from middle-class families</li> </ul>
Private schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better facilities and opportunities</li> <li>• Limited number of students</li> <li>• School authority reserves the right to make changes and amendments according to their situation and needs</li> <li>• Better academic facilities</li> <li>• Trained faculty</li> <li>• Students come from well to do families</li> </ul>

Data gathered from Q.10 regarding differences in terms of facilities between the government and private schools and the impact of schooling on the learners in their personal and future life, show that all five teachers suggested that students had access to better facilities and opportunities in a private school. They clearly stated that teaching in a government school was syllabus and examination-oriented. These institutions also suffered from having large

classes and time constraints, and the lack of trained and qualified teachers. Moreover, the low remuneration of the teachers contributed to lack of motivation in teaching. The students usually belonged to the middle- or lower middle-class sections of the society.

The teachers observed that the private school authority reserved the right to make changes and amendments to teaching materials according to the demand and need of the situation. They were able to control class time and duration, and had comparatively more trained and qualified teachers who were usually paid much more than the teachers in government schools. Private schools dealt with fewer numbers of students from well-off families per class.

The teachers similarly observed that due to the differences in facilities and resources between the two schooling systems, the students also differed in their attitude and learning. The government schools lacked some academic facilities that caused incomplete and imperfect knowledge, hampering future prospects. The better facilities and opportunities in the private schools, on the other hand, ensured a more flexible and positive learning environment.

Table 5.10 Q.11 Why no speaking skills are being taught /practiced/examined at present?

Lack of competency in the language	5 (100%)
Lack of trained and competent teachers	5 (100%)
Speaking skills are not tested during examination	1 (20%)

Information received from Q.11, concerning the lack of speaking skills being taught /practised/examined at present, indicate that all five teachers identified the students' lack of proficiency in the language and lack of trained faculty to be the major causes. This was a result of many practical reasons, such as large class sizes, time constraints, an examination-oriented syllabus and the teaching methodology. In addition, one teacher mentioned lack of provision for testing the skill resulted in non-teaching and non-practice in the examination-oriented teaching environment.

Table 5.11 Q.12 Do the students need to develop speaking skills? Why?

Yes	No
5 (100%)	-

Data gathered from Q.12, asking whether the students needed to develop speaking skills, show that all five teachers acknowledged that they did, as speaking skills were required for accomplishing important issues in life.

Section C aimed at eliciting the views of the teachers regarding their role as teachers, and the present classroom environment, with regard to the development of speaking skills. Questions in this section asked for information regarding issues in the classroom which demanded special attention from them, and their impact on present teaching practice. Teachers were also asked to identify the barriers to, and offer suggestions for, teaching speaking skills.

The data reveal that all five teachers agreed that students were afraid of English because of their weak foundation in the language from primary classes, together with fear of humiliation, shyness and a passive attitude concerning speaking. Large class sizes, time constraints, classroom conditions, and a syllabus- and examination-oriented methodology were other reasons cited for not paying individual attention to learners who may need help. The teachers' own tendency to use Bengali during English lessons, and an examination system which did not test speaking skills, were other identified hindrances to teaching spoken English.

In such a situation, it was important that students received help to overcome their hesitation and shyness, and practise the language in order to become self-confident. Therefore, teachers should tolerate their mistakes and encourage them to speak. Most importantly, teachers should teach, encourage, practise and examine the skill regularly.

Section D attempted to discover the teachers' view regarding connections between literature, language and speaking skills in general and also in the Bangladesh context. Q.1 asked the teachers to define the term 'literature'. Data reflect that all five teachers defined literature to be the projection of life as a whole, having authentic and universal value. Q.2 asked the teachers' understanding of the students' perspective of genres regarded as literature.

Table 5.12 Q.2 What genres do the students usually relate to 'literature'?

Stories	Poems	Essays	Drama	Novels
5 (100%)	5 (100%)	3 (60%)	3 (60%)	3 (60%)

Data from the above table disclose that all five teachers mentioned short stories, and poems as commonly considered genres. A majority (3 out of 5) mentioned essays, fables, drama, and novels to be other genres related to literature.

Q.5 asked about the amount of literature that the teachers were teaching in the English classes. Q.6 attempted to elicit whether they would prefer to have more literary pieces in the classroom and why.

Table 5.13 Q.5 What amount of literature are you teaching in your English class at present?

None	Very little	Moderate	Quite a lot
-	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	-

Table 5.14 Q.6 Would you prefer introducing more literary pieces in the classroom?

Yes	No
5 (100%)	-

Data gathered from Q.5 and Q.6 reveal that the new textbook contained very little literature, practically negligible in terms of the syllabus contents and volume. Data also reflect that all five teachers thought that literature had the power to evoke interest in the students, which would lead to improved language learning and better knowledge about life as a whole and therefore they preferred to introduce more literary texts in language classroom.

Q.7 attempted to elicit the teachers' views regarding the handling of a text in the classroom. Q.8 asked about interesting and motivating ways to teach literature. Data gathered from these two questions show that the teachers were eager to learn about effective methodologies. They wanted to present the text through various activities, using different techniques and in a way that would interest and motivate students to take part in the lessons. A majority of them (3 out of 5) promoted the idea of learner autonomy that would give students chances to imagine, react and interpret in their own way. Therefore, in order to motivate the students, the teachers thought it was important to introduce literature with a small 'I' together with interesting activities.

Q.9 attempted to elicit the teachers' views regarding making a connection between literature and spoken skills. Data gathered demonstrate that all five teachers believed that the student would learn more English from literary works, and would use the language while speaking.



However, one teacher pointed out that there was a difference between reading, understanding and knowing a foreign language and the ability to speak in that language.

Table 5.15 Q.10 What genres do you like most to be handled in the class?

Short stories	Poems
5 (100%)	5 (100%)

Data from Q.10 reveal that all five teachers confirmed that short stories and poems were the most preferable genres in the classroom. The genres, having motivating power, used devices such as imagery, metaphors and symbols, and offered greater variety, and their manageable length was sufficient to keep the students interested. Moreover, interesting plots and themes of stories and poems were suitable for devising different activities. Especially poems having storylines with characters could be a particular choice in the classroom. Regarding the teachers' views on whether literature texts in English lessons can help their students to improve their English (Q.11), data suggest that all of them agreed (3 out of 5 strongly agreeing) with the statement, demonstrating their definite favourable attitude towards literature as a resource for language teaching. The data are presented in the table below:

Table 5.16 Q.11 Literature texts in the lessons of English can help your students to improve their English.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
		2 (40%)	3(60%)

Q.12 had five components. The data from Q.12 are presented in Table 5.17 below:

Table 5.17 Q.12 If literature texts help, then they can help to:

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
learn new words.				5 (100%)
get to know the culture of the English speaking countries.			3 (60%)	2 (40%)
speak English (to express their opinions and emotions in English).			2 (40%)	3 (60%)
have access to varied examples of the language grammar structures in use.				5 (100%)
broaden their imagination and prediction that ultimately help them express vividly and clearly.			3 (60%)	2 (40%)

Data show that all five teachers strongly agreed that literature texts help students learn new words and vocabulary. All five of them agreed (2 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that literary texts presented students with the culture of English-speaking countries. All of them agreed (3 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that literature helped in improved speaking and expression in English. All five strongly agreed that literature presented varied examples of English grammar structure in use, which helped students to acquire knowledge of grammar and structure. Again, all of them agreed (2 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that literature enhanced imagination and prediction, ultimately helping to express oneself vividly and clearly. Therefore, data confirm that all five teachers had a very positive outlook towards using literature, seeing it as presenting rich cultural issues together with strong and precise linguistic components.

Table 5.18 Q.13 Working with literature texts in lessons of English is a source of enjoyment.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
		2 (40%)	3 (60%)

Data gathered from Q.13 reveal that all five teachers agreed (3 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that working with literature texts in English lessons was a source of enjoyment. They commented that literature, being authentic material, introduced important practical issues, thus, promoting the students' interest in the text. Literature initiated discussion that led to a broader imagination, wider interpretation and better thought processes and perspectives. For them, teaching language through literature was an interesting experience as it showed a way out from the traditional, boring and monotonous language classroom. Thus, literature in the English classroom could help achieve a far improved teaching/learning situation.

Table 5.19 Q.14 You like the literature texts used in your lessons. Q.15 You find them suitable for your teaching purpose.

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
You like the literature texts used in your lessons.		1 (20%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)
You find them suitable for your teaching purpose.			5 (100%)	

Data from Q.14 make it evident that the majority of teachers (4 out of 5) agreed that they liked the literature texts used in their lessons, suggesting that they were quite adequate for their teaching purpose. However, one teacher thought that the texts in question were not

suitable, because they were uninteresting, and not complex enough to motivate students to read more. Her views conflicted with the views of the other four. Data from Q.15 reveal that all five teachers agreed that they found the texts suitable for their teaching purposes. They mentioned that the activities included in the text were examination-oriented and, therefore, were motivating. This brought in the view that the teachers were happy with non-literary texts which served the ultimate purpose.

Table 5.20 Q.16 What activities based on literary texts do you do in your class?

Prediction activity	2 (40%)
Reading aloud	3 (60%)
Question-answer work	4 (80%)
Retelling	1 (20%)
Gap-filling	3 (60%)
Problem solving	3 (60%)
Role-playing	3 (60%)
Discussion	2 (40%)

Q.16 asked about the preferred activities that the teachers used in the class. It seems evident from the above table that question-answer work was the most preferred (4 out of 5), whilst reading aloud, gap filling, problem solving and role-playing were, equally, the next preferred (3 out of 5) choices. Prediction and discussion were the third placed activities (2 out of 5), possibly because of the practical limitations that the teachers faced, such as large class sizes and time constraints. The reasons for their preferences were that the students were interested in those activities.

Table 5.21 Q.17 These activities make your students interested in the texts. Q.18 They make them speak, and express their opinion. Q.19 Literature texts motivate your students in their lessons.

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
These activities make your students interested in the texts.			4 (80%)	1 (20%)
They make them speak, express their opinion			4 (80%)	1 (20%)
Literature texts motivate your students in their lessons			4 (80%)	1 (20%)

Data obtained from Q.17-Q.19 show that all five teachers agreed (1 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that the activities that they preferred generated students' interest in the text. This confirmed the satisfaction of both teachers and students with traditional teacher-centred, examination-oriented methodology in teaching. All five agreed (1 out of 5 strongly agreeing )

that these activities made learners speak, and express their opinion. Nevertheless, the teachers preferred to have more literature in the class because of their affinity and personal attraction to literature. They also preferred to devise activities which would initiate some speaking. Data also re-confirm that all teachers agreed (1 out of 5 strongly agreeing) that literature texts would have a motivating effect on their students, leading to improved learning.

The aim of Section E was to re-confirm the information received concerning the teachers' attitudes and thoughts regarding literature in the language classroom and their opinion in respect of speaking skills. Many of the questions in this section were in the form of statements.

Table 5.22 Q.1 Literature in the language classroom is irrelevant.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
4 (80%)	1 (20%)		

Table 5.23 Q.2 Literary texts provide many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
		2 (40%)	3 (60%)

Table 5.24 Q.3 Literary texts provide many possibilities in the ways that they:

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
a. are valuable authentic materials.			3 (60%)	2 (40%)
b. help students to get better understanding of the culture of English speaking community.			1 (20%)	4 (80%)
c. help students get in touch with universal human values			1 (20%)	4 (80%)
d. bring students into contact with real language.				5 (100%)
e. help increase the student's vocabulary.				5 (100%)
f. provide examples of the language grammar structures in use.				5 (100%)
g. have motivating effect on the learner in language learning.			1 (20%)	4 (80%)
h. can stimulate personal involvement of the students.			3 (60%)	2 (40%)
i. can create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion.			4 (80%)	1 (20%)
j. can stimulate the development of conversational skills.			4 (80%)	1 (20%)

Data from Q.1 show that all five teachers disagreed with the statement that literature in the language classroom was irrelevant. This re-confirmed all five teachers' inclination for, and positive attitude towards, having literary texts in the language classroom. Data from Q.2 reveal that all five teachers agreed that literary texts provided many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning. This confirmed the status of literature as having a positive and rewarding effect on the teaching /learning atmosphere.

Q.3 had ten components. The data obtained from the answers to this question reveal that all five teachers agreed that literature was valuable authentic material and helped students to have a better understanding of the culture of an English speaking community by presenting the cultural and traditional issues and values there. All five respondents agreed that literature placed students in touch with universal human values and provided real language. They agreed that literature helped increase vocabulary and provided examples of the language grammar structures in use, which are now being taught in the traditional manner. All of them suggested that literature would naturally create a happier classroom atmosphere where the learners would be likely to learn the grammar structure of English in an improved way.

The teachers reiterated that literature had a motivating effect on the learner in language learning and that it could stimulate students' personal involvement. They commented that it was most likely that an affinity with a situation or character would make one engrossed in the situation, thus creating a motivating effect on the reader who would begin to have a personal attachment to the writing. They also agreed that literature could create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion, saying that when someone became interested in a text and started relating to it, it was natural to start thinking of sharing the thoughts and feelings with someone else, which would bring interaction and discussion. They also agreed that literature could stimulate the development of conversational skills arguing that it was likely that during communication, stimuli to have more opinions about the topic would arise when literature had created the atmosphere for having a conversation.

Table 5.25 Q.4 Literature texts can promote individual development and general education of the whole person by:

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
stimulating imagination			1 (20%)	4 (80%)

encouraging students to work creatively			1 (20%)	4 (80%)
providing materials for creating analytical and critical abilities			4 (80%)	1 (20%)
developing confidence and independence in expressing students' own ideas, opinions and emotions in English				5 (100%)

It seems evident from the above table that all five teachers agreed that literature texts had the power to stimulate imagination which contributed to individual development and the general education of the whole person. All of them agreed that literature could also encourage students to work creatively and that it provided materials for creating analytical and critical abilities. All the respondents strongly agreed with the assumption that literature opened up opportunities for developing confidence and independence in students in order to be able to express their own ideas, opinions and emotions in English.

Table 5.26 Q.7 You use group-work in dealing with literature. Q.8 You use pair-work in dealing with literature.

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
You use group-work in dealing with literature.		2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
You use pair-work in dealing with literature.		3 (60%)		2 (40%)

Data from Q.7 and Q.8 reflect that although the majority (3 out of 5) of teachers used group work in dealing with literature, a majority (3 out of 5) did not use pair work. This may relate to practical reasons mentioned earlier.

Table 5.27 Q.9 You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. Q.10 These activities are appropriate for your learners. Q.11 They are motivating. Q.12 They can stimulate natural conversation. Q.13 They can help the students to develop their conversational skills.

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks.	2 (40%)		1 (20%)	2 (40%)
These activities are appropriate for your learners.		2 (40%)	3 (60%)	
They are motivating.		2 (40%)	3 (60%)	
They can stimulate natural conversation.		2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
They can help the students to develop their conversational skills.		2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)

Data collected from Q.9 to Q.13 makes it clear that a majority of teachers (3 out of 5) agreed that they felt satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. They thought that the activities included were appropriate for their learners in order to meet the current examination system. However, two teachers did not agree with the statements. A majority (3 out of 5) agreed that activities included were motivating and that they could stimulate natural conversation, and could help students to develop their conversational skills. Again, two teachers did not agree with them. At this point, it is interesting to note that although the majority of teachers confirmed that the activities were satisfactory for teaching purposes, nevertheless, due to some limitations, they failed, or hesitated to implement them in the classroom. One interviewee confirmed that the aims and objectives and the activities included in the lessons remained only on paper.

Table 5.28 Q.14 What activities do you consider most effective in developing conversational skills of your students?

Open question answer	Prediction activity	Role-playing	Retelling
3 (60%)	5 (100%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)

Data from Q.14 show that all five teachers considered prediction activity; three of them mentioned open question and answers; one supported role-playing and another teacher mentioned re-telling activities to be the most effective activities in developing conversational skills of their students. Q.17 asked the teachers about the way in which students usually responded to literary texts. Q.18 asked about the reasons behind their non-response.

Table 5.29 Q.17 In most cases, how do students respond to literary texts?

They respond without the teacher's guidance	-
They do not respond without the teacher's guidance	5 (100%)

Table 5.30 Q.18 The students do not readily respond to literary texts because:

They lack motivation	2 (40%)
They lack reading abilities	3 (60%)
Some texts are conceptually inaccessible to the students	-
They lack linguistic competence	5 (100%)

Data from Q.17 and Q.18 show that all five teachers agreed that, in most cases, the students did not respond to literary texts without the teacher's guidance and that non-response was

firstly due to lack of linguistic competence. Three teachers identified that students lacked reading ability, and another two thought that they also lacked motivation.

Table 5.31Q.19 The teaching of English literature in Bangladesh, emphasises:

the historical aspects of the text and the author	3 (60%)
the development of competence in the English language	1 (20%)
awareness of different literary genres and their place in English literature	-
the ability to respond appropriately to any literary work	1 (20%)

Data gathered on Q.19 clearly show that the majority (3 out of 5) held the view that the teaching of English literature in Bangladesh emphasised the historical aspects of the text and the author. Q.20 attempted to elicit the factors that could change the existing negative atmosphere in the English classroom. Data reveal the importance of the special role of the teacher and an expected change in the teaching /learning atmosphere. There were also the need for teacher training, and their ability to help students become self-confident in using the language.

Q.21 invited the respondents to make suggestions for students in practising their speaking skills outside classroom. A summary of the comments suggests that the syllabus needed to include both literature and language components for improved language output. The students needed to practise speaking in order to become competent speakers, and also needed to explore and utilise the available resources in the best possible manner.

Q.22 invited the teachers to make suggestions for teaching of English literature in connection to developing spoken skills in Bangladeshi contexts. Data gathered clearly show that the teachers placed emphasis on major and pertinent issues in respect to initiating improved teaching. They mentioned teacher training, especially with regard to the teaching of literature, speaking skills and the important role of the teacher in encouraging and motivating students. They also called for the inclusion of literary texts from different genres, suitable and appropriate for discussion in the class. Teachers also mentioned introducing a variety of student-centred activities to maintain interest and involvement throughout the lesson.

They added the importance of testing speaking skills in order to promote development in this particular area. It was counter productive to have the objectives clearly stated in the preface of the textbook, unless equal attention was paid in examining four skills in the final examination, in order to ensure maximum development in the language. Therefore, it was



important to implement the ideas suggested in the textbook, despite large class sizes and time constraints.

### ***5.3.3 Summary of Teachers' Pre-treatment Interviews and Responses to the Pre-treatment Questionnaire***

The preceding sections presented and analysed the transcribed extracts from the pre-treatment interviews and results of the teachers' pre-treatment questionnaires, in order to present the kinds of problems that teachers of English have in their classes in the selected school. The data also reflected their personal views on literature teaching and improving students' speaking ability in English.

As was expected, and could be seen from the data, the teachers seemed to be quite unsettled with regard to a sound methodology which would help to improve learners' interpretation and understanding of literary texts, at the same time, improving their language skills, especially speaking. The English classes were no more than a spoon-feeding activity on the teacher's part, and, for students, no more than a boring hour in which they were merely passive participants. The students did not attempt to make use of the linguistic knowledge that they had already acquired. Overcrowded classrooms also prevented them from enjoying literature or undertaking certain activities, because it was not always easy to control such large classes.

The teachers also acknowledged that classes were teacher-centred with students busy taking notes on the lecture. Most students also suffered from lack of confidence and shyness in speaking English. Although the teachers wished to conduct the class in English, in reality, to make the lesson easier they used Bengali during English lessons. As the students were not required to contribute much, therefore, to be able to complete the syllabus content, the teacher herself chose and explained the important parts from the text. Most students became accustomed to memorising facts and appeared to make little effort in reaching their own interpretation and understanding of the text.

Nevertheless, the teachers agreed that through literature students were likely to feel motivated to read outside the syllabus, which would eventually lead to improved language output. They also suggested that opportunities to talk about their feelings with regard to the particular text in question without hesitation and without the fear of the language should be

given. This would enhance students' speaking ability, and make them better literature students.

The teachers believed that a change in their own mentality, and some effort on their part, would bring a definite positive outcome in the existing system. The students needed to be properly equipped with systematic analytical tools. These could be utilised to trigger and encourage individual interpretative skills and help them emerge from the spoon-feeding situation of 'remembering what the teacher said' and noting this down. The situation observed, and revealed through the questionnaire and interviews, validated the view that students and teachers alike should approach literature in the way proposed by the present study. It was believed that such an engagement can 'ensue with varying degrees of systematicity at different levels of literary study' (Brumfit and Carter, 1986:4), with the hope of improving skills in the language, especially spoken language, in the context of Bangladesh. From the above data analysis, the outcome of the survey strongly indicated that there was indeed a belief in the positive effect that literature had in promoting speaking skills.

#### **5.4 A Closer Look into the Classroom**

This section attempts to present the personal approaches and the teaching of the two teachers involved in this study, as control group and experimental group teachers. Structured observation sheets, field notes, and the notes provided by the teachers are the sources of information and sample lessons provide the base for the report. As a medium of instruction, the teachers were free to conduct the class in a mixture of Bengali and English in order to engender a proper atmosphere and to make the students feel comfortable. The students in both CG and EG were allowed to respond in Bengali not to be burdened with their scare of English. Their responses given in Bengali were translated into English later on for the sake of comprehension on the part of the reader.

There is a detailed discussion of the first lesson (Lesson 1) from both CG and EG teachers, in order to show the exact classroom procedure and the outcome of it. A presentation of Lesson 1 is followed by samples of question-and-answer sessions that took place during the remainder of the teaching. This is included in order to give a flavour and a clear picture of the events and their impacts on the students up until the study of 'The Luncheon' came to an

end. During the teaching processes, the observer began filling in Observation Sheets 1 and 2 and took field notes.

#### *5.4.1 The Control Group Teacher and her Lesson*

The control group teacher was middle-aged and had an MA in English Literature. In the pre-treatment questionnaire for teachers, she stated that she did not receive any training in literature teaching and that the current syllabus was language-based, having very little literature. She believed that it would be ideal not to use Bengali in English lessons. The current methodology, she noted, demanded that students answer questions concerning characters, plot, and setting, and that they write essays and prepare for the examination. She also observed that students had better facilities and better opportunities in private schools, and that the teaching in government schools was syllabus-centred and examination-oriented. The CG teacher added that, due to large class sizes, time constraints and the focus on examinations, it was not always possible to use different methods. However, she reiterated that the development of speaking skills was necessary in order to compete in different spheres of practical life. She pointed out that literature could generate interest and motivation among the students to read further, in order to learn more about life across cultures and about the language. She observed that in most cases the students did not respond to literary texts without the teacher's guidance as they lacked both motivation and linguistic competence. In the classroom, she mainly aimed at completing the syllabus in time to prepare the students for examination. She felt that there was no direct connection between literature and speaking, as literary language was more formal. However, she confirmed that it was better to have both literature and language components in the syllabus.

The CG classroom setting was typical, with student desks in rows and a table for the teacher at the front of the room. There was a blackboard behind the teacher's table. When the CG teacher taught in the classroom, she mostly stood by the table. Her teaching consisted primarily of reading aloud passages from the story, translating, rephrasing and explaining them. While translating, she gave the Bengali equivalent of some unfamiliar vocabulary items in the text. She conducted seven lessons on 'The Luncheon'. There is a description of the activities devised for CG in Chapter Three, section 3.3.3.

When the observation took place (**Lesson 1**), the CG teacher began the class with a series of questions:

- T:** What is literature?  
**S:** Short story, poems....  
**T:** Well, literature is the reflection about life, a picture of a part of life. Often simple incidents become more significant in the writings.

After defining literature, she started talking about the different types of writings or genres of literature:

- T:** Some are tragedies, some are comedies, and jokes, drama, poems and novels are some examples of literature. Today we will read a story by a famous writer.... Do you know the different names for different meals that we eat in a day at different times? (*nobody replies*)  
**T:** Okay, tell me what do we call the morning meal?  
**Ss:** (*all together*) Breakfast.  
**T:** The main meal of the day?  
**Ss:** (*all together*) Dinner.  
**T:** What do you understand by the word 'lunch'?  
**Ss:** (*only few, though*) That we eat in the afternoon.  
**T:** What do you understand by the word 'luncheon'? (*nobody replies*)

At this point, the students kept quiet and the teacher suggested:

- T:** Well, luncheon comes from lunch.

After the initial question-answer session was over, the teacher told the students:

- T:** The story that we are going to read today is 'The Luncheon' by a famous writer, called Somerset Maugham.

She wrote the name S. Maugham on the blackboard and the students repeated his name after her. She continued, giving autobiographical information about the writer:

- T:** S. Maugham was born in 1874. He is one of the most popular novelists and short story writers. He studied medicine but never practised. His best-known novels are, 'Of Human Bondage', 'The Moon and Sixpence', 'Cakes and Ale', and 'The Razor's Edge'. His writings were so famous that people would also call him The English Maupassant. He also had written a large number of comedies. *The Circle* and *Our Betters* are two of his many plays.

The students were busy listening throughout her presentation. The CG teacher now attempted to give a summary of the plot:

- T:** In 'The Luncheon' the writer nicely depicted a small incident of his life. When he was young, he was once flattered and misled by a female reader and though not so willing...that means though he had not the ability to afford her, was still compelled to invite her at Foyot's. The lady made him invite her to an expensive luncheon. This interesting incident is the main topic of our story.

Well, we can say that the woman who was not so well cultured tried to capture a young writer for her own satisfaction. On the other hand, the writer said he understood his own position, the poor condition of his pocket (which was not so good) but could not avoid his admirer, a lady of forty years of age, and her adroit demand one after another, leaving him a bankrupt... At last, after 20 years when they both met again, the writer found the lady in such a shape that made him realise that nature had taken revenge on her.

The students shared the distributed handouts among them. The teacher asked the students to read and to attempt to understand the story. However, before long, she began to read the section by herself, translated the whole piece into Bengali, and asked:

- T: Who are the characters?  
Ss: Writer and the lady guest.  
(S1, S2 and S3 attempted to answer)  
T: How many characters are there in the section?  
Ss: Two. (all together)  
T: What is the meaning of the word 'play'?  
Ss: Drama.  
(a few attempted to answer)

The teacher asked S3 to read aloud a part of Section 2, and continued to translate the text line by line. At this instant, she explained the statement 'Did I remember?' saying that the writer wanted to remember something specific. She also asked students to identify and underline the difficult words, which were 'beckon', 'recognise', and 'interval'.

Section 3 commenced with S20, and S2 reading aloud. The CG teacher asked the students to underline the difficult words and phrases, which were 'cemetery', 'to keep body and soul together', 'chat', 'French senators', 'beyond my means', 'too young to have learned...', 'francs', 'a modest luncheon', and 'cut off coffee'. She wrote the words on the blackboard and gave meaning to the phrases by herself:

- T: What is meant by 'beyond my means'? It means, difficult for me.  
T: What is meant by 'I was flattered'? It means, 'I fell in her trap'.  
T: The phrase 'cut off coffee' means that I have to be cautious.

The final question that she asked was:

- T: Why did the writer agree to go to the restaurant?  
Ss: To dine! (all together)

**Lesson 2:** The teacher started the class by a recapitulation of the last class. Having discussed the first 3 sections once again, the second class dealt with Section 4. The CG teacher asked

S10 and S20 to read aloud the section. Soon, she referred to the text, followed by a series of questions:

- T: Who said this?  
S1: The writer.  
T: How much money did the writer have?  
S5: 80 francs.  
T: Can you tell me how old the lady was?  
S20: 40 years.

**Lesson 3:** The teacher began the class by giving details of the substance of Section 4. She asked S7 and S13 to read aloud parts of Section 5. The students particularly took interest in expressions such as, 'I never eat anything for luncheon', and 'Oh, don't say that', translated in Bengali, brought laughter and enjoyment into the classroom. The teacher talked about the characters from her point of view. The following are some of the questions asked by the teacher, and the answers from the students during Lesson 3:

- T: Who are the characters?  
Ss: The writer, lady guest and the waiter.  
(S1 and S2 answered)  
T: How many characters are there in the section?  
S3: Three.

**Lesson 4:** CG teacher started the class by a recapitulation of the previous class and clarified a few word meanings. Students 6, 11, 12, and 16 read aloud section C, with the teacher correcting their pronunciation in every instance. The teacher, actually, took over from the students, as soon as they could read only one or two lines. The only question that she asked during the lesson, to which she gave the answer herself, was:

- T: What is asparagus?  
T: A delicious and costly food.

**Lesson 5:** Lesson 5 dealt with Sections 7, 8 and 9. The teacher started the class with the following questions:

- T: What is the name of the writer?  
T: What information do you have about the writer?  
T: Name one of his famous writings.

She gave the spelling of the writer's name, and the answers to the questions while the students repeated these after her. She moved on with the story and asked S17 to read aloud the section, and after a while asked questions, such as:

- T: What is the meaning of 'humorist'?  
S8: Funny.  
T: What is the meaning of 'vindictive'?  
S2: Revengeful.

The teacher concluded the lesson by asking the students to identify difficult words and phrases and find out their meanings from the dictionary.

**Lesson 6:** The teacher started the class by repeating information on Maugham and his works. She introduced fill-in-the-blanks, true/false and summarising/paraphrasing activities, as well as continuing the reading-aloud activity and translating the text into Bengali. The following are some of the questions asked by the teacher during Lesson 6:

- T: How did you find the lady guest?  
S3: Greedy.  
T: How many sections have we been?  
S: Nine.  
T: What was there in section 1?

S1 read out a summary of section 1 that she had written as her homework, while the others listened to her. Later on, the teacher marked the answer scripts of two students on the fill-in-the-blank activity and read those out in order to help others to correct the answers by themselves. She concluded the class by giving some phrases with which to make sentence as homework.

**Lesson 7:** This was the final lesson conducted by the CG teacher. This involved a written test with questions set on the text. However, the teacher mentioning that the test would be a mock one distracted the students from making their best effort. By the end of the lesson, the observer and the teacher thanked the students for their time, participation, and cooperation during the programme.

The data from CG lessons reveal that, with the exception of a very few students, the subjects were not involved in the learning process/activities, at all. Their performance level was very poor. There was no real interaction between the teacher and the students. The teacher interrupted them as soon as they started reading aloud, continued to give a word-for-word translation of the text in Bengali and mentioned the difficult phrases from the sections. She gave homework that required pointing out difficult words and phrases, discovering the meanings, and parts of speech of those words from the dictionary. She also introduced fill-in-

the-blanks, true/false and summarising/paraphrasing activities, which demanded text-based written answers. These activities received good responses from the students because of their traditional textual nature, demanding a test of memory on their part.

The teacher used a reading aloud activity based on the grammar-translation method, which at times, made the students smile. She interpreted the characters from her point of view, taking the clues directly from the text. The teacher helped the students find out the meanings from the dictionary and checked the words for them in the front row. It was noticeable that most students remained inactive and did not do any work at all, showing a lack of motivation on their part. There was no activity demanding pair or group work. There was also no inclusion of any student-centred activity or prediction activity or use of an interactional approach.

The English lessons taken by CG teacher were totally teacher-oriented and followed traditional methods. The teacher's overall role was that of someone sitting at a distance, lecturing from the podium. The students were busy taking notes from the lecture, and even worse, attempting to take down whatever the teacher said. In this class, literature was dealt with a capital 'L', without the use of any communicative strategy to initiate response from the students. It was noticeable that most students were consulting and copying each other's papers during the test.

However, it can be said that the students did enjoy and understand the content of the story and could answer text-based questions, although it could not be ascertained whether they were able to answer anything that demanded creativity and imagination on their part.

#### ***5.4.2 The Experimental Group Teacher and her Lesson***

The experimental group teacher was comparatively young, and open to suggestions and experimentation. She was an MA. In the pre-treatment questionnaire for teachers, she stated that she had not received any training in literature teaching. Regarding the importance of introducing literary texts in the English classroom, she stated:

...If they (the students) read quality literature, ... they are likely to be motivated to read further. From books in English, they will enrich their stock of vocabulary, sentence pattern, etc. .... They will develop their language ability, and will know about cultures of different societies apart from their own. Not only that, they will be able to compare between different cultures of the world and realise about the good and bad sides of the cultures.



Concerning her experience with English literature in the classroom, she observed that her experience was good because the method used was teacher-oriented and focused on preparing students for syllabus-based examination. However, she pointed out that a student-oriented classroom would be better, facilitating the overall development of the students.

The EG teacher observed that students preferred to be spoon-fed, which was undesirable in terms of learning. This was due to their lack of proficiency in language skills. She, however, added that students coming from Bengali medium schools were adequate in vocabulary and grammar, yet they were very weak in spoken English. This was mainly a result of lack of opportunity to practise speaking in English either at school or at home. Moreover, the absence of testing speaking in the examination left students with the impression that writing correct English was equal to achieving competency in the language. The teachers also placed effort into developing students' writing ability to augment support for the examination.

According to the EG teacher, literature could play a vital role in effective teaching. Her views regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills' were that students would learn language from literature fairly quickly, therefore they would grow in self-confidence, leading to an encouragement to speak. She concluded that literature was a reflection of life, mingled with the rich imagination of the writer.

The EG classroom setting was identical to that of the CG; a crowded class with student desks in rows, a table for the teacher at the front of the room, and a blackboard behind this. When the EG teacher taught in the classroom, initially, she mostly stood by the table. She conducted nine lessons on 'The Luncheon'. The activities devised included guessing games, simple prediction based on photographs, reading aloud with proper expression/gesture, and answering prediction questions initiating interpretation of the text in many different ways. The set of activities for EG were presented in Chapter Three, section 3.3.4. The following is a discussion of the data gathered from Lesson 1 in length, followed by the sample data from the other lessons to give an essence of the exact classroom events that took place during the teaching in EG. Throughout the lessons in EG, clear indication has been made if answer was produced in Bengali in order to be able to count the frequency of English use during the lessons. This is to draw a conclusion about their performance in English which is presented in Section 5.6.5. The answers arranged in a table on Lesson 1 with indications on medium of language use in EG are presented in Appendix 15.

When the observation took place (**Lesson 1**), the EG teacher started her class with a warm-up session. She discussed the nature of the class with the students and made the instructions clear. She encouraged them to answer questions using their schemata and imagination, and told them not to worry about pronunciation or grammar. She also asked them to have more than one answer ready to a certain question, and not to repeat answers mentioned previously.

- T:** Can you guess about what are we going to read?  
**Ss:** (S1, S3, S6, S10, S14, S18, S19, S20) Story; (S2) Poem [in Bengali]; (S11, S16) Poem; (S5, S8, S17) Comedy; (S4) Fiction; (S7) Historical stories [in Bengali]; (S9) Novel; (S12) Detective story; (S13) Essay; (S15) Science fiction.

Now, the teacher presented the pictures to the students, after viewing, they passed them on to the next one.

- T:** Okay, now, have a look at the picture (*picture 1*). Let us try the odd picture out (*group and pair discussion and response*)  
**Ss:** (*All together*) Flower vase.  
**T:** Very good. Well, now, look at this picture (*picture 2*). Can you tell me, what is this picture about?  
**Ss:** (S1, S13, S15, S18) Hotel; (S2, S12, S14, S20) Restaurant; (S3) Night club; (S4) People having food [in Bengali]; (S5) Market; (S6) Club; (S7) Drawing room; (S8, S16) Lobby; (S9, S10) Waiting room, (S11) Bar.

The students at this point became very interested in the lesson and keen to answer promptly. Next, the teacher asked them to describe the place in the picture:

- T:** Okay, can you describe the place? What do you see there?  
**Ss:** (S1) Gorgeous; (S2) 5 star hotel; (S3) Posh; (S4) Well decorated; (S5) Expensive; (S6) Beautiful sculptures [in Bengali]; (S7) Fashionable; (S8) Beautiful, expensive flower vase; (S9) Decorative table-chairs; (S10) Decorated furnishing; (S11) Soothing atmosphere [in Bengali]; (S12) Less crowded [in Bengali]; (S13) Sculpture of a monkey [in Bengali]; (S14) Beautifully decorated; (S15) Beautiful light sheds [in Bengali]; (S16) Nice looking furniture (S20) Many food items.  
**T:** Okay. Many of you said that it is an expensive place. How do you know it is expensive? Well, try to use your imagination now... what I mean is, you can go beyond the picture, imagine a place that you think is expensive, and describe it. Okay?  
**Ss:** (S1) [in Bengali] (S4) Expensive decoration; (S2) Can see a swimming pool [in Bengali]; (S3) Atmosphere is sophisticated; (S5) Duty free shop; (S6) Marble and bronze statues; (S7) Expensive curtains; (S8) Decoration of crystals [in Bengali]; (S9) Nice curtains; (S10) I do not think they are expensive although, at the first sight they look so... [in Bengali]; (S11) The bar outside is nice; (S12) Attractive lighting; (S13) Shining, bronze statue [in Bengali]; (S14) Chandeliers [in Bengali]; (S15) Clean dressed and professional waiters; (S16) [Can see some] real, rare plants; (S17) Decorative furniture; (S18) Shinning, decorative cutlery [in Bengali]; (S19) Silver spoons; (S20) Dress code maintained [in Bengali].  
**T:** Good. Let us try the same question again. Try to add to your description, okay?

- Ss:** (S1) Decorative, expensive, wooden furniture [in Bengali]; (S2) Marble statue with fine curving [in Bengali]; (S3) Soothing lighting; (S4) Skin of [a] tiger; (S5) Gorgeous light sheds; (S6) Waiters; (S7) Original paintings [in Bengali]; (S8) Well maintained outside [in Bengali]; (S9) Chandeliers; (S10) Artistic, professionally done [in Bengali]; (S11) Good service; (S12) Expensive drinks available; (S13) Quite place, not for everyone; (S14) Good management; (S15) Fine material for the curtains [in Bengali]; (S16) Rare decorative pieces; (S17) Decoration is replica, not original; (S18) people wearing designer clothes.

The above data reveal that the students had already started to use their imagination, prediction and schemata. Now that the atmosphere of the story was set, the teacher asked the next warm-up question:

- T:** With whom would you like to go to a restaurant?  
**Ss:** (S1) Parents; (S2) Friends; (S3) Cousins; (S4) Relatives [in Bengali]; (S5) Someone my age [in Bengali]; (S6, S17, S18) Sister; (S7) Brothers and sisters; (S8) Younger brother; (S9) Whole family including grandparents; (S10) Brother; (S11) Grandparents; (S12) Brother-in-law; (S13) Elder brother [in Bengali]; (S14) Mother; (S15) Elder sister; (S16) Teacher; (S19) Father; (S20) Whole family.

The next question asked was regarding the people with whom one usually goes to a restaurant, making the situation more general than personal. The students suggested the following:

- Ss:** (S1) Friends; (S2, S8, S18) Family; (S3) Colleagues; (S4) Mother; (S5) Beloved; (S6) Someone close; (S7) Husband/wife; (S9) Clients; (S10) Alone; (S11) Elder brother; (S12, S17, S19) cousins; (S13) Business partner (S14) Best friend; (S15) Grandpa; (S16) Parents; (S20) Sister.

**T:** Okay, now that we know where the story is going to take place, can you think of the occasion? What could be the story about? Give me your idea in one sentence.

- Ss:** (S1) Engagement party; (S2, S5) Wedding reception. (S3) Birthday party. (S4) Reception of Jenifer Lopez (S6) Meeting of two people. (S7) Classmates are celebrating examination results [in Bengali]. (S8) Business meeting. (S9) The waiter becomes the customer [in Bengali]. (S10) Marriage anniversary. (S11) Cousins having dinner. (S12) Rag Day, finishing school [in Bengali]. (S13) Surprise birthday party for dad. (S14) Friendship day – opening up secrets to each other [in Bengali]. (S15) 31<sup>st</sup> December party. (S16) Farewell party to the boss. (S18) Sister's birthday party. (S19) Eating out for a change [in Bengali]; (S20) Office party.

**T:** What could be the theme?

- Ss:** (S1) Engagement of my best friends. (S2) Wedding of my aunt. (S3) My friend is turning 16. (S4) To know about her latest movie. (S5) The couple are leaving the country [in Bengali] (S6) Prospective couples. (S7) Future plans. (S8) New prospects. (S9) His wishes and dreams. (S10) 30th anniversary. (S11) Meeting cousins who live abroad [in Bengali]; (S12) Missing friends. (S13) Dad has turned 50. (S14) We will be friends forever [in Bengali]; (S15) Chaos. (S16) He was good to us. (S18) How to

surprise her. (S19) Got fed up with our cook at home [in Bengali]. (S20) Annual dinner.

- T:** Okay, can you think about the characters that might be involved in the story?
- Ss:** (S1) Opposite characteristics. (S2) She knew her husband-to-be, have similar tastes [in Bengali]. (S3) Charming girl, her enemy is also invited [in Bengali]. (S4) Crowded with journalists. (S5) Friends and relatives of the couples. (S6) Nicely dressed, open-minded. (S7) All friends and favourite teachers. (S8) Formal tone. (S9) The waiter and myself (S10) All relatives from mom's and dad's side [in Bengali]. (S11) Cousins of all ages [in Bengali]; (S12) Friends of nearly 10 years. (S13) Family members. (S14) Friends, cousins; (S15) New people. (S16) Colleagues. (S18) Cousin sisters. (S19) Family members; (S20) Colleagues and their spouses [in Bengali].
- T:** Okay, now think about the setting. Imagine the setting and try to describe it in one sentence.
- Ss:** (S1) Selected guests; (S2) Crowded but organised; (S3) A fine restaurant, soft music; (S4) A posh atmosphere. (S5) Reception hall of a hotel [in Bengali]; (S6) Quite place; (S7) Chinese restaurant. (S8, S9) Quite atmosphere; (S10) Indian restaurant. (S11) Everyone is curious, some want to go abroad as well [in Bengali]. (S12) Everyone wants to talk, quite emotional [in Bengali]; (S13) Excitement, nice place for family gathering [in Bengali]; (S14) Excitement and tears, not everyone notices though [in Bengali]; (S15) Noisy; (S16) Formal; (S19) Quiet surrounding [in Bengali]; (S20) Spacious hall room.

Throughout the warm-up session, the EG teacher kept the students very busy. They were not allowed too much time to spend on any question. Initially, the teacher clarified instructions and other related matters more than once, however, she checked herself from talking too much. She concluded the class by saying that they would read the story in the following lesson, which was concerned with having food in a restaurant.

**Lesson 2:** Lesson 2 focused on Sections 1-3, and used guessing games and prediction activities. After asking some interesting questions demanding prediction, the teacher revealed the title of the story. Students consulted the dictionary as well as each other to find the meanings of difficult words. A very congenial atmosphere prevailed, not a very common picture in a traditional classroom. The following are some sample questions with their answers:

- T:** What could be the title of the story?
- Ss:** (S1) Foyot's- the restaurant; (S2) The writer and the lady;( S3) The luncheon; (S4) A wonderful lunch; (S5) An expensive lunch; (S6) The invitation; (S7) A chat with a difference; (S8) A wonderful day; (S9) Writer in a restaurant; (S10) The poor writer; (S11) A memorable experience of a writer [in Bengali];( S12) The writer; (S13) How to make a friend (S14) Cheating by flattery; (S15) The lunch; (S16) The experience; (S17) Never again! [in Bengali]; (S18) A fanatic [in Bengali]; (S19) The restaurant; (S20) A memorable day.

**T:** Why so?

**Ss:** (S1) The story is set in an expensive restaurant called Foyot's. (S2) The story is about the writer and a lady. (S3) It is an exceptional lunch. (S4) The host met his life partner. (S5) The host is going to be a bankrupt; the lunch is unaffordable for him [in Bengali]; (S6) This invitation was fatal for the writer, yet he invited his guest to Foyot's [in Bengali]. (S7) They could talk about spending life together. (S8) The writer was hoping to meet his soul mate. (S9) He was expecting a nice plot for his next book. (S10) He was poor and yet had to treat his guest in one of the most expensive restaurants in Paris [in Bengali]. (S11) The writer tells us about his memorable experience. (S13) It was easy to make a friend by speaking high about her. (S14) The writer being flattered, asked the lady to dine with him, who left him bankrupt by the end of their meeting [in Bengali]; (S15) Something special happened; (S16) The host did not have enough money to pay the bill; (S17) Bad experience. (S18) No money, yet wanted to go to Foyot's; (S19) This was no ordinary lunch; something special was bound to happen [in Bengali] (S20) The host is going to remember the event forever [in Bengali].

**T:** Why did the writer give the title 'The Luncheon' and not anything else?

**Ss:** (S1) A formal word. (S2, S3, S6, S11, S13) This was a story about a memorable lunch. (S4, S10) He met the special lady during lunch. (S5) The story took place during lunch and ended there [in Bengali]. (S7) Luncheon means 'to lunch', the writer, and the lady met for the first time in a restaurant [in Bengali]. (S9) Luncheon is not a common word, so to indicate that something special would happen [in Bengali]. (S12) The writer had to pay off the bill, which left him bankrupt. (S14) Interesting lunch; (S15) It was a special lunch; (S16) The lady wanted to have lunch with the writer. (S17) The writer was happy to meet the lady and to treat her special [in Bengali]. (S18) The lady refused to eat much [in Bengali]. (S19) The writer and the lady got married later on, so this was a special lunch. (S20) The story took place during lunch.

Together with the prediction activity, there was activity on grouping words to follow a story line. Students were very expressive in sentence making (orally) for this activity. They jotted down points for the story chronologically and crossed out the common points in order to draw a story line from all the responses. They followed the story line from the previous response in order to be able to instigate instant ideas.

**Lesson 3:** From the beginning of Lesson 3, EG students were found to be very responsive and enthusiastic, asking the teacher about the task and what were they expected to do. Lesson 3 dealt with Sections 1 and 9. An allocation of five minutes seemed enough to read the text silently and to underline difficult words.

Activities included reading aloud, word meaning through inference and prediction activity through simple open-ended questions. While doing the reading aloud activity, each of the students read out, for example, one line and translated that in Bengali. All of them read and

tried to explain what they read using their own words. Following are some sample questions and their answers from Lesson 3:

**T:** Can you predict what is going to happen in between the first and the last sections?  
**Ss:** (S1) They will talk about their school life. (S2) They are going to have a fight. (S3) The writer recalled the incident that ended their friendship [in Bengali]. (S4) A severe quarrel took place between them [in Bengali]. (S5) They will talk about their events in life. (S6) The writer will recall how did the lady cheat him. (S7) The lady got tired of the writer's dumping of garbage in front of her house [in Bengali]. (S8) They will talk about the experience at school (S9) She will tell him how she liked his lectures and some other things (S10) They will talk about their office. (S11) The writer fell in love with her during college days [in Bengali]. (S12) The writer will narrate how the lady treated him in the past. (S13) How their business grew and how did she cheat him. (S14) She used to tease him through letters. (S15) He is going to recall her cruelty towards him [in Bengali]. (S16) The writer will talk about his other books those has been published in between; (S17) She did something to the writer that the writer will narrate; (S18) They had good times. (S19) He remembers her actions (S20) The lady actually did not understand the writer's style [in Bengali].

**T:** What direction the relationship between the characters is likely to take?  
**Ss:** (S1) They were good friends but something happened in between that made the writer angry with her [in Bengali]. (S2) They will try to patch up their differences for friendship's sake. (S3) The lady apparently thought that the problem was over between them [in Bengali]. (S4) Both were willing to fix the problem. (S5, S10) They will be friends again. (S6) The writer would like to make it up. (S7) They wanted to find a solution to this problem in order to become good neighbours. (S8) The lady realised that she was unjust to the writer, and that is why she took the initiative to talk to him, hoping that they will forget the bitter past and would keep in touch from then on [in Bengali]. (S9) They will keep in touch from now on and do some research together. (S11) She complained to the principal of the college and the writer considered her to be his enemy from then on [in Bengali]. (S12, S17) He decided not to see her ever again. (S13) The relationship grew bitter. (S14) He did not like it and thought of taking revenge on her some day. (S15) The lady did not realise that she had harmed him and so wanted to keep contact with him [in Bengali]. (S16) The lady was still interested in his books and decided to keep in touch. (S18, S20) They always remained friendly. (S19) He wished they never met.

The EG teacher remained patient throughout and did not get agitated with the mistakes that the students made during the lesson.

**Lesson 4:** Lesson 4 focused on Sections 1-3. The division of the sections into several components ensured that each student had a chance to read and explain. After completing the reading aloud activity, the class moved on to the prediction activities. The following are some questions with the responses from the students:

**T:** Who is going to pay the bill?

- Ss:** (S1, S2, S5, S7, S9, S10, S16, S17, S20) The writer, because he invited the lady. (S3) They would share the bill. (S4) They shared, because the writer realised that his wallet was missing [in Bengali]. (S6) After having a fight between them, they decided to pay their own share [in Bengali]. (S8, S13) The lady being very nice paid off the bill. (S10, S11, S14, S19) They had lunch at home, so nobody had to pay any bill. (S15) The lady, because the writer had his purse stolen [in Bengali]. (S18) The lady, the writer pretended that he had lost his purse.
- T:** What will be the possible reactions and impacts on their relationship if they were a young woman and a young man?
- Ss:** (S1) Even though they both were young, the writer decided not to keep contact with the lady any more [in Bengali]. (S2) He wanted to take revenge, although she was pretty. (S3) He bought her a nice ring, although it was expensive for him [in Bengali]. (S4) The writer liked the lady very much and invited her to dine with him the following weekend [in Bengali]. (S5) He would listen to her, because she was pretty. (S6) The writer missed his step on the stairs and fell down. Though the lady was angry with him, out of pity offered him help. The writer forgot everything and decided to meet her again the next day [in Bengali]. (S7) The writer had consolation with the thought that, after all, he was treating a beautiful lady [in Bengali]. (S8) Somebody fell sick at the next table, which made the lady sick. The writer became concerned and took her to the washroom to help her freshen up [in Bengali]. (S9) The writer was handsome and the lady wanted to meet him again. (S10) The writer being polite compelled to her wishes. (S11) The lady became scared finding an insect inside her purse and started weeping; the writer tried to assure her and found that it was made of plastic. Her cousin only wanted to play a trick on her [in Bengali]. (S12) The writer wanted to propose the lady however, watching her eating habits, he decided not to. (S13) They decided to invest together on a project. (S14) The lady cut her finger. The writer took her to a doctor and later on to Fantasy Kingdom so that she could have some fun [in Bengali]. (S15) To save the writer from embarrassment, she proposed that he could treat her another day [in Bengali]. (S16) Although they did not enjoy the food, they kept quiet. (S17) They would plan for another meeting. (S18) He would tolerate and invite her again, because she was young. (S19) Although the writer realised that the lady had put on a heavy make-up, he took it easy and appreciated her [in Bengali]. (S20) He would like to keep contact with her, although he realised that she was not that friendly as she seemed at the beginning of their meeting [in Bengali].

The teacher provided the students with the correct pronunciation when all of them completed their turn in the reading aloud activity.

**Lesson 5:** Lesson 5 dealt with sections 4 and 5. The sections contained dialogue between the characters. Students had to be expressive and had to quickly continue the dialogue, while completing the reading aloud activity. They were confident in doing so and from their explanation and expression, it was evident that they were enjoying the procedure as well as the text very much. The following are some questions and responses to them:

- T:** What are the other noticeable characteristics of the lady?
- Ss:** (S1) Imposing. (S2) Not attractive. (S3) She was about forty. (S4) A bit elderly. (S5) She was of a charming age. (S6) There was nothing exciting about her. (S7) Did not

arouse sudden passion [in Bengali]. (S8) Disappointing. (S9) She had too many teeth. (S10) She had white, large and even teeth. (S11) She liked food. (S12) Talkative. (S13) Friendly. (S14) Not that young but still charming. (S15) Receptive. (S16) Social. (S17) Appreciative. (S18) She was at the restaurant on time. (S19) Smiling. (S20) She was older than the writer.

- T:** ‘...she gave me the impression of having more teeth’ – what connotation this impression might have?
- Ss:** (S1) She wanted to impress the writer by showing her white teeth. (S2) The writer did not like the lady, so he started to find faults with her. (S3) Her front teeth were a bit larger than usual [in Bengali]. (S4) To impress the writer by showing her white teeth (S5) She was laughing more than necessary. (S6) She talked too much and laughed too much with a display of her teeth [in Bengali]. (S7) She was proud of her teeth and wanted to show off. (S8) Because of her wide jaw, whenever she opened her mouth it seemed like she had more teeth than others did [in Bengali]. (S9) Her complexion was dark, so her white teeth were flashing out. (S10) Her teeth were attractive so she wanted to show her friendly gesture to the writer by giving a smile [in Bengali]. (S11) She had artificial teeth, which were not set properly. (S12) Due to the uneven setting, she gave the impression of having more teeth [in Bengali]. (S13) Most of the time she was laughing that was showing off her teeth (S14) In order to impress the writer she had been to the dentist before the meeting [in Bengali]. (S16) The lady thought that she could smile nicely, so she was showing off her teeth while smiling, and the writer thought she had too many teeth [in Bengali]; (S18) She was too talkative. (S19) She used to laugh too much, so the writer was thinking that she was having many teeth (S20) She was over excited.

**Lesson 6:** Lesson 6 dealt with the remaining part of section 5, section 6 and Section 7, and students continued with the reading aloud activity followed by the prediction activities. The following are some of the questions followed by the responses on Lesson 6:

- T:** What are your feelings towards the lady at this point?
- Ss:** (S1) She is quite complex; (S2) Merry; (S3) Witty; (S4) Very clever; (S5) Miserly; (S6, S12) Very selfish; (S7) Without civic sense [in Bengali]; (S8) Critical about others; (S9) Stubborn; (S10, S15, S19) Greedy; (S11) Dull; (S13) Flatterer; (S13) Very inconsiderate; (S16) Unwise; (S17) She should have listened to the writer [in Bengali]; (S18) Stupid; (S20) She was doing the right thing.
- T:** Why so?
- Ss:** (S1) She said one thing, and acted in another way. (S2), (S6), (S12) Was never bothered about others. (S3) Knew how to place orders. (S4) Knew how to exploit others [in Bengali]. (S5) Never talked about the bill. (S7) Should have realised that he was young and not an established writer, so might not have enough earning [in Bengali]. (S8) Started teasing the writer about the small mutton chop over and over again. (S9) Put the orders, ignoring the hints from the writer [in Bengali]. (S10) Ate too much. (S11) She could not understand the hints or the situation. (S13) She was creating pressure on the writer. (S14) She should have realised the writer’s position [in Bengali]. (S15) She asked for an invitation. (S16) Never thought whether the writer was able to pay off the bill. (S17) She was deliberately putting him into trouble [in Bengali]. (S18) Did not notice the writer’s hint about drink. (S19) Ordered the most costly items. (S20) She was being invited.

**Lesson 7:** Lesson 7 dealt firstly, with the remaining part of section 7 and then section 8. The EG teacher reminded the students that there was no correct or incorrect answer, as long as



they could put them logically. The following are some samples of the questions asked, with their answers:

- T:** What was the writer thinking about when he said, 'Panic seized me'?
- Ss:** (S1) What would be the bill like. (S2, S3) She would never stop eating. (S4) He would be left a popper. (S5) How was he going to manage the rest of the month? (S6, S9) She might fall ill. (S7) He was nervous. (S8) She might propose him. (S10) She might want to go for sightseeing after lunch. (S11) He would be starving for the rest of the month [in Bengali]. (S12) He would be scared of women from now on. (S13) She might order some more food to take home. (S14) His heart started beating fast. (S15) He would never be able to get out of this situation. (S16) What if he had to live the rest of his life with her [in Bengali]. (S17) He would be under humiliation while paying the bill. (S18) He might have to borrow money from the lady. (S19) She might think him to be miserly and poor [in Bengali]. (S20) This was a question of manhood.
- T:** What else the writer could do if the bill was higher than his pocket?
- Ss:** (S1) He could call his friend to help him out of the situation. (S2) He could sign an agreement that he would pay off the bill later [in Bengali]. (S3) He could request the manager to talk to his uncle who could assure him of the payment [in Bengali]. (S4) He could pretend to have left his purse at home. (S5) He could call a friend to come to his aid (S6) He could pretend that he has fallen sick and must leave the restaurant. (S7) He could tell her that he has lost his purse. (S8) He could be bold enough to tell her that he did not have money and request her to share the bill [in Bengali] (S9) He can be frank to tell her that he does not have enough money to pay off the bill, (S10, S13) He could pretend that he had received an urgent phone call and that he must leave . (S11) He could request the manager that he will pay the rest of the bill the next day [in Bengali]. (S12) He could politely request her to lend him some money [in Bengali]. (S14) He can pretend to throw up so that they have to leave the restaurant (S15) He could call his sister/brother to save the situation. (S16) He could just tell her to wait, pay half of the bill and ask the manager to get the rest from her [in Bengali]. (S17, S19) He can ask her to share the bill; (S20) He can pretend to have lost his wallet.

**Lesson 8:** Lesson 8 dealt with the last section of the story that the students had already read at the beginning of the EG lessons. There was no reading aloud activity. The students were to focus on the activities keeping in mind the whole story. Here are some questions followed by the responses from the students on the whole story:

- T:** Are you happy or sad about the lady's predicament?
- Ss:** (S1, S2, S11, S14, S18, S20) Happy. (S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S12, S13, S15, S16, S17, S19) Sad.
- T:** Why so? Explain.
- Ss:** (S1) She had to be careful about herself. (S2) She just made him a bankrupt. (S3) As a girl myself, I feel sorry for her. I would have felt the same for myself if it happened to me. (S4) She was not doing that intentionally [in Bengali]. (S5) I feel that she had no idea that the writer may have any problem in giving her such an expensive treat [in Bengali]. (S6), (S17) Because of her weight, she must be vulnerable to many diseases. (S7) Whatever she did, I think the punishment was too severe for her. She was suffering from obesity. (S8) She did not know about his financial condition. We cannot blame her because the writer did not disclose his situation to her. (S9) She had

to be aware of her weight and control her eating habits [in Bengali]. The obvious thing happened to her. (S10) People gave her strange looks. (S11) She should not have made the writer so miserable. (S12) She was suffering from diseases from overeating. (S13) She must have exploited many others and hence this condition [in Bengali]. (S14) She was mature enough to understand the writer's position and he tried many times to manage her; she did not cooperate [in Bengali]. (S15) She liked to eat, that does not mean that she had to suffer so much. (S16) She was innocent and foolish. She was not capable of understanding other's problem. (S18) She was older than the writer was; she should maintain some manners with him [in Bengali]. (S19) She may suffer from severe illness/disease (S20) She had to be cautious.

Now that they had reached the story's end, it became evident that the students were excited to have experienced something new in terms of the subject matter and in the ways of teaching.

**Lesson 9:** Now that the students had completed studying the whole story, Lesson 9 focused on post-reading activities on the whole text. The students spent five minutes on the story as a whole and sorted out words or expressions that still needed clarification. The first question asked them to do a summary of the story, using their own language. While doing so, the students quoted from the story, for example, the key statements. They were quite confident in their responses, explanations and expressions. It was evident that they very much enjoyed the procedure as well as the text. The following are some questions with the responses received from the students on Lesson 9:

**T:** Do you find the theme thought provoking?

**Ss:** *(All agreed that the theme was thought provoking)*

**T:** If yes, why so?

**Ss:** (S1) Quite useful for our everyday life. (S2) There are girls who spend a lot unnecessarily and put others into trouble. I think I will remember that from now on [in Bengali]. (S3) Yes. Have learnt about relationships and how behaviour shapes up a relationship (S4) I will not promise to treat someone in a restaurant, without having enough information regarding the cost there [in Bengali]. (S5) I can think about situations beforehand and think about what probable measures to take accordingly [in Bengali]. (S6) I have learnt how to deal with an awkward situation. (S7) We must not do something that we do not mean to do. (S8) I learnt about situations, which might be troublesome and the ways to avoid them [in Bengali]. (S9) I will from now on, be more practical. (S10) I will be more patient from now on, but be extroverted. (S11) I should not agree to proposals from strangers. (S12) I will be careful enough before promising someone something. (S13) I will be careful and considerate about other's condition [in Bengali]. (S14) I should behave properly if I am the guest. (S15) I should think about my ability before committing to something. (S16) I know that the result of greed could never be rewarding, and that, overeating would result in many severe diseases [in Bengali]. (S17) I should not expect too much before meeting someone. For example, the writer expected the lady to be young and beautiful without having any information about her [in Bengali]. (S18) I will be careful not to do anything that might hurt the other party. (S19) I will be careful about my eating habit. (S20) I will try to help people, who have problematic eating habit, such as the lady guest [in Bengali].

This was the final class on 'The Luncheon', following the proposed methodology, which was learner-centred and mainly based on prediction activity. The teacher asked the students whether they understood the plot, vocabulary and the story line. All of them agreed that they did. During the lessons, each student attempted to respond to the questions without hesitation and to the best of her ability. None remained silent on any question. They were ready to answer short questions, true/false, fill-in-the-blanks, matching, multiple-choice questions, phrasal meaning, and other traditional questions based on the text. The EG teacher commented on their performance as extraordinary.

The prediction activities comprised open-ended questions. The students replied one after another, giving varied answers with almost no repetition, thus making the observer's task easier. The observation of students followed a clockwise direction, sometimes three times. As can be seen from the observation made on EG lessons, with the exception of a few students and only on few occasions, all the subjects were much involved in the activities. Their performance level could be said to be 'very good' on average. It was a completely student-centred classroom with the teacher as moderator and facilitator, having minimum talk-time. Students made use of reference, inference, schemata and the information that they had already received while answering questions (5.4.2).

In general, the students reacted to the method and activities very positively, took the initiative and showed a lot of enthusiasm for speaking. Sometimes, the teacher made them work in pairs in deciding the answer. However, it was noted that initially the EG teacher was tempted to retreat to the traditional mode of teaching and become the lecturer. Nevertheless, originally a follower of the traditional method throughout her teaching career, she adapted herself to the proposed method quite quickly, showing a lot of interest.

### ***5.4.3 Summary of the Teaching in CG and EG***

This section presents a summary of how the CG and EG teachers handled their literature classes following the traditional and the proposed methodologies respectively. This is also to provide a closer look into the real teaching situation.

As expected, the CG teacher's lessons carried the characteristics of traditional ways of teaching which comprised the lecture and the grammar-translation methods, and which made

the students passive participants in the teaching process. There were a lot of teacher interruption during the reading aloud activity. The students could understand the content of the story and answer text-based questions, although it would be difficult to guess whether they would be able to answer anything that demanded creativity and imagination. They were required to memorise answers that required text-based information. There was no group work activity during her lessons.

Both the teachers were free to conduct the class in Bengali with occasional use of English (the usual practice in the English classroom). However, the CG teacher spoke and explained things in English throughout the lesson which was unusual. She herself commented during the interview and questionnaire survey that although English was desired as a medium of instruction throughout it was not always possible to implement this. Therefore, her attitude during the lessons was self-contradictory. In addition, the class sometimes seemed to be a pre-planned one by negotiation with the students, thus lacking the flavour of a usual environment.

The EG teacher followed the proposed student-centred method based on prediction activity. At the outset of the lessons, she made the instructions clear to the students. As a medium of instruction, she used mostly Bengali and sometimes English, which engendered a proper atmosphere and the students appeared to feel comfortable. The scenario changed as the lessons progressed and the students started to speak more in English and less in Bengali.

The EG teacher did not correct their mistakes (grammatical/structural/pronunciation) and problems in every instance. This made the students motivated and interested in speaking out and as a result, they responded quite freely, enthusiastically and with much confidence. During the lessons, the teacher noted down any pronunciation problem, and mentioned the correct one after the students had finished reading. It was unprecedented for the researcher to see that, after initial ice breaking, the students reacted in a very positive way. At first, out of habit, they asked the teacher for the meaning of a word, but gradually they focused on their own efforts. Throughout the lessons, they never appeared to get bored or unhappy, rather they inquired whether they had to come to the class at the weekends. They actually proposed that they were willing to do this for the sake of the study, which was very surprising.

The EG teacher added that, although at the beginning, she thought that this process might be time-consuming, she was soon assured that it was better than the traditional classroom practice. She also observed that, through patience, it was possible to change the traditional spoon-fed mentality of the students.

On the final day, the students confirmed that they were no longer afraid of examinations and that they no more felt the urge to memorise an answer as directed by the teacher or private tutor. They said that they were able to answer open-ended questions as well as textual questions quite comfortably. Moreover, by the end of the class, it was also evident that their pronunciation and grammar improved a great deal. This was a rewarding experience for the researcher both in terms of trying out the method and in the responses received from the class.

To sum up the findings from both groups, although both the teachers were still following traditional methodology to some extent, the EG teacher was getting used to the proposed methodology and a systematic approach. It was also interesting to observe that none of them used any devices such as transparencies, OHP or different materials other than the photocopies of 'The Luncheon'. By following the proposed methodology, the EG teacher nevertheless, managed the class very well in initiating talk among her students.

### **5.5 Students' Views: Pre-treatment Interview and Questionnaire**

Fourteen students from both CG and EG took part in the pre-treatment interviews, in order to talk about their motivation, and the nature of contributions in class. There were also questions concerning attitudes towards literature and the teaching methodologies employed in their classes. The schedule for the interview was semi-structured and, framing of the questions were based on the information that the researcher already had on a traditional English classroom. Girls in groups of two or three came to take part in the interview and spoke in a mixture of English and Bengali. Each session (recording) took around forty-five minutes to one hour.

In addition to the interview survey, all forty participants in both CG and EG took part in a pre-treatment questionnaire survey which aimed at seeking their responses and attitudes towards English lessons and the teaching approach.

### ***5.5.1 Pre-treatment Interview with the Students***

The students took part in the interviews individually, initially inside the classroom. Later, because of interruptions during the interviews, the head teacher was kind enough to let us use her house on campus to conduct the remainder.

When the students were asked to define literature, they expressed literature as the projection of life mixed with the writers' creativity. For them, any thought-provoking writing which broadened the imagination, and gave ideas about society and life could be a literary work. All the students mentioned the literary canon, showing their association of literature with the classical past.

While giving opinion on the introduction of literary texts in the classroom, all the participants argued that literature presented a vast and broader picture of the world by presenting different cultures, places and societies which could lead to a greater understanding of life from many perspectives and dimensions. They added that they would also learn language components such as grammar and structure, directly and comparatively easily, because literature was able to capture their interest. Learning language this way made it easier to apply in real situations, because from literature 'we will learn how and what to do and what to say in different situations' thus contributing to improved language development without having to go to separate language classes.

The students reiterated that literature helped them to develop their imaginative, as well as linguistic faculties, assisting them in better communication. Literature gave the opportunity to develop interpretative skills as, through the development of the imaginative faculty, they could look at things in different lights and from different angles to have a broader outlook on situations. One student connected the development of thinking skills to better expression, and improved speaking skills, self-realisation and learner autonomy. As she commented:

... through literature we automatically learn a lot about the language. We start thinking; can start predicting about the events yet to take place. Thus, we start developing our imagination and thinking skills. As we start developing our thinking skills, the possibility of developing our speaking skills open up. Apart from developing the linguistic side, my knowledge about the society and life around also develop. This helps in understanding myself better. Literature encompasses varied themes and topics that capture my interest and motivate me to read further.

The students also mentioned contemporary literature as a rich resource in learning contemporary language. However, they added, drawing parallels between the past and now, for example, Shakespearean English could be a good resource for language learning, as writings from the past also encompassed themes and plots having universal application and value. It was language that went through changes but not the expectations and dynamics of life.

All fourteen students agreed that they were interested in literature. Regarding the genres of choice, their favourite was the short story because its length, the element of pleasure and enjoyment that it offered, led to motivation. The intricacy of the plot and element of suspense of a short story made the readers excited. Short stories also depicted life and realism, represented real characters, which helped them to come to terms with real situations. This made them better equipped with insight into practical experiences. According to one student:

The problem of a character seems to be my problem...this togetherness or familiarity deepens and broadens my thoughts. I can have clues to solve my own problems.... The life-like qualities of short stories have a far-reaching interesting effect and impact on me.

Moreover, the open-ended criteria of a short story allowed one to think and imagine, which contributed to a search for deeper meaning. The students also observed that, through short stories, they could increase their vocabulary which would have an impact on their speaking skills. They could also make use of the dialogues as representing real conversations.

All students commented that they read additional books because the texts in the syllabus were not adequate to cater for their interest and were too simple and uninteresting for their age group. Books outside the syllabus offered variety and an opportunity to make comparison between cultures, and made language learning easier. Two of the students said that additional reading helped them develop their imagination and creativity, whereas reading texts in the syllabus was mainly aimed at scoring high in examinations.

Some students said that they read additional texts to keep themselves updated. This helped them to cope with friends from English medium schools, who had plenty of resources to fulfil their thirst for reading. Two of them added that the books that they read out of their own interest helped them learn things which were more effectively usable in their personal and practical life. They enjoyed this self-learning.

In answering the question whether literary texts would be able to motivate them to read more and express themselves better in English language, all fourteen commented in the positive. They believed that reading an interesting book motivated and encouraged them to further reading. Some students observed that the world of literature, offering deep meaning beyond the surface, helped develop the mind and evoked curiosity, which also had a motivating impact on them. A further motivating factor with regard to literature was that, through literary pieces, learners could learn language with pleasure and enjoyment, thus making the process of learning appropriate and effective. This was perhaps lacking in a purely language classroom. Thus learning was likely to take a new shape, resulting in self-confidence and better expression among students.

Regarding the students' experiences with English literature in the classroom and the teaching methodology there, some students observed that the literary texts in the syllabus were inadequate, too simple, and not interesting enough as learning materials. The majority of them added that the class was generally teacher-oriented, with the teacher delivering lectures, reading out the text, and translating the text into Bengali in order to make it easy for them. The students listened to the teacher, took notes and memorised the answers in order to be able to reproduce these during the examination. They were essentially non-creative and non-responsive which posed a great deal of problems in their practical life. Moreover, they usually did not undertake any pair or group work. There was not much scope for open discussions.

With any introduction of a literary work in the class, as observed by one student, the emphasis was on the life and works of the writer (literature with a capital 'L'). The students were not encouraged to explore, or experiment with the theme, plot or language used in the text.

However, all the students felt that lessons needed to be student-oriented in order to produce an improved learning environment. According to one student, the teaching of literature should aim at broadening thoughts and imagination, and should help them to learn and use the language in real life. Another pointed out the need to interpret and speak according to their understanding by assisting each other in the learning process. This would result in a collective learning atmosphere contributing greatly to the increase of self-esteem and confidence. Some students said that they expected the teacher to be tolerant of their mistakes



to help them overcome their fear of the language. The teacher should also welcome creative answers in so far as they were meaningful and logical.

Regarding the teaching strategies for literature used by their teachers, the majority of respondents said that the teacher-oriented classroom made them dependent on the teacher. The attitude of the teacher as the imparter of knowledge and her teaching style made the students frightened of her, thus confirming the status of English as a difficult subject.

Students also pointed out the teaching strategies followed in the classroom. They were adhering solely to the textbook, using only textbook-based activities and memorising textbook-based answers for examinations. Teachers produced answers and asked them to memorise these for reproduction during examinations in order to avoid any risk of scoring low. However, this textbook-based attitude, as noted by two students, resulted in a test of memory and not of knowledge, and blocked their creative faculty and the development of prediction power. One student added:

The worst would happen if I accidentally forgot a part from my memorised answer. I would then be unable to continue my writing any further. Sometimes I have to leave the hall without writing the paper because of my weak memorisation skill.

The students also observed that translation into Bengali made the lesson boring, dull and monotonous. The teacher's favouritism to a few students added to the demotivational aspect of the lesson and resulted in the breakdown of self-confidence.

Regarding the problems that they faced in the literature classroom, many identified the teacher-oriented classroom to be a major one in the learning process. It left them completely teacher-dependent and created further problems for their immediate future when they entered higher learning. The teacher-oriented atmosphere also gave rise to fear of the teacher. Moreover, as observed by one student, the teacher wanted them to follow her interpretation without questioning and became annoyed if they wanted to do otherwise. The serious atmosphere in a literature class also contributed to fear of the language, leading to boredom, monotony, utter frustration and lack of interest in studies on the part of learners. Their learning outcome was generally, and quite understandably, below standard because their creativity, ingenuity and willingness to add something new were usually not welcome.

Regarding the probable solutions to the problems identified, all the students claimed that it was necessary to have a change in the teaching/learning atmosphere. They added that a student-centred atmosphere would give them the opportunity to think, imagine, predict, suggest, discuss, interpret and express verbally. This would pave the way to a radical and dramatic change towards better input/output in learning. The majority also thought that it was important that the teachers stopped finding fault with them. This would ensure an increase in their confidence and result in improved communication. Some students suggested that introduction of literature with a small 'I' would help them shed their fear of the language. In the words of one student:

The teacher needs to make the class interesting so that "we are in the English lesson"...this feeling of uneasiness is not there.

The majority of students preferred to view the teacher as someone just and kind to everyone in the class. This would bring in the best collective learning outcome, because paying attention to each student would initiate different opinions and reactions, thus opening up new horizons. To quote a student:

Paying attention to everyone would decrease the gap between the 'better/best ones' and the 'poor ones'. The 'poor ones' would also gain confidence and would be able to standardize themselves. They would feel motivated to express their opinion, and thus develop their skills.

Regarding the classroom methodology, a majority of students were concerned that the 'must follow the teacher' dictum was quite non-productive in terms of learning and gave rise to examination phobia. According to one student:

As a result, even after 12 years of learning English as a compulsory subject we end up remaining weak in the language. As the text is always translated into Bengali, we never get any chance to interpret it in different dimensions.

On the issues of the standard of spoken English in general, and the need to communicate in English, all observed that the standard was very poor in general, however, it was absolutely necessary for them to be able to speak in the language. To quote one student:

Practically speaking, many educated persons are not able to speak in English correctly or fluently. Comparatively the students from English medium schools are quite competent in using the language. If we think in terms of the whole country then this number is not so high. Surely, speaking skill is the weakest skill among general people.

All the students felt strongly that English, an international language, was required in all spheres of life. Knowing the language would enable them to compete successfully almost everywhere, especially in the job sector and in higher education both at home and abroad.

Regarding the existing plus points that helped develop the students' achievement in speaking skills, some students felt that English having the status of a compulsory subject in the curriculum from primary level, was one of the major plus points in learning the language. Most mentioned that the available resources, for example, books, dictionary, literary texts in the syllabus, newspaper, and magazines were rich resources for grammar, structure, vocabulary and other language components, as well as representing various dimensions of life. A majority of students added that programmes in English on radio and television could help improve overall competency in the language and development in imaginative and thinking ability which would lead to improved comprehension. Language centres, such as coaching centres, the British Council Library and the United States Information Services (USIS), were further available resources, as identified by three students.

Students also were asked to identify the limitations which slow down achievements in speaking skills. All of them mentioned the faulty methodology, including teachers encouraging them to memorise set answers and their non-encouraging attitude to speak in English. Moreover, the non-inclusion of testing speaking in examination contributed to the lack of confidence in real-life language usage. According to one student:

Since speaking skills are not there in the syllabus and not tested during examinations, the teachers tend to avoid teaching or practising this skill. However, we need it badly in our practical life specially after leaving school. The teachers very well know that yet they seem not to realise it.

One student added that studying English lessons in Bengali made the situation worse. Negative attitudes towards English conversation were a further hindrance when attempting to speak in English with friends and family members. In many cases, they viewed speaking in English as offensive and a gesture of 'showing off.'

Regarding the positive effects that literature offers in terms of learning the language, all the students agreed that literature had a great impact on them. From literary texts, they learned a lot of vocabulary, grammar, structure and real language representing real situations, in a better and more effective way. They all noticed that, through literature, they also had the

opportunity to develop their imaginative faculty and prediction power, which was good for language output. Finally, the motivating power of literature led one to read more, resulting in more language input.

Regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills', a majority of respondents believed that through discussion on, and about, literary texts they would be able to develop their thinking skills, and increase their knowledge about life in general. Discussion itself would lead to more speaking and more thinking. As one student pointed out:

Thought is embedded in language. Starting to think in English will increase my self-confidence, which will help me to express myself in English without much hesitation.

Regarding culture-specific language, another student observed:

Culture specific language and customs can be effectively used, when required, especially while speaking to a foreigner...it will be an advantage that will help me to communicate in English smoothly and fluently.

The words of one student revealed the students' views regarding the characteristics of a teacher who would make lessons interesting and motivating, especially whilst teaching literature in a language classroom:

The teacher should cooperate with us by giving us chance to speak about our thoughts. She should take note of the points that we make and vice versa. This will make the class interesting and help develop our self-confidence and individuality and thus the fear of English would lessen.

The majority believed that it was of utmost importance for the teacher to be friendly with the students, and build up rapport in an EFL classroom. She should also possess an attractive personality, and should be someone on whom the students could depend. She should speak in English to make the students practise with her.

Regarding the kind of materials/activities that would work effectively in teaching literature in a language classroom, the majority held the view that the materials had to be interesting and suitable for their age in order to capture their attention and increase motivation. Many students commented that activities such as prediction, role-playing, retelling, discussion, problem-solving and open-ended questions would raise curiosity and interest by inviting

different interpretations from them. The aims of the activities should engage and motivate the entire class ensuring equal participation.

Regarding the kind of environment that would work well in teaching English in a language classroom, a majority of students suggested the need for a friendlier and freer classroom environment in an EFL situation. A congenial and interesting environment would lessen the fear of the teacher or of fellow students who might tease at someone's attempt to speak in English. To impose anything on the students was not deemed helpful, as they tended not to learn much under compulsion. Moreover, correction of errors with sympathy and equal opportunity given to everyone would ensure an improved learning atmosphere. To quote one student:

The one who speaks less should be encouraged to speak and express more. She should not be encouraged to keep quiet and the one who speaks should not be given chance to express more than once.

The students should consider the prospect of learning from each other, as competitiveness may not always be very healthy in terms of collective learning. Most students felt that it was important to be helpful to one another, make progress together, and succeed together. In a friendlier atmosphere, through communication and reciprocity, it was likely that the students would learn more and become more competent in the skills. Finally, the students' overall impression of the textbook prescribed by the NCTB, revealed that most of them thought that this was not so interesting, but rather dull and too simple. They studied the book because it was an imperative for examination purposes. Nevertheless, one student gave a different picture of the textbook when she said:

There are pictures in our textbook. We discuss the pictures, which help us a lot in developing our speaking skills. We also do writing tasks on specific topics, where sometimes we add our own comments. However, these are all text-based activities ... Textbooks need to incorporate activities that will enhance our spoken language and skills.

### ***5.5.2 Pre-treatment Questionnaire for Students***

A pre-treatment questionnaire, consisting of structured and semi-structured questions, was administered to all forty participants, from both CG and EG. This was aimed to gather information about their attitudes towards literature and literature classes, and teaching methodologies employed; attitudes towards speaking in English and the relationship between literature and speaking skills. It should be mentioned here that some questions were mainly

designed to discover the students' general approach towards English language and literature which will ultimately have impact on their oral outcome. It was also assumed that elicitation of more data would ultimately serve as connections between the main purposes of the study with the emerging ones. The teacher explained the purpose of the questionnaire and asked the students to complete it during school hours in order to ensure maximum returns. All forty students returned the completed questionnaire.

In the case of presenting the data separately in each group, the percentage was calculated out of the total number of students in each group, which was twenty. When data were presented as a total for both EG and CG, the percentage was calculated out of all forty students. The following section presents and discusses the data.

The data from Section A revealed the average age of the students to be fourteen. Section B dealt with some general queries regarding the types of English used in Bangladesh, reasons for learning English, frequency of use of the language in a social context and the use of English in reading general literature. Q.1 tried to elicit the students' preference for models of English instruction. Table 5.32 below presents the data from Q.1:

Table 5.32 Q.1 Your preference for models of English instruction:

	EG	CG
American English	17 (85%)	15 (75%)
British English	1(5%)	3(15%)
Local variety/New English	1(5%)	2(10%)
Do not know	1(5%)	-

The above data reveal that, in both groups, the great majority of students stated that their first preference for models of English instruction was American English. In EG, 85% (17 out of 20) of the students said that their first preference was American English. In CG, 75% (15 out of 20) students preferred the same. This indicates the growing preference for American English as a medium of instruction in English lessons. This could be a result of the massive growth in English medium schools, which follow American English and an open access to Sky channels which are supposedly dominated by American shows. However, data from Q.2, on self-labelling the variety of English that they used, reveal that, in both groups, the majority decided that their English was more a mix of all three, American, British and the local variety.

Table 5.33 Q.2 Your 'self-labelling' of the variety of your English, that you use:

	EG	CG
American English	4(20%)	1(5%)
British English	-	-
Local variety/New English	1(5%)	2(10%)
Mixture of all three	14 (70%)	17 (85%)

The majority of 70% (14 out of 20) students in EG and 85% (17 out of 20) in CG to be precise, thought that their English was more a mix of all three. Therefore, it can be said that although most students would prefer American English as the medium of instruction, they labelled their own English as not of any distinct variety. Q.3 attempted to discover the students' reasons for learning English in Bangladesh.

Table 5.34 Q.3 Give at least three reasons for learning English in Bangladesh:

	EG	CG
International language	19 (95%)	18 (90%)
Higher education	15 (75%)	15 (75%)
To communicate with others	6 (30%)	9 (45%)
Better job	12 (60%)	11 (55%)
IT sector	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
To be able to read materials translated into English	1 (5%)	4 (20%)
Issues of prestige and self-esteem	2 (10%)	1 (5%)

Data from Q.3 reveal that 95% (19 out of 20) in EG and 90% (18 out of 20) in CG, a great majority, 92.5% (37 out of 40) students thought that learning an international language would open up better opportunities for them. The number of students who said that learning English was a necessity in higher education, both at home and abroad was the same in both groups; 75% (15 out of 20) stated that it was necessary in higher education. 60% (12 out of 20) students in EG and 55% (11 out of 20) in CG observed that, knowing English was a pre-requisite in the job sector (both government and private sectors), thus making it imperative for securing a good position in a future career. A further 30% (6 out of 20) in EG, and 45% (9 out of 20) in CG, mentioned that knowing English was necessary in maintaining communication with the international community.

Only 5% (1 out of 20) student in EG and 20% (4 out of 20) in CG mentioned that they were allowed access to world classics in translation, and other materials written, published and translated in English. In EG, 10% (2 out of 20) students and in CG, 15% (3 out of 20) mentioned the predominance of English in the IT sector. Only 10% (2 out of 20) students in

EG and 5% (1 out of 20) in CG mentioned the issues of prestige and higher self-esteem related to knowing the language.

The above information therefore, show that the students clearly recognised the importance of learning English in the Bangladesh context, although in general people could manage everyday affairs without it. The younger generation, however, was more certain of the changing global scenario where knowing English was a necessity for their personal as well as professional life.

Table 5.35 Q.5 What is the frequency of your using English in different social interaction:

Frequency	People				
	Family	Friends	Teachers	Strangers	Others
All the time					
Often	EG: 3 (15%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 13 (65%) CG: 10 (50%)	EG: 3 (15%) CG: 4 (20%)		EG: 1 (5%)
Rarely	EG: 16 (80%) CG: 15 (75%)	EG: 7 (35%) CG: 10 (50%)	EG: 17 (85%) CG: 16 (80%)	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 9 (45%)	EG: 11(55%) CG: 11(55%)
Never	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 3 (15%)			EG: 13 (65%) CG: 11 (55%)	EG: 3 (15%) CG: 3 (15%)

Data gathered from Q.5 show that some students in EG and CG thought that they often used the language with friends, family and teachers; otherwise, the language was not so regularly used with others. A majority of 65% (13 out of 20) in EG and 50% (10 out of 20) in CG observed that they used English more among themselves. Knowing English was a genuine prestige issue to them. Using English with teachers was evidently placed towards the non-use line, as can be seen from the table that a majority in both groups, 85% (17 out of 20) in EG and 80% (16 out of 20) in CG mentioned they rarely interacted with their teachers in English. Data also reveal that English was not used much with strangers and talking to 'others' in it was a rare phenomenon altogether.

Q.6 attempted to discover the students' reading habits with regard to English. Types of materials were categorised as: newspaper/magazines, storybooks, comics and other types of their choice.

Table 5.36 Q.6 Your use of English in reading general 'literature':

Frequency	Type of material			
	Newspapers/ Magazines	Story books	Comics	Other types
Always	EG: 4 (20%)		EG: 3 (15%)	EG: 3 (15%)



	CG: 1 (5%)		CG: 3 (15%)	CG: 3 (15%)
Frequently	EG: 10 (50%) CG: 12 (60%)	EG: 7 (35%) CG: 8 (40%)	EG: 15 (75%) CG: 12 (60%)	EG: 9 (45%) CG: 9 (45%)
Rarely	EG: 4 (20%) CG: 6 (30%)	EG: 13 (65%) CG: 12 (60%)	EG: 1 (5%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 4 (20%)
Never	CG: 1 (5%)			

Data from Q.6 reveal that a majority of students in both groups read comics. In EG, 75% (15 out of 20) students and in CG, 60% (12 out of 20) said that they had frequently read comics in English. Only 15% (3 out of 20) students in each group claimed to read comics all the time, whereas only 5% (1 out of 20) in EG and 20% (4 out of 20) in CG chose the 'rarely' option. In total, a majority, 55% (22 out of 40) said that they read newspaper/magazines in English frequently, whereas only 12.5% (5 out of 40) claimed that they always read newspapers and magazines in English. In total, 37.5% (15 out of 40) students confirmed that they read storybooks frequently, whereas the majority, 62.5% (25 out of 40) stated that they rarely read storybooks in English.

From the data, comics appear to be the most popular genre among the students, perhaps because comics were easy to read, less time-consuming, fun and inexpensive. The majority of respondents showed interest in reading newspapers and magazines in English, made available to them through subscription by older members of the family. Under the category 'other types', the frequently read type was the textbook because of the status of English as a compulsory subject in the curriculum. Students read advertisements in English out of curiosity about places and products. They also mentioned using the Internet, where the basic language was English. However, Internet access is expensive in Bangladesh and not all government schools could provide this facility to their students.

Section C attempted to elicit information about the aspects of literature and language teaching and learning in the Bangladesh context. Students were asked about the expected role of their teacher. Data show that all students from both EG and CG expected the teacher to have all the good qualities which would help them through their study. She should be accommodating and understanding, and should provide a happy and congenial atmosphere which could guarantee a better outcome. Impatience on the teacher's part would demotivate, whereas a sympathetic and smiling mentor could ensure the opposite. Data also illustrate that the students preferred a student-oriented classroom, which would allow them to discuss and speak out on issues of concern. They wanted lessons to be interesting and wanted to practise

in English in order to improve their speaking ability and confidence in the language. To quote a student from EG:

I expect that my teacher would maintain a cordial relation with us. She must help us to realise the lessons thoroughly, and teach us with fun. She should understand us; otherwise, it becomes disappointing and demotivating. She should be friendly and teach us with patience.

Q.2 asked about the issues in the classroom which demanded the students' special attention and which may have impact on their learning process.

Table 5.37 Q.2 Have there been certain issues in your classroom that demanded special attention from you?

	EG	CG
Time constraints	5 (25%)	2 (10%)
Classroom environment	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
Attitude of teacher	10 (50%)	13 (65%)
Methodology	8 (40%)	4 (20%)
Infrastructure	10 (50%)	8 (40%)

Data from Q.2 reveal that 50% (10 out of 20) students in EG and 65% (13 out of 20) in CG said that the role and attitude of the teacher played a very significant part in motivating students. For example, the teacher paying particular attention to certain students created a sense of isolation and rejection among others. Amongst them, 50% (10 out of 20) in EG and 40% (8 out of 20) in CG identified some infrastructural problems such as, inadequate fans and lights in the classroom, power failure during summer and uncomfortable seating arrangements as hindrances to learning. A few students in both groups, 25% (5 out of 20) in EG and 10% (2 out of 20) in CG stated that time constraints prevented practice in English especially speaking skills, which was of importance in their social, personal and professional future life. An equal number of 20% (4 out of 20) students in each group added that a proper classroom environment was a necessity to ensure proper learning. This was not always available due to overcrowded classrooms, lack of discipline and unfriendly attitudes among peers. In EG, 40% (8 out of 20) and in CG, 20% (4 out of 20) students identified certain methodological problems that included a teacher-oriented classroom atmosphere that needed rectification.

Students' responses to Q.4 regarding 'how literature is usually taught in the classroom' are presented below:

Table: 5.38 Q.4 How is literature usually taught in the classroom? You are:

	EG	CG
asked questions by your teacher about characters, plot, setting and the teacher explained the important points to you	19 (95%)	18 (90%)
involved in group discussion as a whole class	-	-
grouped in pairs and let discuss		1 (5%)
asked to express your feelings and support them through linguistic evidence in the texts	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
asked to do projects	1 (5%)	
asked to write essays	8 (40%)	7 (35%)
asked to make presentations	-	-
to prepare for examinations	13 (65%)	17 (85%)

Data from Q.4 reveal that the majority in both groups, 95% (19 out of 20) in EG and 90% (18 out of 20) in CG, a total majority, 92.5% (37 out of 40) students, stated that they were asked by the teacher about characters, plot and setting, with the teacher explaining the important points to them. A further majority of 65% (13 out of 20) students in EG and 85% (17 out of 20) in CG, confirmed that they were asked to prepare for examinations. In EG, 40% (8 out of 20) and in CG, 35% (7 out of 20) students commented that they were asked to write essays. Only 5% (2 out of 40) students said that they were asked to express their feelings and support them through linguistic evidence through the text. A further 2.5% (1 out of 40) claimed that they were grouped in pairs and let discuss and mentioned they were asked to do projects.

Thus, the above data confirm the examination-oriented attitude of both teachers and students. The whole teaching process seemed to be one of lecturing on the teacher's part, and taking notes, memorising and producing the answers in the examination on the student's part. The essays students wrote were again text-based and not necessarily open-ended which would require exploration of thought and imagination, interpretation and diversity.

Q.5 attempted to discover the reasons behind students' liking literature. There were choices given that asked students to circle according to their preference:

Table: 5.39 Q.5 You like literature classes because:

	EG	CG
You like literature in general	19 (95%)	19 (95%)
Literature classes are taught with competence	-	-
The content of the works analysed in class is relevant to your experience of life	5 (25%)	8 (40%)

The above data reveal that the number of students who confirmed that they liked literature classes because they liked literature in general was the same in both groups; 95% (19 out of 20) students in each group. In total, the great majority, 95% (38 out of 40) students, stated that they liked literature. A few students, 25% (5 out of 20) in EG and 40% (8 out of 20) in CG, stated that they found the content of the works relevant to their experience of life. The option stating that literature classes were taught with competence received no response from the students, suggesting that there was something lacking in the current teaching methodology. Q.6 attempted to discover the reasons for any dislike of literature classes. There were choices given that asked students to circle according to their preference:

Table 5.40 Q.6 You dislike literature classes because:

	EG	CG
The language used in literary work is too difficult	9 (45%)	10 (50%)
The content of literary works is irrelevant to your experience of life	2 (10%)	
The cultural references in these works are inaccessible	1 (5%)	4 (20%)
The way teachers handle literature classes lacks a proper and systematic methodology and classes are boring	15 (75%)	14 (70%)

As can be seen from the table above, the majority of 72.5% (29 out of 40) students confirmed that they did not like literature because the teaching of literature lacked a proper and systematic methodology and because classes were boring. This was the opinion of 75% (15 out of 20) in EG and 70% (14 out of 20) in CG. In EG, 45% (9 out of 20) and in CG, 50% (10 out of 20) did not like literary pieces if the language or cultural references used were too difficult for them. Only two (10%) students in EG suggested that the content of literary works in the syllabus was irrelevant to their life. One (5%) student in EG and another four (20%) in CG mentioned that the cultural references in literary works were inaccessible. Data, therefore, confirm that the main problem was with teaching methodology and not with literary texts.

Regarding the strategies, which the teachers normally used for teaching literature, students were given choices and were asked to circle their choices according to their preference. Table 5.41 below presents the results:

Table 5.41 Q.7 What strategies do the teachers usually resort to in the teaching of literature?

	EG	CG
S/he usually lectures the class and you take notes	15 (75%)	13 (65%)
Translation	20 (100%)	20 (100%)

Paraphrase	6 (30%)	3 (15%)
S/he uses systematic methodologies to encourage you to attempt your analysis and speak about it	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
Other (specify)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)

The table above shows that 100% (20 out of 20) students in both EG and CG verified that the teacher translated the text into Bengali. A majority in both groups, 75% (15 out of 20) in EG and 65% (13 out of 20) in CG confirmed that the teacher followed the lecture method, where the students were expected to listen and take notes. A few students, 30% (6 out of 20) in EG and 15% (3 out of 20) in CG added that she also paraphrased for them, confirming the one-way teaching process which merely prepares the students for the text-based examination system. Only 5% (2 out of 40) said that the teacher used systematic methodologies to encourage them to attempt their analysis and speak about it. In the 'other' category, 20% (4 out of 20) students in each group confirmed that the teacher provided them with prepared answers which they were supposed to memorise and produce in the examination papers. Data, therefore, confirm the examination-oriented attitude of both teachers and students with students having to do everything according to the teachers' understanding.

Section D attempted to discover the students' views regarding literature, language and spoken skills. In many cases, they were asked to use a rating, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Table 5.42 summarises what the students understood by the term 'literature'. Q.1 was designed to find students' inclination towards any specific genre that they regarded as 'literature'.

Table 5.42 Q.1 What do you understand by the term 'literature'?

	EG	CG
Short story	16 (80%)	18 (90%)
Advert.	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
Novels	11(55%)	17 (85%)
Drama	11(55%)	9 (45%)
Articles	3 (15%)	3 (15%)
Poems	13 (65%)	13 (65%)
Detective story	2 (10%)	2 (10%)
Science fiction	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
Comics	-	1 (5%)
Songs	1 (5%)	2 (10%)

Data reflect that the majority in both groups, 80% (16 out of 20) in EG and 90% (18 out of 20) students in CG, opted for short stories. In EG, 55% (11 out of 20) and in CG, 85% (17 out of 20) opted for novels. An equal number of students, 65% (13 out of 20) in both EG and

CG, mentioned poems; and 55% (11 out of 20) in EG and 45% (9 out of 20) in CG opted for drama. An equal number of students in both groups, 20% (4 out of 20) mentioned advertisements; and 15% (3 out of 20) in each group opted for articles. In total, 10% (4 out of 40) students mentioned detective story; 12.5% (5 out of 40) opted for science fiction and 7.5% (3 out of 40) mentioned songs. Only 2.5% (1 out of 40) student considered comics to be literature. In addition, some students tried to define literature in words.

Data therefore, clearly show that a majority of students considered stories, novels, poems and drama to be literature. Although comics seemed to be the most popular genre among the students as revealed earlier, they seemed not to regard comics as literature, perhaps because of their preconception of literature with a capital 'L' as dealing with serious subject matters. The definitions of literature produced by the students, show that many of them considered literature to be writings related to practical life and culture, which help broaden one's thoughts and imagination. To them, literature was the expression of ideas of permanent interest and of universal values.

Q.4 aimed at finding the use of outside materials in addition to the textbook and whether they were used in order to show different language usage in the text.

Table 5.43 Q.4 Are different texts such as advertisements, newspapers, magazine articles, etc., used in literature classes to give idea how language operates, for example, through prediction.

	EG	CG
Always	-	-
Sometimes	5 (25%)	5 (25%)
Never	15 (75%)	15 (75%)

As can be seen from the above table, an equal number of students in both EG and CG, a majority, 75% (15 out of 20), stated that they never undertook such activities and only 25% (5 out of 20) in both groups stated that they sometimes did, but these mainly focused on items included in examinations.

Table 5.44 below presents the data gathered from Q.5, regarding the attitude towards having texts that are more literary in the classroom:

Table 5.44 Q.5 Would you prefer to have more literary pieces in the classroom, why?

	EG	CG
Yes	18 (90%)	20 (100%)
No	2 (10%)	-

Data reveal that, in EG, 90% (18 out of 20) and in CG, 100% (20 out of 20), in total, the great majority, 95% (38 out of 40) said that they would prefer to have more texts that are literary in the classroom. Only 10% (2 out of 40) students decided otherwise. The response was in line with the previous findings on the issue of liking or disliking literature. Data also reveal that most students felt comfortable with literature because of its universal qualities. They found literature enjoyable and interesting, and thought that they learnt language better through literary texts, resulting in self-confidence in using the language. Many students added that, through literature, their thinking ability and imaginative faculty became developed. To quote one:

It broadens my thoughts and creates a special feeling that I really enjoy a lot. Literature sets me thinking even when I finish the text.

The comments against having more literary texts in the syllabus reveal the problem to be methodological. Students commented that literature could turn out to be difficult when not taught properly, thus having a demotivating effect on the overall learning process.

Q.6 asked for opinions regarding making a connection between literature and spoken skills and for reasons supporting their views. The data from Q.6 are presented below:

Table 5.45 Q.6 What is your opinion in making a connection between literature and spoken skills? Please suggest some ways of making the connection.

	EG	CG
Linguistic capability	18 (90%)	18 (90%)
Knowledge about life	12 (60%)	4 (20%)
Speaking skills	6 (30%)	7 (35%)

The above data show that the number of learners who thought that their linguistic capability would develop through literature was the same in both groups; 90% (18 out of 20) in each group. In total, it was the majority, 90% (36 out of 40) learners. Some students, 40% (16 out of 40) commented that they could broaden their overall knowledge about life through literature. Moreover, 32.5% (13 out of 40) stated that literature helped develop speaking skills, for example, through learning the language from the communication between characters.

Students also mentioned that literary texts were good resources for topics to set them thinking and for interpreting texts from different points of view. The more they were able to think, the more they became mature in their imagination and thought process. This resulted in better expression through language, especially orally. Here literature worked as a provider of topics and issues of concern. Therefore, it can be said that 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed that the realistic and linguistic knowledge gathered from literature contributed to an improved speaking ability on their part.

Q.7 attempted to discover the reasons behind the present non-practice, and the non-assessment of speaking skills, from the students' point of view. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.46 Q.7 Why do you think that no speaking skills are being taught /practiced/examined at present?

	EG	CG
Not required in daily life	3 (15%)	2 (10%)
Not tested in examination	9 (45%)	8 (40%)
Lack of trained teachers	6 (30%)	6 (30%)
Negligence of authority and teachers	6 (30%)	8 (40%)
Speaking is easier than writing	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
No time allotted for speaking	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
Teachers are inefficient in English themselves	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
Become scared of the language	2 (10%)	1 (5%)
Not easy to test speaking?	1 (5%)	1 (5%)

45% (9 out of 20) students in EG, and 40% (8 out of 20) in CG, stated that no arrangements for testing speaking in examinations left teachers reluctant about practising this specific skill during class hours, although some activities on speaking were included in the textbook. Another 30% (6 out of 20) in EG and 40% (8 out of 20) in CG noted that teachers seemed neither interested nor motivated to teach this skill, and the authorities seemed to ignore it with full knowledge that developing speaking skills was a pressing need at the present time and absolutely essential for their future. A few students, 20% (4 out of 20) in each group thought that no time allocation for developing speaking skills was a further reason for not practising the skill. This re-confirmed a mentality which adhered solely to syllabus content and focused only on examinations.

In total, 25% (5 out of 40) students added that the lack of interest in developing speaking skills might also be a result of the fact that English was not required in day-to-day affairs. A



few students, 20% (8 out of 40) thought that perhaps speaking was easier than writing and, therefore, teachers did not feel that this area required especial attention. Only 5% (2 out of 40) observed that perhaps it was not easy to test speaking and so there was no inclusion of speaking in the examination. This observation has relevance to the Bangladesh context, as testing speaking would be expensive to carry out in government institutions, and would involve a large budget.

Q.8 asked the students whether they would be interested in developing their spoken language and why.

Table 5.47 Q.8 Would you be interested to develop your spoken language, why?

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
EG	-	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	18 (90%)
CG	-	-	-	20 (100%)
	Reasons		EG	CG
	An international language		7 (35%)	3 (15%)
	To take part in competitions		8 (40%)	4 (20%)
	To secure a better future		15 (75%)	12 (60%)
	To accomplish higher education		10 (50%)	10 (50%)
	To achieve higher self-esteem		9 (45%)	13 (65%)

Data from Table 5.47 reveal that the majority, 90% (18 out of 20) in EG and 100% (20 out of 20) in CG, in total, 95% (38 out of 40) students strongly agreed and 5% (1 out of 20) in EG agreed that they would like to develop their spoken English. Only 2.5% (1 out of 40) disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the great majority of students strongly agreed that it was important for them to develop their spoken English.

In EG, 75% (15 out of 20) and in CG, 60% (12 out of 20) students, in total, a majority, 67.5% (27 out of 40) stated that they were interested in developing their spoken language because they thought that English was necessary in securing a better future. In both groups, 50% (10 out of 20) students realised that they would be required to communicate in English in higher education. In EG, 45% (9 out of 20) and in CG, 65% (13 out of 20) decided that speaking in English was important for higher self-esteem that initiated a feeling of independence. They did not want to feel abandoned: 'nobody will be able to tease saying: she doesn't speak English'. Therefore, the ability to communicate in English, they thought, would make them confident in facing the future.

In total, 25% (10 out of 40) thought they were interested to develop their spoken English because it was an international language; and 30% (12 out of 40) mentioned spoken English was necessary to take part in competitions. Only 2.5% (1 out of 40) appeared not to be concerned about speaking in English. This particular student, however, belonged to the weakest category of students in the class, who, perhaps because of her own lack of self-confidence, did not want to admit the necessity of learning English. She may be ready to change her mind as soon as she obtains necessary support. Q.10 asked about the students' preference regarding genres with reasons supporting their choice.

Table 5.48 Q.10 What genres do you like most?

	EG	CG
Short stories	17 (85%)	15 (75%)
Drama	5 (25%)	5 (25%)
Novel	5 (25%)	3 (15%)
Poems	3 (15%)	-
Comics	4 (20%)	3 (15%)
Detective stories	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
Science fiction	1 (5%)	1 (5%)

As can be seen from the table above, 85% (17 out of 20) in EG and 75% (15 out of 20) in CG, in total, a majority, 80% (32 out of 40) students, preferred short stories; the next preferred genre was drama, supported by equal number of students in EG and CG; 25% (5 out of 20) in each group. The next choice was the novel, mentioned by 25% (5 out of 20) in EG and 15% (3 out of 20) in CG. Comics were a choice of 20% (4 out of 20) in EG and 15% (3 out of 20) in CG.

As for reasons, students chose short stories as their first choice because they found them interesting, and able to evoke curiosity. They felt comfortable with the plot, theme and characters and commented that stories were easy and quick to read. Drama was the next most popular genre because it was a good resource for learning dialogues and expressions in different situations. The novel had some popularity, but not so much because of its length and the intricacy of different plots. Students opted for comics because they presented interesting and funny characters.

Although in Section B comics were the most popular genre in terms of reading habits, the data from Q.10 show that only seven students opted for comics as their favourite genre. This is possibly because although comics were fun and easy, they did not fit the students'

preconceptions that ‘literature’ must deal with serious matters, and that, as teenagers, they should be more interested in the dilemmas of life present in short stories.

Q.11 tried to confirm whether the learners were convinced that literature texts in the lessons of English could help them to improve their English.

Table 5.49 Q.11 Literature texts in the lessons of English can help you to improve your English.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
EG			3 (15%)	17 (85%)
CG			3 (15%)	17 (85%)

Data reflect that in total, the majority, 85% (17 out of 20) in both EG and CG strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) of the students agreed that literature texts in the lessons of English could help them to improve their English. This confirmed their inclination towards literature. Q.12 consisted of statements to re-confirm the ways in which literature could help to improve their English. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.50 Q.12 If literary texts help, then they can help in many ways:

	Strongly disagree 1		Disagree 2		Agree 3		Strongly agree 4	
	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
Learn new words and vocabulary					1 (5%)	1 (5%)	19 (95%)	19 (95%)
Get to know the culture of the English speaking countries					6 (30%)	8 (40%)	14 (70%)	12 (60%)
Express opinions and emotions in English					6 (30%)	6 (30%)	14(70%)	14(70%)
Have access to varied examples of the language grammar structures in use					6 (30%)	8 (40%)	14(70%)	12 (60%)
Broaden your imagination that ultimately help you express vividly and clearly					6(30%)	6(30%)	15(75%)	13(65%)

Data reflect that with the majority, 95% (19 out of 20), in both groups strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) agreed that literature could help to learn new words. With a majority, 70% (14 out of 20) in EG and 60% (12 out of 20) in CG strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed, that literature could help them know the culture of the English speaking countries. Again, with a majority, 70% (14 out of 20) in both groups strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) students confirmed that literary texts help them to express opinions and emotions in English. Having a majority in both groups, 70% (14 out of 20) in EG and 60%

(12 out of 20) in CG strongly agreeing, all forty (100%) students agreed that literary texts help them to have access to varied examples of the language grammar structures in use. Again, a majority strongly agreeing in each group, 75% (15 out of 20) in EG and 65% (13 out of 20) in CG, all forty (100%) students agreed, that literature could help them broaden imagination that ultimately helps in vivid and clear expression. Therefore, all these findings from Q.12 confirm the students' liking of literature in terms of language learning. Q.13 asked if working with literary texts was a source of enjoyment. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.51 Q.13 Working with literature texts in lessons of English is a source of enjoyment.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
EG			16(80%)	4 (20%)
CG			16(80%)	4 (20%)

Data reflect that with 20% (4 out of 20) in both in EG and CG strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) of the students agreed and re-confirmed that literature texts in English lessons were a source of enjoyment to them.

Table 5.52 Q.14 You like the literature texts used in your lessons. Q.15 You find them suitable for your learning purpose.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
You like the literature texts used in your lessons	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 10 (50%) CG: 13 (65%)	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 1 (5%)
You find them suitable for your learning purpose	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 9(45%)	EG: 11 (55%) CG: 9 (45%)	EG: - CG: -

The data from Q.14 and Q.15 show that a majority, 65% (26 out of 40) students agreed, with 10% (2 out of 20) in EG and 5% (1 out of 20) in CG strongly agreeing, that they liked the texts used in their lessons. The remaining 35% (14 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement. In EG, 55% (11 out of 20) and in CG, 45% (9 out of 20), in total, 50% (20 out of 40) agreed, that they found the texts suitable for their learning purpose, whereas, 40% (8 out of 20) in EG and 55% (11 out of 20) in CG, in total, 47.5% (19 out of 40) students decided otherwise.

In supporting their views, students commented that the texts helped them to acquire knowledge concerning practical issues, thus helping them become mature and responsible.

Involvement with characters, issues and events helped them broaden their minds and their imagination, resulting in improved understanding of the issues involved. They found the texts helpful in developing their language skills. A few students commented that literature prevented them from being bored, in comparison with classes on grammar and structure. However, data also reveal that a good percentage of respondents decided that the texts used in the classroom were not suitable because they were too easy and not practical for their age group. They added that the texts used were boring, incapable of evoking curiosity and thus did not motivate them to read further.

Regarding the issue whether they found the texts used in their classroom suitable for their learning purposes, data show that the percentages for and against the statement were practically equal. Students, who thought that the texts were suitable for their learning purposes, cited the issue of language learning and knowing about lifestyles and culture from the texts. However, the others who thought that the texts were not suitable for their learning purpose claimed that the texts were not suitable for their age group and were comparatively easy.

Q.16 was concerned about the activities, based on literary texts, which the students enjoyed most. Students were to circle their choice and give reasons.

Table 5.53 Q.16 What activities based on literary texts do you enjoy most of all?

	EG	CG
Prediction activity	8 (40%)	12 (60%)
Reading aloud	3 (15%)	2 (10%)
Question-answer work	4 (20%)	7 (35%)
Retelling	7 (35%)	6 (30%)
Gap-filling	4 (20%)	6 (30%)
Problem solving	9 (45%)	7 (35%)
Role-playing	9 (45%)	4 (20%)
Discussion	14 (70%)	16 (80%)

The above table shows that the great majority, 75% (30 out of 40) students, having 70% (14 out of 20) in EG and 80% (16 out of 20) in CG, commented that they enjoyed activities which provoked discussion. In EG, 40% (8 out of 20), and in CG, 60% (12 out of 20), chose activities that required prediction; 45% (9 out of 20) in EG and 35% (7 out of 20) in CG liked problem-solving activities. The number of students in both groups, who chose both re-telling and role-playing activities, was the same. In total, 32.5% (13 out of 40) chose both re-telling

and role-playing activities, 27.5% (11 out of 40) enjoyed question-answer work, 25% (10 out of 40) enjoyed gap-filling activities, whereas only 12.5% (5 out of 40) enjoyed reading aloud.

According to the respondents, discussion activity promoted an improved learning atmosphere. They were able to learn from each other, and be aware of points of view and ideas from different dimensions and perspectives. These activities offered the opportunity to express real emotions to others and make use of argumentation while establishing a point of view, resulting in improved oral communication. They commented that prediction activities promoted thoughts and imagination, supported by logic. The open-ended quality of prediction activities helped promote diverse answers to a single question, and helped them to be creative and confident with their arguments and logic. Problem-solving activities promoted thought and use of wit. It can, therefore, be concluded that the most enjoyable activity types were those capable of initiating thought and imagination giving rise to different opinions and options that help improve students' confidence in the language.

Q.17 and Q.18 asked the students whether these activities made them interested in the texts and encouraged them to speak and express their opinion.

Table 5.54 Q.17 These activities make you interested in the texts. Q.18 They make you speak and express your opinion.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
These activities make you interested in the texts	EG: - CG: -	EG: - CG: -	EG: 11(55%) CG: 7 (35%)	EG: 9(45%) CG: 13 (65%)
They make you speak, express your opinion	EG: - CG: -	EG: - CG: 1(5%)	EG: 11(55%) CG: 8 (40%)	EG: 9 (45%) CG: 11(55%)

Data reflect that 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed, with 45% (9 out of 20) in EG and 65% (11 out of 20) in CG strongly agreeing, that the activities mentioned promoted their interest in the text. Data also reveal that, with 45% (9 out of 20) in EG and 55% (11 out of 20) in CG strongly agreeing, in total, a majority, 97.5% (39 out of 40) students agreed that the activities encouraged them to speak and express their opinion. Only 5% (1 out of 20) in CG thought that the activities did not make one speak and express one's opinion. Therefore, data confirm that the activities that students enjoyed most were also capable of promoting their interest in the text and making them speak and express their opinion.

Q.20 attempted to elicit opinions regarding the use of Bengali in the English classroom in order to assess its effectiveness in learning English.

Table 5.55 Q.20 Use of the mother tongue, Bengali, in the English classroom is effective for learning English.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
Use of Bengali is effective for learning English	EG: 3 (15%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 7 (35%) CG: 12(60%)	EG: 4 (20%) CG: 2 (10%)

As can be seen from the above table, 55% (11 out of 20) in EG and 70% (14 out of 20) in CG, in total, a majority, 62.5% (25 out of 40) agreed that use of Bengali, in the English classroom, was effective for learning English. 45% (9 out of 20) in EG and 30% (6 out of 20) in CG, in total, 37.5% (15 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement that use of Bengali was effective for learning English. The data, therefore, indicate that the majority agreed that use of Bengali helped them to learn English better. However, it is important to note that many students have actually been expressing reservations regarding their choice, indicating that use of Bengali would also slow down the learning process. To quote one student:

English will become easier when the lesson is too difficult. However, I don't think we will learn English that much. We become dependent on Bengali translation.

Students suggested that Bengali could perhaps be useful during English lessons, because they would be able to express certain issues and matters better in their mother-tongue. Although, some added that it was important to conduct English lessons in English, they nevertheless added that it was better to introduce an all-English policy gradually to minimise demotivation on the students' part.

Q. 21 asked students to provide positive comments with regard to the use of literature texts in English lessons. A summary of the data reveal that many students mentioned that literature was helpful in improving their language competency directly, and in an interesting way. Some students also mentioned the realistic characteristics of literature, which helped develop ideas about practical issues. A few students decided that literature could also help develop their imaginative faculty and thought processes, leading to self-confidence, and contributing to overall development as a whole person. They mentioned that literature was fun, relaxing

and not stereotyped, all these having a definite impact on the motivation to read further. Therefore, data from Q.21 confirm that the motivating and realistic quality of literary texts, which keep the learner engaged and engrossed, would help learners to have improved language output, and knowledge about life and reality. This would contribute to the overall development of the whole person.

Students also provided negative comments regarding using literature texts in English lessons (Q.22). In both EG and CG, a good number of students noted that literature was sometimes difficult if the language was difficult and noted that this could be the result of faulty methodology rather than the literary text itself. A few added that if the text was too lengthy, too difficult, complicated or boring, then there was the possibility of losing interest, indicating that text selection was an important issue. Only one student, however, added that reading literature appeared to be a waste of time, an observation related to the fact that the students need not attempt any questions during examination from the texts that they had in their syllabus. Therefore, it can be said, that the major problem was with the methodology and teaching approach rather than with literature itself.

Section E attempted to crosscheck the findings from previous sections in order to reconfirm the data already gathered in respect of having literature in an EFL context. In this section, data are presented as a total for both EG and CG, therefore, the percentage is calculated out of all forty students.

Data from Q.1 and Q.2 confirm that 100% (40 out of 40) students disagreed that literature in the language classroom was irrelevant and agreed that literary texts provided many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.56 Q.1 Literature in the language classroom is irrelevant. Q.2 Literary texts provide many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total	
					Disagree	Agree
Literature in the language classroom is irrelevant	EG: 10 (50%) CG: 11(55%)	EG: 10 (50%) CG: 9 (45%)	EG: - CG: -	EG: - CG: -	40(100%)	-
Literary texts provide many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning			EG: 10(50%) CG: 10(50%)	EG: 10(50%) CG: 10(50%)	-	40 (100%)



Q.3 contained ten components regarding the possibilities provided by literary texts. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.57 Q.3 Literary texts provide many possibilities in the ways that they:

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total	
					Disagree	Agree
a. Are valuable authentic materials.			EG: 12 (60%) CG: 13(65%)	EG: 8 (40%) CG: 7 (35%)	-	40 (100%)
b. Help students to get better understanding of the culture of English speaking community			EG: 2 (10%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 18 (90%) CG: 16 (80%)	-	40 (100%)
c. Help students get in touch with universal human values through literature			EG: 6 (30%) CG: 6 (30%)	EG: 14 (70%) CG: 14 (70%)	-	40 (100%)
d. They bring students into contact with real language			EG: 8 (40%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 12 (60%) CG: 16 (80%)	-	40 (100%)
e. Help increase the student's vocabulary			EG: 4 (20%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 16 (80%) CG: 18 (90%)	-	40 (100%)
f. Provide examples of the language grammar structures in use			EG: 8(40%) CG: 11 (55%)	EG: 12 (60%) CG: 9(45%)	-	40 (100%)
g. Have motivating effect on the learner in language learning			EG: 9 (45%) CG: 8 (40%)	EG: 11(55%) CG: 12 (60%)	-	40 (100%)
h. Can stimulate personal involvement of the students			EG: 6 (30%) CG: 7 (35%)	EG: 14 (70%) CG: 13(65%)	-	40 (100%)
i. Can create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion			EG: 5 (25%) CG: 3 (15%)	EG: 15 (75%) CG: 17 (85%)	-	40 (100%)
j. Can stimulate the development of conversational skills			EG: 6 (30%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 14 (70%) CG: 16 (80%)	-	40 (100%)

A summary of the data gathered from statements a-j indicate that 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed that, literature was a valuable authentic material, providing authentic language and situations which had a strong connection with life around. Through literature, they were able to learn more about the culture of the English-speaking community, which was also fun and exciting. Students were also able to get in touch with universal human values, contributing to the development of the whole person. They also agreed that literature brought them into contact with real language, thus helping them to learn everyday language in a much more interesting and relaxed manner. Literature also, having a rich vocabulary stock, grammar structures in use and expressions, contributed to the language development and the self-confidence of the learner.

Data also show that 100% (40 out of 40) students confirmed that literature had a motivating effect on their language learning because of their liking of literary texts in general. Literature could also stimulate personal involvement and could create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion. The universal quality of literature was able to capture the attention of

the readers making them feel comfortable and promoting natural discussion. In addition, data reveal that all respondents (40 out of 40) agreed that literature could stimulate the development of conversational skills. Interactive discussion involving communication strategies used in establishing a point was likely to draw learners automatically into using their conversational skills, resulting in improved oral performance.

Table 5.58 Q.4 Literature texts can promote individual development and general education of the whole person by:

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total	
					Disagree	Agree
Stimulating imagination			EG: 4 (20%) CG: 3 (15%)	EG: 16 (80%) CG: 17(85%)	-	40 (100%)
Encouraging students to work creatively			EG: 2 (10%) CG: 1 (5%)	EG: 18 (90%) CG: 19 (95%)	-	40 (100%)
Providing materials for creating analytical and critical abilities			EG: 8 (40%) CG: 8 (40%)	EG: 12 (60%) CG: 12 (60%)	-	40 (100%)
Developing confidence and independence in expressing students' own ideas, opinions and emotions in English			EG: 1 (5%) CG: 3 (15%)	EG: 18 (90%) CG: 17(85%)	-	39 (97.5%)

Data gathered from Q.4 show that, in total, 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed that literary texts could promote individual development and the general education of the whole person by stimulating imagination. In both CG and EG, 100% (40 out of 40) agreed that literature encouraged students to work creatively and provided materials for developing analytical and critical abilities. A great majority in both groups, 97.5% (39 out of 40) agreed that literature helped develop confidence and independence in expressing students' own ideas, opinions and emotions in English. Only 2.5% (1 out of 40) did not provide opinion on this statement.

Therefore, data confirm that literature by bringing in new values and situations gave insight into diverse predicaments, which encouraged one to have an exploration of diversified thoughts and imagination. Development in creativity made students more understanding, analytic and critical of the world around, contributing to the development of the whole person and of their general education. Students' confirmation regarding the development in their thoughts and ideas about life is indicative of their development in expression and opinion, which led to self-confidence.

Q.5 tried to find whether the students were satisfied with the variety of the texts given in their textbooks. Q.6 asked if they were satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts

provided in textbooks. Q.7 asked if these activities were appropriate for their learning purpose. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.59 Q.5 You are satisfied with the variety of the texts given in your textbooks. Q.6 You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. Q.7 These activities are appropriate for your learning purpose.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total out of 40	
					Disagree	Agree
You are satisfied with the variety of the texts given in your textbooks	EG: 7(35%) CG: 10(50%)	EG: 11(55%) CG: 8 (40%)	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: - CG: -	36 (90%)	4 (10%)
You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks.	EG: 13(65%) CG: 14(70%)	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 6 (30%)	EG: 1 (5%) CG: -	EG: - CG: -	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)
These activities are appropriate for your learning purpose.	EG: 6 (30%) CG: 4 (20%)	EG: 13 (65%) CG: 16 (80%)	EG: 1 (5%) CG: -	EG: - CG: -	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)

Data from Q.5 confirm that in total, the majority, 90% (36 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement that they were satisfied with the variety of the texts given in their textbook, indicating that the majority was not satisfied with the texts. Only 10% (4 out of 40) agreed with the statement. Data from Q.6 indicate that in total, 97.5% (39 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement that, they were satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. However, only 2.5% (1 out of 40) agreed with the statement. Data, therefore, indicate that the majority was not satisfied with the range of activities and thought that they were not sufficient to cater for their needs and taste. Q.7 attempted to discover whether the activities provided were appropriate for their learning purposes. Data reveal that in total, the majority, 97.5% (39 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement, however, only 2.5% (1 out of 40) thought otherwise. Data, therefore, indicate that the majority found the activities inappropriate for their learning purposes.

Q.8 attempted to discover whether the activities were motivating. Q.9 asked whether they were able to stimulate natural conversation. Q.10 asked whether they could help students develop their conversational skills.

Table 5.60 Q.8 The activities were motivating. Q.9 The activities were able to stimulate natural conversation. Q.10 The activities could help you develop your conversational skills.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total out of 40	
					Disagree	Agree
The activities were motivating.	EG: 2 (10%) CG: 5 (25%)	EG: 17 (85%) CG: 15 (75%)	EG: 1 (5%) CG: -	EG: - CG: -	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)
They were able to stimulate natural conversation.	EG: 1 (5%) CG: 3 (15%)	EG: 17 (85%) CG: 17 (85%)	EG: 2 (10%) CG: -	EG: - CG: -	38 (95%)	2 (5%)

They could help you develop your conversational skills.	EG: 3 (15%) CG: 2 (10%)	EG: 16 (80%) CG: 17 (85%)	EG: 1 (5%) CG: -	EG: - CG: -	38 (95%)	1 (2.5%)
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Data from Q.8 show that the majority, 97.5% (39 out of 40) students disagreed with the statement that the activities were motivating. However, 2.5% (1 out of 40) thought otherwise. Therefore, the findings indicate that most students thought that the activities were not motivating and they did not serve the learners' learning purpose. Q.9 attempted to discover whether the activities were able to stimulate natural conversation. Data indicate that in total, the majority, 95% (38 out of 40) disagreed with the statement, whereas, 5% (2 out of 40) decided otherwise. Therefore, data reflect that the majority of the students decided that the activities provided in the textbook were not able to stimulate natural conversation. Data from Q.10 show that the majority, 95% (38 out of 40) disagreed with the statement that the activities could help students develop their conversational skills. Only 2.5% (1 out of 40) thought otherwise. Thus, data confirm that the majority felt that the activities did little to help develop conversational skills, as they did not give opportunity for natural conversation.

Q.11 asked about activities which could be considered the most effective in developing conversational skills.

Table 5.61 Q.11 What activities do you consider to be most effective in developing your own conversational skills?

	EG	CG	Total out of 40
Discussion	19 (95%)	20 (100%)	39 (97.5%)
Re-telling	9 (45%)	7 (35%)	16 (40%)
Prediction	11 (55%)	11 (55%)	22 (55%)
Story making	5 (25%)	6 (30%)	11 (27.5%)
Role-playing	6 (30%)	5 (25%)	11 (27.5%)
Open-ended	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	9 (22.5%)
Vocabulary games	-	2 (10%)	2 (5%)
Dialogue making	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	4 (10%)
Problem-solving	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	3 (7.5%)
Fill in the blanks	1 (5%)	-	1 (2.5%)
Summarising	1 (5%)	-	1 (2.5%)

Data from the above table reveal that activities, which promoted discussion, were thought to be the most effective ones in developing conversational skills. A majority, 97.5% (39 out of 40) claimed that discussion activity was the best for mastering conversational skills. Another 55% (22 out of 40) suggested prediction activity, and 40% (16 out of 40) supported re-telling activity to be the most effective in developing conversational skills.

Q.12 asked whether their teacher encouraged them to use the literary texts available outside the classroom/given textbook. The table below presents the data:

Table 5.62 Q.12 Your teacher encourages you to use literary texts available outside classroom/ given textbook.

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Total out of 40	
					Disagree	Agree
EG			7 (35%)	13 (65%)	-	40 (100%)
CG			11 (55%)	9 (45%)		

Data reveal that with a majority, 55% (22 out of 40) strongly agreeing, 100% (40 out of 40) students agreed that their teacher encouraged them to use literary texts outside classroom. This demonstrated the teachers' own attitude towards literature, suggesting the importance of having literary texts in the English lessons because of their motivational qualities and their usefulness as a resource for developing language skills.

Q.13 sought suggestions concerning English literature learning/teaching and what the students thought a good literature learning/teaching process should include. A summary of the data reveal that a majority pointed out that teaching methodology was one of the main areas which required attention by the authorities. A further concern was the teacher's use of English during English lessons, thus keeping the translation method to the minimum. Moreover, emphasis was placed on having more student-oriented classes, providing an opportunity to discuss, imagine and interact. A few students mentioned the importance of appropriate text selection. A few others reiterated that the teacher should be friendly, and sympathetic, ready to accept the learner's ideas and opinions and should allow them to be creative, which would ensure a congenial learning atmosphere. A further few added that activities concerned with speaking needed to be included and practised to ensure improved speaking ability.

### 5.5.3 Summary of Students' Views

The pre-treatment interviews and questionnaires collected data on students' attitudes towards English lessons and literature teaching methodologies employed in their classes. Results show that students defined literature as a combination of realism and creativity representing life. They confirmed the importance of having more literary pieces in the syllabus, which would increase both their imaginative and linguistic faculties, the two main issues of concern

involved in communication. They observed that they read books outside the syllabus in order to broaden their ideas and imagination, and to enable them to keep pace with friends from English medium schools who enjoyed better resources. Students confirmed that literary texts had a motivating quality which would inspire them to read more, and that reading more would assist them in improved expression. Comics were the most widely read genre, whereas students identified short stories as the favourite literary genre.

Students clearly indicated the growing preference for American English to be the medium of instruction during English lessons. However, they labelled their own English as a mix of different varieties. They confirmed that learning English was essential because of its status as an international language, ensuring a better future as the key to the door of all feasible opportunities throughout their practical life.

They also confirmed that classes were generally teacher-oriented. Usually, they were not allowed to discuss, undertake group or pair work, or interact with each other or with the teacher. The attitude of the teacher, as the imparter of knowledge, and her teaching style, made them frightened of her, and this resulted in English being presented as a difficult subject. Adherence to the textbook, textbook-based activities and the memorisation technique for examination were some of the other problematic areas that they thought required amendment. The teachers' attitude towards making mistakes added to the uneasiness that hindered free communication. Adherence to translation into Bengali made the lesson boring, dull, monotonous, and prevented learning much English.

Students recognised the importance of bringing in considerable changes to the teaching/learning atmosphere, for example, by converting the class into a student-centred one, thus giving them opportunities to think, predict, discuss, interpret and express verbally in order to ensure improvement in this particular area. Data also confirm the point made by Dörnyei (2001:120) that teachers play a significant role in socialising and shaping the motivation of their students through their:

- personal characteristics;
- verbal and non-verbal 'immediacy' behaviour;
- active motivational socialising behaviour;
- classroom management practices.

The students reiterated, and is supported by MacIntyre (1999), that a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom was essential in maintaining effective learning, as student anxiety created by a tense classroom environment is one of the most potent factors undermining learning effectiveness and L2 motivation. Dörnyei (2001:121) adds that learner involvement is expected to be highest in a 'psychologically safe classroom climate in which students are encouraged to express their opinions and in which they feel that they are protected from ridicule and embarrassment'. Good and Brophy (1994:215) echo the students' views on the role of the teacher: 'The teacher should be a patient, encouraging person who supports students' learning efforts.'

The negative attitude towards English conversation was a further hindrance when attempting to speak in English with friends and family members. In many cases, they viewed speaking in English as offensive and a gesture of 'showing off.' According to Gardner *et al* (1997) parental encouragement is associated with the development of attitudes towards the learning situation and with the language-learning efforts of the learners.

All the respondents also felt that the standard of spoken English was very poor in general, and that it was necessary to be able to speak in English in the Bangladesh context. They concluded that a change in methodology and attitude of the teacher would enhance the learning process, especially in the area of speaking skills. Moreover, emphasising the development of speaking skills in the classroom would save them from paying extra time, energy and money on coaching centres or private tuition. The findings from Akyel and Yalcin's survey (1990:177) regarding the students' desire to have 'language skills to be more interlocked with the literary programme, and class work to involve more discussion and debate type of activities on the meaning and interpretation of literary texts', appear to be the same as in the Bangladesh situation. The students added that it was better to present literature with a small 'I'. They should not be burdened with too much information about the writer, his works or the historical aspects involved, which made the whole learning process more theoretical rather than interesting.

Activities

They confirmed that the activities included in their textbook were not appropriate for their learning purposes, let alone for improving their speaking skills. They also thought that activities which promoted discussion created an improved learning atmosphere and should be introduced because they would be able to learn from each other. Their views regarding peer

acceptance cohere with the findings by Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998:241) where they mention a set of 'class rules' fostering peer acceptance. The rules include listening to each other, helping each other, respecting each other's ideas and values, accepting mistakes as learning points, not making fun of each other's mistakes and avoiding hurting each other, verbally or physically. However, the main problem in imparting knowledge is methodological, resulting in weak performance, leading to boredom and frustration, non-attentiveness and disappointment.

The data also reflect that the majority of students thought that it was the fault of the teachers and the authorities who should take proper measures to teach speaking skills, as this was very important for their future. Also a lack of trained teachers, an inadequate number of teaching staff, over-crowded classes and limited time made it difficult for the teachers to complete the syllabus.

All of these results, together with the teachers' responses to the interview questions and to the teachers' questionnaire, only validated the existence of the previously stated problems in the EFL literature class (i.e. teacher-centredness, low student motivation, lack of reading ability, etc.). Nevertheless, the researcher believes that a proper exploration of the materials and resources available, and introduction of more literature in the language classroom could help achieve the objectives. It would also be possible to deal with speaking even in the present situation if the institution and teachers decided to allot time to speaking, taking tests and marking these on paper as the learners proceeded.

#### **5. 6 Post-treatment questionnaire and Quantitative findings from Observation Sheets**

All forty students in CG and EG had to complete a short post-treatment questionnaire which took about five minutes to complete (Appendix 6) in response to the particular teaching. The EG students were exposed to the proposed teaching methodology and activities described in Chapter Three, whereas the CG students continued with the traditional methodology, although they studied the same text. In the following sections, data from EG reveal the students' responses and attitudes towards the lesson and the teaching approach, which are compared and contrasted with those of CG. The percentage is calculated out of the total number of students in each group, which was twenty.



### 5.6.1 Students' Responses to the Teaching Process

The EG students' responses to the teaching methodology proposed by the study were very positive. Q.1 asked about the teaching process in the class.

Table 5.63 Q.1 The teaching process was:

	EG	CG
a) Not any different from the others	-	20 (100%)
b) Systematic	20 (100%)	-
c) Disorganised	-	-

Data reveal that all twenty (100%) students in EG found the teaching process to be systematic and well-organised, bringing something new into the classroom. Data from CG reveal that all twenty (100%) of them found the process to be normal and no different from usual. This confirms that the CG teacher followed the traditional grammar-translation methodology and played a pivotal role as a figure talking from the podium. This was a teacher-centred, and lecture-oriented classroom, where the students acted as passive recipients of knowledge delivered by the teacher.

Q.2 asked for their opinions regarding the prediction activities used in the class. The data from Q.2 are presented below.

Table 5.64 Q.2 The prediction activities used in the class were:

	EG	CG
a) Nothing interesting	-	18 (90%)
b) Quite interesting and motivating	20 (100%)	2 (10%)
c) Initiated talk on our part	20 (100%)	-

As can be seen from the above table, all twenty (100%) students in EG thought that the prediction activities were quite interesting and motivating, capable of initiating talk or verbal communication. They enjoyed the activities, which were interesting and kept their attention, two key ingredients in motivation, resulting in improved learning with imagination and thinking skills. Data from CG show that the majority, eighteen (90%) students thought that the activities used were not interesting or motivating. Only two (10%) thought otherwise.

When the responses of students in CG are compared with those of EG, it can be said that the students in EG found that the proposed teaching methodology offered more varied activities

than traditional ways of literature teaching. This was important because the proposed approach contains the necessary elements for more student-centred classes. The data however, confirm that the text-based questions requiring text-based answers gave little scope to predict, be creative or imaginative.

### ***5.6.2 Students' Overall Evaluation of the Delivery of the Materials and the Teaching Approach Employed in the Class***

In the post-treatment questionnaire, students in both EG and CG were asked to evaluate the delivery of the materials and the teaching approach employed in the class. To a certain extent, students' responses revealed the points which students liked and disliked about the lesson. Table 5.65 below summarises these points.

Table 5.65 Q.3 Mark the points that describe best the lessons and your overall evaluation of the delivery of the materials and teaching approach employed in the class:

	EG	CG
a) Very detailed	1 (5%)	20 (100%)
b) Instructions were made clear	19 (95%)	-
c) The teacher talked all the times and I did not have any chance to express myself	-	20 (100%)
d) Creative	20 (100%)	-
e) Effective	20 (100%)	-
f) Motivating	20 (100%)	-
g) The text chosen was interesting	20 (100%)	20 (100%)
h) Appropriate to our needs	18 (90%)	2 (10%)
i) Catered for our need to express orally	20 (100%)	-
j) The teacher talked about the important points and sometimes asked us to take notes/underline important parts	20 (100%)	20 (100%)
k) Very encouraging to contribute to the discussion	19 (95%)	-
l) I kept on taking notes and did not focus on anything else	-	20 (100%)
m) Pair work and group works were really good and useful	19 (95%)	-
n) I have learnt that I can support my intuitions through textual evidence	20 (100%)	-
o) I have learnt that by using the clues from the text , based on prediction and imagination, I can express myself more fluently	20 (100%)	-
p) I enjoyed approaching literature from a different perspective	19 (95%)	-
q) Repetitive	-	20 (100%)
r) I had enough opportunity to express myself	20 (100%)	-
s) I did not have to think whether my answer was correct or not, all the time	20 (100%)	-
t) I enjoyed the activities and responded to those without thinking much about grammatical pattern all the time.	20 (100%)	-
u) I think I would like to read books of my own outside classroom	20 (100%)	1 (5%)
v) I think this will help me developing my thinking skill that will lead to better oral expression	19(95%)	-

As can be seen from the above table, the EG students' responses reveal that the teaching materials and the teaching approach utilised in their classes made a remarkable impact on them. Only one (5%) student in EG thought that the delivery of the materials and teaching approach employed was *very detailed*. This finding becomes remarkable when compared with the total percentage of CG students' responses, where all twenty (100%) thought the process to be quite detailed, the teacher being the main resource of data, knowledge and interpretation, whereas the students were mainly passive recipients of messages.

As is shown in the table, data from statement 'b' showed that a great majority, nineteen (95%) students, in EG found that the instructions were very clear during the lessons, ensuring a developed output from them. There was no response to this statement from CG.

There was no response from EG students regarding the statement that the '*teacher talks all the times and I did not have any chance to express myself*', which show that the students were already experiencing a classroom without much teacher intervention. However, data from CG confirm that all twenty (100%) of them were busy listening to the teacher without having much scope to interact. The results thus show that the proposed teaching approach might be a step towards literature classes where teachers were not merely information givers, but also enablers.

Data also reveal that all twenty (100%) students in EG found the lessons and activities to be *creative, effective and motivating*. They gave students opportunities to become innovative and imaginative which contributed to enthusiasm about the whole teaching/learning process, thus resulting in improved performance. However, in CG, students found the activities and methodology used in their class to be as usual, and not demanding creativity, as both the teacher and the students were busy following the content of the text in order to be able to answer text-based questions. They followed the traditional methodology of listening to the teacher and taking notes.

Data also reflect that all forty (100%) students in CG and EG commented that the chosen text was interesting, attention-grabbing and enjoyable and could be studied with enthusiasm. This confirms the importance of text selection. Data also show that in EG, eighteen (90%) students found the activities to be appropriate and all twenty (100%) of them found that they were able to cater for their need to express because they evoked curiosity and interest,

helping them improve their learning. Through prediction activities, they were able to master their language skills, especially their speaking skill, the weakest area in their language output. In CG, only two (10%) students found the delivery of the teaching materials and methods to be appropriate for their needs. Materials and methods were too traditional, and the majority did not find them to be anything new. The result from EG when compared with CG, can again be considered remarkable.

Data from statement 'j', regarding the teacher talking about the important points and sometimes asking the students to take notes/underline important parts, show that all twenty (100%) students in EG agreed that she did so. This was based on the previously established fact that the students found the teaching methodology used in the experimental classroom to be different from the traditional one. The teacher acted as a facilitator helping them through the text, which might otherwise be quite difficult and thus uninteresting. All twenty (100%) students in CG also agreed with the statement. Nevertheless, this was with a difference, as they found the teaching methodology used in the control classroom no different from the traditional method. Therefore, it was usual to find them listening to the teacher and following her guidance.

Another important result for the present study is to see that nineteen (95%) students in EG stated that it was very encouraging for them to contribute to the class discussion, indicating that the activities and delivery of the materials were interesting enough to encourage them to take part in a two-way communication. However, there was no response to this statement from CG, which suggests that there was not much scope for discussion on their part.

There was no response to the statement 'l', *'I kept on taking notes and did not focus on anything else'* from EG, indicating that while following the proposed method, they were rather busy undertaking activities or taking part in discussions which demanded a lot of imagination, thought and use of logic and argument. However, all twenty (100%) in CG suggested that, in the classroom, they were busy listening to the lecture and taking notes. Note-taking still remained a focal point for them. The result from EG is highly complimentary and encouraging, suggesting that, through the proposed approach, teachers of EFL literature could ensure more student-centred classes.

Results from statement 'm' show that a great majority, nineteen (95%) students in EG, commented that pair work and group work involved in the lessons were good and useful, suggesting that communication between peers helped them perform better. It also helped to shed the general tendency to keep knowledge to oneself – an examination-oriented mentality that prevails in the Bangladeshi classroom. On the other hand, in CG, there was no mention of doing any group work activity.

As for raising language awareness and making students more sensitive to linguistic elements in the text, students' responses reveal that the study had made an impact on EG students and that they liked approaching literary texts from this perspective. Data show that all twenty (100%) EG students felt that, through the proposed approach, they had learnt that they could support their intuitions through textual evidence. The tasks demanded the use of thinking skills, imagination and intuition. Data also confirm that they found the activities helped support their intuition with quotations from the text. Thus, they were able to relate the text to their prediction and thoughts combined with logic behind the intuitions that they had. Obviously, such an approach was not common practice in CG, and there was no response from them regarding this issue.

Data also reveal that all twenty (100%) students in EG agreed that, through the proposed methodology, they were able to use the clues from the text, based on prediction and imagination, resulting in improved and more fluent expression. Development of the imaginative faculty and prediction helped them to become fluent, as they were trying to initiate new thoughts without depending on memorisation. On the other hand, there was no response to this statement from CG respondents as there was not much scope for using imaginative faculties during their lessons.

The great majority in EG, nineteen (95%) agreed that they enjoyed approaching literature from a different perspective, whereas there was no response from CG regarding this. Teachers usually taught literature with a capital 'L' which made the students to some extent nervous and uncomfortable about the whole learning process. Moreover, the traditional way of teaching involved a teacher-centred classroom and memorisation of answers for examination. The proposed approach, in a student-oriented classroom, worked better as the students began to approach literature with a small 'l' where they were able to apply their own understanding of the text. They were free to discuss, and express their thoughts and

appreciation of the text. The teacher presented herself as a facilitator rather than a dictator during the lesson.

None of the EG students found the process to be repetitive. They found the lessons interesting and motivating. On the other hand, all twenty (100%) students in CG found the process to be repetitive, as expected.

Data also reveal that all twenty (100%) students in EG agreed that they had enough opportunity to express themselves during the lessons. They had equal chances to express their views, resulting in an excellent learning outcome and performance. However, there was no response to this statement from CG, as they did not have much chance to express their point of views because the teaching followed a prescriptive way which did not demand interaction. This result also indicates a great difference in students' responses between CG and EG.

In EG, all twenty (100%) students commented that they did not have to worry about whether the answers they suggested were correct or not, indicating that the atmosphere was congenial to learning. They were asked to continue speaking, and were not penalised for their mistakes. They were, rather, encouraged to communicate independently and this resulted in developed self-confidence and performance. However, there was no response to this statement from CG.

All twenty (100%) students in EG agreed that they did not have to worry about grammatical patterns all the time while responding to an activity. Less emphasis on correct grammar added extra motivation to the overall learning process, as worrying about correct grammar and structure resulted in fear of the language, leading to boredom. Therefore, being free of these taboos, the students were enthusiastic in speaking freely, and enjoyed taking part in the activities. There was no response to this statement from CG, as there was little interaction during their lessons, hence, no question of being grammatically correct or otherwise.

All twenty (100%) students in EG felt encouraged to try additional books in English after their exposition to the treatment class. Previous data revealed that the students in general were interested in literature; therefore, the problem was with the methodology rather than with the text. Data confirm that the proposed methodology guided EG students to approach literature with a small 'l', which encouraged them to read further, resulting in more language

input and output. In CG, only one (5%) student thought that she would like to read books outside the syllabus. Students in CG, perhaps, not finding the methodology and classroom procedure that promising or interesting, did not feel motivated to read additional English texts outside the classroom, their single aim being to pass the compulsory English paper.

In EG, nineteen (95%) students stated that the teaching process and activities could help them to develop their thinking skills, which would pave the way to improved oral expression. This result also indicates a great difference in students' responses in CG and EG, because there was no response from CG on this particular issue. The activities used in EG were able to stimulate thought processes which initiated diverse answers to a single question, supported by logic, argument and the proper use of vocabulary. Students in CG did not have chance to interact either between themselves or with the teacher, therefore there was no question of developing thinking skills that might result in improved oral expression.

Q.4 of the post-treatment questionnaire attempted to obtain the students' overall impression about the lesson. The following table presents the data:

Table 5.66 Q.4 Your overall impression about the lesson (e.g. interesting, boring, enjoyable, unenjoyable, etc.).

	EG	CG
Interesting, enjoyable, creative	17 (85%)	3 (15%)
As usual, teacher-oriented	2 (10%)	18 (90%)

Data show that the majority, seventeen (85%) students, in EG admitted that the lessons were interesting, enjoyable, and creative. They found their teacher to be very co-operative, and that she paid equal attention to everyone. Data from CG show that the majority, eighteen (90%) students in their group thought otherwise. They commented that the lessons were as usual, the teacher doing everything for them just as she would do in a traditional classroom. Therefore, data from CG confirm the prevalence of a teacher-oriented classroom where students were expected to listen to their teacher and memorise text-based set answers.

### ***5.6.3 On-task Behaviour for Learners in EG and CG***

The use of Observation Sheet 1 (Appendix 12) was to quantify, compare and contrast individual learners' on-task behaviour, which would indicate levels of learners' motivation

generated by the teaching approach and materials in use in both groups. The use of Observation Sheet 1 also aimed at finding the frequency of English use during the lessons in order to calculate and quantify the EG learners performance in English. This will allow the study to draw a conclusion about improved performance in English, if that was found so. An indication was clearly made within brackets if the answer was produced in Bengali. The observer entered '2' if a learner was on task, and if she contributed to the class discussions, that is, when she was, she was engaged in the discussions and pedagogic work of the day. The observer entered '1', if she showed a complete lack of attention to the lesson and set task, and did not contribute to the question at all. The total number of observations on each student was twelve. This method observed students one by one, clockwise, around the class. After each question was asked, the observer wrote down the category best describing the observed student's behaviour at that moment, then passed on to the next student.

The following table presents the on-task behaviour of individual students on each day in EG and CG. During one lesson, each student was scanned 12 times and in total, 84 times during 7 lessons. The table also presents the percentage of total on task behaviour of each student, out of 84 scans.

Table 5.67 EG and CG students' individual on-task behaviour on each day and its summation:

Students EG/CG	On-task behaviour: 12 scans/day														Total scan: 84 Total days: 7			
	Day 1		Day 2		Day 3		Day 4		Day 5		Day 6		Day 7		Total on-task		Total on-task (%)	
	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
S1/S2	12	1	12	1	12	2	12	0	12	2	12	4	12	0	84	10	100	11.9
S3/S4	12	1	12	1	9	2	12	1	12	0	12	3	12	0	81	8	96.43	9.52
S5/S6	12	2	12	2	12	1	12	1	12	0	12	4	12	0	84	10	100	11.9
S7/S8	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	1	12	1	12	2	12	0	84	4	100	4.76
S9/S10	12	0	12	1	12	0	12	1	11	0	11	3	12	0	82	5	97.62	5.95
S11/S12	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	3	12	0	84	3	100	3.57
S13/S14	12	0	12	2	11	1	12	0	12	1	12	2	12	0	83	6	98.81	7.14
S15/S16	12	0	11	0	12	0	10	0	12	1	12	3	12	0	81	4	96.43	4.76
S17/S18	12	0	12	0	12	0	10	0	12	0	12	4	12	0	82	4	97.62	4.76
S19/S20	12	0	12	2	12	0	10	0	12	0	12	2	12	0	82	4	97.62	4.76
S21/S22	12	0	12	0	10	0	11	1	12	0	12	3	12	0	81	4	96.43	4.76
S23/S24	12	1	11	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	2	12	0	83	3	98.81	3.57
S25/S26	12	0	12	0	12	1	10	0	12	0	12	3	12	0	82	4	97.62	4.76
S27/S28	12	0	12	0	12	0	11	0	12	0	12	2	12	0	83	2	98.81	2.38
S29/S30	12	0	12	0	11	0	12	0	9	1	12	2	12	0	80	3	95.24	3.57
S31/S32	12	0	12	0	12	0	10	1	12	0	12	2	12	0	82	3	97.62	3.57
S33/S34	7	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	9	1	11	2	12	0	75	3	89.29	3.57
S35/S36	10	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	2	10	0	80	2	95.24	2.38
S37/S38	10	0	12	0	11	0	10	0	12	0	12	2	11	0	78	2	92.86	2.38
S39/S40	12	1	12	2	11	0	12	0	10	0	11	2	12	0	80	5	95.24	5.95



The study groups matched for age, sex, and social class. In the school, the students' roll numbers are allocated on the basis of their merit in final examinations. So, it was decided to choose the even numbers in one group and the odds in the other to maintain a balance between 'good', 'average' and 'comparatively poor' students in each. This was on the principle that when two identical groups are selected, one of which (the EG) is given special treatment and the other (the CG) is not, then any differences between the two groups at the end of the experimental period could be attributed to the difference in treatment.

As can be seen from the above table, the total percentage of each student's performance on 7 lessons, in both EG and CG, reflect that there is a significant relation between the teaching methodologies employed in both classes, and levels of students' participation, and involvement. For example, the performances of S1/S2, S17/S18 and S39/S40 (belonging to the 'good', 'average' and 'comparatively poor' group, respectively) in EG and CG clearly reflect the differences of their performance levels.

In EG, the percentage of on-task behaviour of S1 was 100, whereas, in CG, it was 11.9 percent by S2. Similarly, the percentage of on-task behaviour of S17 was 97.62 in EG, whereas, it was 4.76 percent in the case of S18 in CG. The total on-task behaviour percentage of S39 in EG was 95.24, whereas, it was 5.95 percent for S40 in CG. Therefore, data clearly reveal that each student in EG was more involved as well as was more enthusiastic to take part in the lessons, and produced more language orally, than that of a student in CG was.

Table 5.69 below presents the overall group performance in both EG and CG on each lesson. It also presents the percentage of these group performances with their average at the end. This is in order to show the distinction in performances in EG and CG as individual groups. Each student, as already mentioned was observed 12 times, therefore, for 20 students in each group, the total number of scans were 240.

Table 5.68 Group on-task behaviour and their average: EG and CG

	Total number of respondents & overall on-task behaviour (EG)	Percentage of respondents & on-task behaviour (EG)	Total number of respondents & overall on-task behaviour (CG)	Percentage of respondents & on-task behaviour (CG)
Day 1	20 (231)	100 (96.25)	5 (6)	25 (2.5)
Day 2	20 (238)	100 (99.17)	7 (11)	35 (4.58)
Day 3	20 (231)	100 (96.25)	5 (7)	25 (2.92)
Day 4	20 (226)	100 (94.17)	6 (6)	30 (2.5)

Day 5	20 (231)	100 (96.25)	6 (7)	30 (2.92)
Day 6	20 (237)	100 (98.75)	20 (52)	100 (21.67)
Day 7	20 (237)	100 (98.75)	0 (0)	0 (0.00)
Average	20 (233)	100 (97.08)	7(12.71)	35 (5.29)

As can be seen from the above table, in average, all 20 learners in EG were on-task and responded to the activities 233 times out of 240 scans. In CG, in average, 7 learners were on-task and responded 12.71 times out of 240 scans. Data also reveal that EG learners were on-task 97.08% of the time when they were exposed to the proposed teaching materials, activities and methodology, and learners in CG were on-task 5.29% of the time where they underwent the usual. This result indicates that the proposed teaching approach largely increased learner on-task behaviour. Once again, it was encouraging to note that the increase in learners' on-task behaviour in EG was consistent, suggesting that it was not a result of students' daily mood, or other factors (e.g. enjoying a particular text, or being familiar with the story, etc.) at the time of the observation.

#### ***5.6.4 Overall Class Motivation***

Observation Sheet 2 (Appendix 13) attempted to assess the overall class motivation generated by the teaching activities and teaching approach in use. The aim was to measure and compare and contrast the levels of students' motivation, interest, enthusiasm, activity, persistence with the teaching process, concentration, and enjoyment during the actual teaching in EG and CG. Observation Sheet 2 was for observing the class as whole, not individual students. The process used ten statements/items to complete the observations. The observation sheet therefore, consisted of ten closed items on a semantic differential scale of adjectives expressing motivation. Each item was scored on a scale of 1 (low/not very involved/not really) to 5 (high/very involved/very much so). Therefore, 35 was the highest possible score on any one item during seven lessons/days. ONE number was circled on each statement. 3 was an average mark for any one item. The observer completed this sheet when the lesson was approaching the end. Table 5.69 presents the overall class motivation scores, scored by EG and CG during seven lessons. Table 5.70 presents the percentage of average group score on each day in EG and CG and their corresponding level of performance.

Table 5.69 Overall class motivation scores in EG and CG

	Day 1		Day 2		Day 3		Day 4		Day 5		Day 6		Day 7	
Statement	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
1	5	1	5	2	5	2	5	1	5	3	5	3	5	1
2	5	3	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	3	5	3	5	1
3	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	2	5	3	5	1
4	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	3	5	3	5	1
5	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	2	5	3	5	1
6	5	3	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	4	5	4	5	1
7	5	2	5	2	4	2	4	2	5	2	5	3	5	1
8	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1
9	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	3	5	3	5	1
10	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1
Average group score/day	5	1.5	5	1.3	4.9	1.4	4.9	1.3	5	2.4	5	2.7	5	1
Total of average group score on 7 days							EG 34.98 (out of 35, the possible highest score)				CG 11.6 (out of 35, the possible highest score)			
Overall average group score/day							4.97 (<5)				1.66 (<2)			
Percentage (%)							99.43 (4.97 <5)				33.14 (1.66 <2)			

Table 5.70 Percentage of average group score on each day in EG and CG and their corresponding level of performance on the scale

Day	EG (%) on average score	CG (%) on average score
1	100 (5)	30 (1.5)
2	100 (5)	26 (1.3)
3	98 (4.9)	28 (1.4)
4	98 (4.9)	26 (1.3)
5	100 (5)	48 (2.4)
6	100 (5)	54 (2.7)
7	100 (5)	20 (1)
Average percentage (%)	99.43 (4.97 <5)	33.14 (1.66 <2)

Data and results presented in the above tables indicate that the overall class motivation on Day 1 in EG was 100% (scoring the highest 5 on the scale), whereas, it was 30% (scoring less than 2 on the scale) in CG. On Day 2, the level of motivation in EG was 100% (scoring the highest 5 on the scale) whereas in CG, it was 26% (scoring less than 2 on the scale). On Day 3 in EG, overall class motivation was 98% (scoring a little less the highest 5 on the scale), on the other hand, in CG it was 28% (scoring less than the average 3 on the scale). Data from Day 4 show that the overall class motivation in EG was 98% (scoring a little less the highest 5 on the scale) whereas in CG, it was 26% (scoring less than 2 on the scale). On Day 5 the overall class motivation was 100% (scoring the highest 5 on the scale) in EG and

48% (scoring less than the average 3 on the scale) in CG. In EG, the overall motivation level was 100% (scoring the highest 5 on the scale) on Day 6, whereas it was 54% (scoring a little less than the average 3 on the scale) in CG. Overall class motivation on Day 7 in EG was 100% (scoring the highest 5 on the scale), whereas, it was 20% (scoring 1 on the scale) in CG.

Therefore, data confirm that overall class motivation and involvement of the learners increased when they were exposed to the teaching materials and the teaching approach proposed by the present study. The total percentage of overall motivation and involvement counted in EG was 99.43%, equivalent to the score 4.97, little less than 5 (<5), where 5 indicates the highest score. In CG, the total percentage of overall motivation and involvement was 33.14%, equivalent to the score 1.66, less than 2 (<2), where 1 indicates the lowest score on the semantic differential scale of adjectives expressing motivation.

#### 5.6.5 Overall EG performance in English

The use of Observation Sheet 1 also aimed at finding the frequency of English use during the lessons in order to calculate and quantify the EG learners performance in English. This will allow the study to draw a conclusion about improved performance in English, if that is found so. For 20 students in EG, the total number of scans were 240 during each lesson. The following Table presents the data on the frequency of English use by EG students.

Table 5.71 Overall EG performance in English depending on the frequency of English use during the lessons

	English/240 scan	Bengali/240 scan	English: Bengali (%)
Lesson 1	186	45	77.50:18.75
Lesson 2	197	41	82.08:17.08
Lesson 3	193	38	80.42:15.83
Lesson 4	190	36	79.17:15.00
Lesson 5	207	24	86.25:10.00
Lesson 6	203	34	87.50:14.17
Lesson 7	210	27	87.50:11.25
Lesson 8	214	26	89.17:10.83
Lesson 9	210	30	87.50:12.50
Overall ratio between English and Bengali use: 83.80:13.94			

From Table 5.68 it is already observed that in average, all 20 learners in EG were on-task and responded to the activities 233 times out of 240 scans. The above table indicates the use of

English and Bengali by them during each lesson as well as the overall performance in English during nine lessons.

It can be seen from the table that there is a rise of English use by 4.58% from Lesson 1 to Lesson 2 with a decline of 1.66% from Lesson 2 to Lesson 3. From Lesson 4 onwards up to Lesson 8 there is a continuous rise of English usage. A small decline of 1.67% is observed between Lesson 8 and Lesson 9. However, the declines seem to be of less significance when compared between the overall performance level in English and Bengali which is 83.80:13.94. Therefore, the result from the data on the frequency of English use during the lessons suggest that the EG students had a sharp development on their performance in English speaking compared to their performance in Bengali. It was again encouraging to note that the increase in learners' performance in English was consistent rather than random, suggesting that it was not a result of students' daily mood, or other factors (e.g. enjoying a particular text, or being familiar with the story, etc.) at the time of the observation.

#### ***5.6.6 Summary of the Quantitative Findings***

The data gathered through students' self-evaluation post-treatment questionnaires and scheduled observation sheets in both CG and EG were analysed quantitatively. In the light of these findings, it can be said that there is a significant relation between the teaching methodologies employed in both classes, and levels of students' motivation, involvement, response to, and appreciation of, the literary text under study and their development in English performance. Even at first sight, it becomes apparent that students appreciated the teaching approach and activities in EG better than those in CG. The findings also suggest that application of the teaching approach proposed by the study significantly increased levels of student performance in English use, motivation and involvement, and changed the classroom dynamics in a positive way. The positive feedback has been very encouraging and is a strong indication of the need for further research in the area.

#### **5.7 Post-treatment Interviews with EG Students and EG Teacher**

At the end of their exposure to the proposed teaching methodology, nine students in EG and their teacher were interviewed in order to confirm their attitudes towards the teaching/learning they experienced in their group. In the post-treatment interview, students

were asked about their motivation and whether the proposed teaching approach helped them to understand literary text better and helped them in developing their speaking skills. They were also required to mention positive and negative aspects of the teaching approach used in their class, and to describe how they would teach the same course if they were the teacher. The number of EG students selected for post-treatment interviews was based on the availability of students and as no comparison was sought at this stage, therefore there was no need to interview the whole class. However, the students selected also took part in the pre-treatment interview so that they exactly could identify the similarities and dissimilarities between the traditional and the proposed approaches and their impacts on their learning process.

The EG teacher was asked to express her views on the teaching methodology and its implications.

#### ***5.7.1 Post-treatment Interview with EG Students***

When EG students were asked to comment on what the class was about, the majority said that it was on 'literature', but handled in a way that gave them an opportunity to have their own understanding of the text. They added that this was very helpful and motivating, leading to self-confidence and improved language awareness. The following is an extract from one student:

The class was on developing our confidence and speaking skills using literary texts.

All students in EG admitted that they liked and enjoyed the classes very much. They felt encouraged in having an equal chance to participate, resulting in a minimum standard achieved by all, especially in terms of speaking skills.

When asked about the effect of the proposed teaching approach on classroom dynamics, all of them agreed that the proposed method changed the classroom environment completely. It accelerated the pace of the lesson. A very exciting environment prevailed during the lessons where students were never seen waiting for the lessons to end, as usually happened in a traditional English classroom. They added that the method helped them become self-confident, encouraging talk even from the most introverted ones. Everyone had to come up

with individual thoughts making the environment a source of fun and excitement that added to the class dynamics.

Responding to the question regarding whether they felt motivated and encouraged to respond orally, all nine students agreed that they felt that the activities invited individual oral response. The questions helped lessen their phobia of English, resulting in better confidence and oral aptitude. They noted that the encouragement to try again helped them become independent and made them motivated and interested in the lesson much more than usual:

As I was not barred every moment by pointing at my minor grammatical mistakes in my expressions I felt motivated to express whatever I had in mind with confidence without suffering from any sort of phobia.

During the interview, all EG students revealed that they liked the methodology very much because of its learner-centredness. The initiation of talk and expression and the tolerant attitude towards mistakes greatly encouraged them to speak in English without hesitation. The following are some typical reactions:

The method the teachers are following in this class is very effective. The teacher does not lecture us. We do everything by ourselves to understand the text. The class is very much student-oriented.

It is helping in developing our sense of prediction, discussion, and imagination, logic, speaking skills and confidence. We are becoming less dependent on the teacher, ...

Regarding the differences that EG students might have noticed between the proposed methodology and the traditional one, all nine respondents agreed that the proposed methodology was student-oriented, whereas a traditional classroom was surely teacher-dominated. During the treatment classes, they were the centre of attention with the teacher keeping her talk to a minimum, whereas in the traditional system the teacher, being the centre, manipulated everything from the podium. In a traditional classroom, there was not much scope for developing one's spoken skills, whereas here in the treatment class students had many opportunities to discuss and express themselves. Some students added that the prediction activities helped them develop their thought processes and imagination. A traditional classroom seldom tried these sorts of activities. The students received many opportunities to speak without interruption and the correction of minor mistakes, which was not the scenario in a traditional classroom. Moreover, they were no longer dependent on the

teacher, an unusual phenomenon in a traditional classroom. One student added that in a traditional classroom the answers were expected to be totally text-based, preventing the students being creative, whereas during the treatment classes they were given almost no scope to memorise the answers. Interestingly, however, she added that she was now confident to answer any traditional type of questions correctly, without memorising an answer. The tendency to memorise everything had lessened, a picture contrary to the traditional one.

Traditional methodology promoted spoon-feeding by the teachers, without which the students felt completely lost. All students in EG agreed that learning in the new way had helped them develop their confidence, self-respect and respect towards others. Moreover, they observed that in the proposed methodology all their attempts were correct if logical, whereas, in the traditional method the answer provided by the teacher was the only correct and accepted one.

Data from the question concerning the effectiveness of prediction questions/activity types/clues and prompts given, and other language-based approaches, reveal that all respondents agreed that these did help them to understand the text better. They observed that the open-ended prediction activities incited them to dig out clues about the story, set in motion their thinking faculty, and prompted them into predicting future happenings in the storyline. The clues presented them with a clear picture of the literary text. To quote a student:

... pre-reading activities helped us guess what might be there in the text...it became interesting and easy to get into the text. We started predicting about what might happen next and started inferring meaning from the text, which helped me a lot to understand the text better.

Therefore, it became clear that fear of English lessened with the introduction of these types of activities and clues to the text. Making the right connection between thoughts and content also required creativity, which could only come with the exercise of interpreting a situation from various angles. This method, therefore, helped to interpret the situation delineated in the storyline from different perspectives, which gave a fresh appeal to the reader and encouraged them to understand the story thoroughly.



All nine students in EG were positive about having an increase in confidence to work on their own on a literary text, after their exposure to the proposed teaching approach. They reiterated that with the development in their level of confidence, they now felt free to make best use of their imaginative faculty. The linguistic knowledge had made them confident enough to express orally their understanding in English.

When asked to mention positive and negative aspects of the teaching approach used in the treatment class, all nine students commented that they did not have any negative observations. A typical response was:

I think I can think of only the positive effects that I had experienced from this methodology.

With regard to the positive aspects, they mentioned the student-oriented atmosphere that made them less dependent on the teacher and helped them out of their English examination phobia. They added that the introduction of prediction activities helped them develop their imaginative faculty, and added to the efficiency of putting logic and argumentation in establishing a point. Furthermore, through the proposed method they had the scope to explore and interpret the text in many different ways, initiating different answers, for use in real life situations. Moreover, as their expressions were regarded correct if logical, they felt motivated to try to express even more, which is important in developing speaking skills.

The students also added that they could learn, without being aware and frightened of grammar and structure all the time. They learnt from, and became respectful towards, each other's opinions, making the learning atmosphere a congenial and friendly one.

Equal attention given to everyone in order to minimise the gap between the better and the weaker students was another noticed positive aspect of the method, which resulted in an achievement of an improved standard throughout.

The students observed that a dynamic atmosphere prevailed throughout the lessons, which prevented them from being bored or uninterested in the lessons. They were no longer depending on the memorisation technique to get them prepared for examination, rather they became more confident in using the language as and when required. Finally, the class was lively, each time concluding with the feeling that it had ended too soon.

Regarding the activities introduced in the class, all students felt that these had helped them greatly from different dimensions. They mentioned that prediction activities, which included open-ended questions, matching, word-meaning, argumentation, discussion, and vocabulary games, enabled them to use their wit, widening their thoughts and opinions that could be connected to the world around. They found the activities interesting and exciting, helping them become confident in using the language orally. In the words of one student:

We had to use our imagination, information derived from the text and our schemata to answer the questions. Our imagination got developed, so did our word-power, and our overall language.

Finally, they commented that these activities were entirely appropriate ways in which to involve the whole class.

Regarding the skills they thought they had been using while trying to answer the prediction questions, a majority of students confirmed that during the activities in the class, they had to imagine, think, predict, argue and discuss, which involved the negotiation of meaning and routine skills. They also had to use logic to establish their points of view. In the words of a student:

To be able to answer prediction questions we had to make use of our knowledge of the world, our schemata. ...We had to think logically. Had to use our imaginative skills, thinking skill, argumentation skill, wit, discussion skills etc....

Students also observed that the treatment class helped them greatly in developing self-confidence both linguistically and psychologically. They felt confident enough to deal with any literary text from then on, and to be able to use the language components learnt from the text in practical life during oral communication. All nine students were of the opinion that literature had a very positive and direct impact on their development of language skills, especially speaking.

Another question attempted to elicit the students' thoughts concerning the most important factors which increase/decrease motivation for learning literature and becoming confident in using the language, orally. A few thought that their opinions needed to be given proper attention in class in order for them to be motivated. They should also be given adequate time to think in different dimensions in order to develop their imaginative faculty, prediction

power, word-power, discussion skills, etc., which were necessary in developing their speaking skills. In this regard, a student-oriented classroom was an absolute necessity. They noted that mistakes being handled in a polite way saved learners from getting embarrassed and prevented them from complete withdrawal. Finally, they observed that it was necessary to practise in English with each other during English classes, thus making speaking easier.

When students in EG were asked how they would teach the same course if they were the teacher, it was very pleasing and encouraging to note that they became very enthusiastic and stated that they would try to follow the exact methodology that had been tried with them during the treatment classes. To quote one of them:

If I were the teacher, I would teach making the lesson fun. I would discuss the matter with them. ... I would never insult them if their answers were incorrect. Sometimes would ask them to wear *sari* whereas I would not; would ask them to play the teacher, and make the class a student-oriented one.

### ***5.7.2 Post-treatment Interview with the EG Teacher***

During the post-treatment interview, the EG teacher stated that she enjoyed the experience and was pleased to discover that the students were much more involved, excited and focused about the story and the lessons than usual, a completely new phenomenon in her teaching career. When asked whether the treatment lessons were any different from other lessons, she said:

The overall approach and the activities used in the classroom were completely different from the traditional methodology that we usually use in the class. The students received clear instructions, at the beginning of the class about the undertaken activities. For example, they were to take part in prediction activities; any answer they come up with would be correct if supported by logic. They will not be allowed to repeat answers, however, if a student still wanted to stick to her point, she then had to establish that supported by another logic.... They should follow a queue in answering questions, may use dictionary, and should be ready with 4/5 options for each question. ...We usually do not follow any of these in a traditional classroom. ... Moreover, the class was very student-oriented, opposite to current traditional practice.

She elaborated on her observation further, saying:

If I had to teach 'The Luncheon', following traditional method, I would then be the central figure in the class. I would read out and translate the whole story to them, in Bengali...with synonyms of difficult words. I would also prepare answers to questions and ask students to memorise those for examination and would give them some written homework. Nothing such

happened during the new approach. I was no longer the centre of the class, rather acted as a guide only....

Her observation here confirms the move made from a teacher-centred setting to a more student-centred one. She also added that the proposed approach was very effective, in terms of developing students' self-confidence thus leading to improved speaking ability. Group work activity helped them understand each other better, enabling them to communicate and cooperate better with their family, friends, and others in society.

The EG teacher also observed that through this method students had participated in the class with motivation, vigour and enthusiasm. In her words:

Each student attempted to answer better than the other does.... After being exposed to the treatment class for a few days, a great increase in their ability to predict and put their point logically became noticeable. ... Since their mistakes were ignored, they tried out answer with confidence. They also knew that as a teacher I am not going to provide the answer on their behalf. Therefore, they really tried to answer after giving proper thought on issues.

When asked whether the method had positive effect on learning she replied 'yes' and added:

The method gave the students chance to think and answer by themselves which happens rarely in a traditional classroom. ... At the same time paying proper attention and weight to each of their opinion added to the fun of the lesson, because in a traditional classroom they were not expected to initiate different answers. We as teachers do not allow them to be innovative. For example, there was a question in section 6: 'How is the writer feeling at this point?' to which some of the girls have replied for example, 'he felt like killing her'. In any traditional classroom this sort of answer was unexpected and not allowed. The positive side of the treatment class was that students were allowed to express their thoughts freely. ... Moreover, they were at ease, knowing that, unless it was necessary, their minor mistakes would be ignored and not corrected every moment. This helped to overcome shyness. ...

When she was asked to comment on whether the proposed approach was systematic and appropriate to her objectives and to students' needs, she said that from the very beginning of the class both students and teacher knew exactly what they were going to do during the lessons. The questions, clues, prompts were all methodically arranged within each section, which helped students to think systematically, and helped them greatly to understand the story better. She added:

The teaching process was very systematic. Both my objectives and the students' needs were achieved. For example, if I asked them about the dishes that the lady guest had, or about her teeth, or about the most interesting feature of hers, I was sure that without depending on memorised answer, they would still be able to answer each of the questions without

hesitation. They would not face any problem in answering text-based questions meant for examinations. The story was divided into nine sections, each section having questions set on it, with clues that helped the students to think and answer after proper consideration. This helped them to develop their thought process... if they keep studying following this method, they will gradually ... be able to appreciate good writings and also be critical of them.

She added that students felt very motivated, and encouraged to make predictions on different issues. She regarded the teaching approach as highly beneficial for her students and said:

If the method was followed regularly, the students would be motivated to read in order to understand it. They would be able to think and compare the story from different angles, initiating better understanding of human relationships and situational reactions which would be useful in real circumstances. ...The whole process was practical in the sense that they were to integrate their reading with the events and situations in life around them. Now while considering traditional examination, it can be said that the new method has enabled them to discuss and think about an issue in detail, which will again help them to answer any question set in line with the traditional method. ...

The EG teacher also noted that, in establishing their answers through logic, students had to predict, argue and discuss with others, which helped them to have an overall language improvement, especially in speaking. She added:

...Any text dealt in following the new method is sure to help improve learners speaking skills to a great extent. ... Not only that, they will learn about the specific style and beauty of the language in that particular literary text.

Regarding group and pair work during the lessons, the teacher observed that the students helped each other by working in groups or in pairs, ensuring a healthy learning atmosphere. It was noticeable that the ones who were able to understand things more quickly helped the less quick ones by trying to explain the point for them. They discussed and interpreted the text by themselves, indicating their ability to work in groups. The teacher also noted that the main motivating issue in reading literature could be the use of proper methodology in the class. A teacher-oriented method did not incite interest among students, because she was the centre of attention, imposing her ideas and understanding on students without allowing them to be independent in thought and expression. Dealing with literature with a capital 'L' made lessons even more difficult, as students had to remember information about the writer and the story from the writer's, and then from the teacher's, point of view. Therefore, in motivating students to read literature, the teacher needed to change her technique of teaching and had to select appropriate subject matter suiting the age and taste of students. She added:

... I don't think that it was always necessary to understand each word unless it was absolutely required in understanding the text in question. The more the student reads, the more developed her language would become.

The EG teacher also observed that after experiencing the proposed teaching approach, and observing the outcome of it, she was convinced that in EFL classes, language and literature should be integrated. She re-confirmed the positive points of having literature and its appropriate use in developing ones' speaking ability and skills. To quote her:

Great literature means great language. Each writer is unique in his or her style, presentation and use of language. If speaking English is taught through literature I am sure that the students will be able to learn about the beauty of the language...at the same time will learn sentence structure and grammatical forms comparatively easily...the class wouldn't turn out to be boring as the one on grammar.

She also acknowledged that she would consider adopting the teaching approach proposed by the researcher in her own language/literature classes. She was strongly enthusiastic in her reactions:

I can very strongly say that the proposed approach that is teaching literature for developing speaking skills through prediction activities is a very effective method of teaching. The students had to talk a lot during the lesson, which made them self-confident. They had developed their skill of argumentation; thought process and learnt to talk intelligently. They also had learnt how to learn from each other. If this method is followed in the class, I am sure that the students will improve in their speaking skills to a great extent.

Of course, I will certainly use this approach in my class from next year although there is not much literature in the syllabus. However, I will attempt to teach whatever there is, through simple prediction exercises. I know that gradually my students will be able to speak better, so will I, by practising the language with them. ...The new approach is really helpful and effective for both students and teachers.

The teacher commented that if there was a will there was a way to bring some change to the current situation. To quote her:

If we wanted to change the situation we have to change, ourselves first...change our teaching strategy and technique. There is the need for teacher training. ... School library needs to be resourceful, and the teachers need to encourage the students to read books of famous writers outside syllabus. We don't really do things that we should ... the fact is if we want we can actually introduce interesting activities in the class to enhance the students speaking ability.

Finally, the EG teacher kindly concluded that she was pleased to take part in the study, and was inspired by the whole experience. She added that she now had a better understanding of the need to facilitate students' engagement with literature in language teaching, through

systematic teaching approaches, in order to prepare them for the future. By providing solutions to the existing problems, it was possible to bring about a positive change in the weakest area - that is their speaking ability in English.

### *5.7.3 Summary of EG Students' and EG Teacher's Views*

The results from the data gathered from the EG students' and teacher's responses to the proposed teaching methodology through post-treatment interviews show that the majority of students in EG enjoyed the whole experience immensely. They stated that the proposed way of teaching affected their involvement in the class in a positive way and enabled them to understand literary texts better. They also noted that the teaching process in their classes made a significant impact on their personal approach to the literary text, and added that they improved in speaking using the prediction activities undertaken during the study of the text. The students reiterated that they were able to understand the text from different angles, making them self-confident about the text and the language itself. A few students, however, might not have felt very relaxed in a student-centred atmosphere initially, because of their habit of being spoon-fed. However, data also reflect the feelings of EG students who thought that the lessons came to an end too quickly, and therefore, expressed their interest in carrying the lessons further, showing the level of motivation that the treatment lessons inculcated.

The EG teacher said that she enjoyed witnessing the approach to a literary text from a different teaching perspective, one which could have a massive positive impact on learning, initiating a huge step towards more student-centred classes in the EFL context in Bangladesh. She added that the approach was very effective in developing students' language skills, especially their speaking skills. In brief, the positive feedback from the students and the teacher in EG, was very encouraging. This prompts the necessity for further research in the area. However, the question of how to continue inspiring students who were used to being spoon-fed, and who depended on a more teacher-oriented teaching remained an important one. It would seem that these students needed extra care and support in order to enjoy and make use of the words of a foreign language.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the data gathered via tape recordings, pre- and post-treatment interviews, pre- and post-treatment questionnaires, and observation sheets was analysed and the results were presented together with their interpretation.

First there was a discussion in order to justify the relevance of utilising qualitative and quantitative data analysis methodologies for the present study. Then there was a presentation of the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data. The chapter concluded with the presentation and discussions of the views of the students and the teachers on the teaching which they had experienced. The results from the data strongly indicated that the proposed teaching method and activity types would be helpful for developing language learners' speaking capacity by the use of literary texts in a more student-centred atmosphere.



## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

#### 6.0 Introduction

The stimulus for the present study derived from the view that the teaching of English language could be accomplished through the use of literary pieces, especially in order to help learners develop their skills of interpretation and speaking. As has already been identified, the traditional approach currently used in English classes suffers from certain limitations, mainly due to problems which are rooted in the mismatch of pedagogical approaches with the teaching of literary texts. As a common phenomenon, in most literature teaching contexts in Bangladesh, 'meaning is established without method' (Carter, 1982:4), resulting in transmission-centred teaching where students are merely the passive recipients of knowledge, which does not augur well for the self-exploration of meaning necessary for comprehension (Chapter One).

In order to develop the capacity for Bangladeshi students to appreciate literary texts without simply telling them what to see and memorise, teaching should move away from teacher-centredness towards student-centredness. Moreover, teaching activities should aim at actively involving students with the text, so that their perceptions of the text can develop through active interaction and exploration of it.

Having used an integrated approach (as exemplified in Chapter Three) as a framework, the present study serves to illustrate the impact of the proposed method of literature teaching on Bangladeshi secondary school students. The study groups involved in the research consisted of two comparable groups, an experimental group and a control group, and were equal in terms of number of subjects in each group. Subjects bearing even roll numbers formed CG, whereas the ones with odd roll numbers formed EG, in order to ensure that students were from all categories. Only the EG students were exposed to the proposed teaching approach. The CG students on the other hand, continued with the teaching process to which they were accustomed.

All participants in both CG and EG were given a pre-treatment questionnaire, in order to gather information about their educational background and, more importantly, information about their attitudes towards literature, literature classes and the teaching methodologies employed in their classes. Some participants from both groups were also interviewed individually. This was in order to discover their motivation and contribution in class, and to find out whether they felt confident whenever they were required to interpret textual meanings and to be innovative in doing so, without having to rely on the notes dictated by their teachers.

In order to obtain the students' responses to teaching methodologies employed in CG and EG classes, a post-treatment questionnaire was administered to both groups and the data gathered in EG were compared and contrasted with those from CG. The EG students and EG teacher were also interviewed after they had experienced the proposed methodology, in order to gather information on their attitudes towards the proposed methodology.

Qualitative and quantitative investigations of the data gathered through interviews, questionnaires, observation sheets and notes revealed significant differences in the nature of students' responses to the teaching approaches they received in CG and EG. In the light of these findings, the point of argument is that there was a significant relationship between the teaching methodologies employed in both classes, and levels of motivation, involvement and appreciation of the literary text under study. The findings suggested that application of the teaching approach proposed by the study significantly increased levels of students' motivation and involvement, leading to self-confidence and improved speaking ability, and that it changed the classroom dynamics in a positive way (Chapter Five).

This chapter presents and discusses a brief overview of the findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses stated earlier. It also discusses the strengths and limitations of the study and implications of the findings. Moreover, the methodological implications of the study for further research are also discussed in this chapter.

### **6.1 Summary and Discussion of the Findings**

In this section the results of the present study are summarised and discussed in light of the research questions (1.5.1) and hypotheses (2.10). For the sake of clarity, the research

questions of the study are highlighted as sub-headings. First, in order to reveal how the teachers taught literary texts in their classes, the following is a summary of both the teachers' teaching styles.

### ***6.1.1 CG and EG Teachers' Teaching***

The researcher used the same short story taught, however, by two different teachers following two different methods, in order to observe any development in learners' speaking skills in both CG and EG, the two comparable study groups.

Analysis of the classroom observation revealed, as expected, that originally both teachers tended to deploy the characteristics of teacher-centred practice. In CG, the teacher's teaching consisted primarily of reading aloud the text line-by-line, rephrasing and explaining the text by herself, thus making the class entirely teacher-oriented. She translated words and sentences into Bengali to make the text easily understood by the learners. There were occasions when students read aloud and answered simple questions based on the text; nevertheless, it was predominantly a teacher-dominated classroom.

Although, the EG teacher was tempted to revert to the traditional style of teaching, she soon started coping with the proposed method, where she became the facilitator and the mentor. As she started to follow the proposed methodology in teaching, the atmosphere became completely student-centred. Students were very responsive to questions, and made use of their schemata, prediction power, imagination and logic while answering those.

In CG class, the traditional way of teaching made the learners passive attendants in the teaching process, whereas in EG class, the students were participating with eloquence and enjoyment. No activity was undertaken in CG to promote learners' imagination and thought processes which might trigger better speaking ability, whereas in EG, the activities were designed to promote improved speaking output.

### ***6.1.2 Addressing the Research Questions of the Study***

This section of the study presents the summary and discussion of the results under the sub-headings of research questions.

### ***Primary Research Questions:***

***Research Question 1: What are the experiences of Bangladeshi students' with respect to English literature and their opinions on teaching strategies for literature used by their teachers?***

In order to gather information regarding the students' attitudes towards literature classes and literature teaching methodologies utilised in their classes, all participants, in both CG and EG, were given a pre-treatment questionnaire consisting of open ended and multiple choice questions. Some students also had to take part in a pre-treatment interview. Results confirmed that there was very little scope for literature in the syllabus and that the majority from both groups experienced traditional ways of literature teaching with the teacher analysing and explaining the text for them. They were to listen to the lecture, take notes and memorise answers provided by others, in order to pass the compulsory examination paper. The same scenario prevailed in language classes where the students acted as passive recipients of knowledge.

The majority in both groups observed that literature was neglected in the class because they did not have to answer any questions on the literary texts in the examination paper. In the light of the students' responses, it can be said that the classes were highly teacher-centred and that students were usually tested on either memorisation of what the teacher or the critics said about a given literary work, or on historical questions regarding the writer and his works. They also stated that the way in which teachers handled literature classes lacked a proper and systematic methodology and that the classes were boring. The results also revealed that the practice to encourage students to attempt their own analysis of the text and to talk about it was a rare phenomenon.

***Research Question 2: What are the teachers' objectives, teaching strategies and methodologies in literature teaching in Bangladeshi EFL classes?***

The data on teachers' personal views on literature teaching in general and the way they handled their classes were gathered through a pre-treatment interview and questionnaire. As can be seen in the transcribed extracts and the tables presented in Chapter Five of the present study, the teachers seemed quite unsettled with regard to a sound and systematic literature

teaching approach. All of them noted that they were still following the grammar-translation methodology in their classes and that in English lessons they translated the text into Bengali, in order to make it easier for the students. In Bengali medium schools, it was taken for granted that English would be taught in the students' mother tongue.

Data also reflected that all the teachers agreed that, while teaching literature, they asked questions about characters, plot and setting, and explained the important points from their point of view. English literature teaching in Bangladesh emphasised the historical aspects of the text and the author, delineating it as literature with a capital 'L'. According to one teacher, the traditional methodology helped the students understand the text easily. She added that adopting a new method in the class would become something experimental and non-applicable due to syllabus and time constraints and also due to the facts that the right atmosphere, and an open mentality to adopt something new, were not always readily available. Two of the teachers said that they involved students in group discussion from time to time, but not on a regular basis. However, all of them asked students to write essays, and only two mentioned that they asked students to give presentations. None mentioned introducing any activity that could initiate discussion leading to speaking. All teachers agreed that they taught to prepare students for the syllabus-based examination. They all followed the lecture method in a teacher-centred classroom environment.

One teacher observed that she was satisfied with this method because, when she delivered a lecture and found students attentive, she felt quite successful in managing the class. However, she made it clear that, although she went home with satisfaction, she could not be sure about the students' real achievement in terms of learning. She felt that it would be better for students to become independent in their thoughts and expressions, without the imposition of the teachers' opinion/point of view. All the teachers, however, felt the importance of introducing literary texts into the syllabus.

The teachers' responses also confirmed that the preferences of teachers regarding the content of the syllabus of English were highly traditional and canon-based. Therefore, the analysis confirmed that English literature teaching ended up having teacher-centred classes, with students being at the receiving end of this teacher-centred process. However, it should be noted that it was very encouraging to observe that most teachers were keen on being equipped with better teaching methodologies which might help their students to approach a

literary text from a different perspective and enable them to have more student-centred classes.

***Research Question 3: What are the students' and teachers' opinions about speaking skills in English and the standard of spoken English, in general?***

In response to this question, all the students felt that the standard of spoken English in Bangladesh was very poor. This was a result, mainly due to lack of practice, a limited teaching methodology and a faulty examination system. The absence of assessing speaking in examinations is one of the major reasons why speaking remains the most neglected area of the other language skills. Both teachers and students mentioned the importance of testing speaking skills in order to promote development in this particular area. It was counter productive to have the objectives clearly stated in the preface of the textbook, unless equal attention was paid in examining four skills in the final examination, in order to ensure maximum development in the language. Therefore, it was important to implement what was included and suggested in the textbook, despite large class sizes and time constraints. The teachers shared the same opinion as the students regarding this issue. All of them put emphasis on the examination related skills – reading and writing to be precise.

***Research Question 4: Do the learners need/want to speak in English? What do they identify as the plus points /limitations that help develop/impede their achievement in speaking?***

All the students strongly felt that in today's competitive world, it was necessary to be able to speak in English due to its status as an international language, and to have access to better opportunities both at home and abroad.

They believed that existing materials could help more in developing speaking skills by following a proper methodology. English being a compulsory subject in the curriculum from primary level was another plus point. English programmes on the broadcasting media were also good resources because they enhanced imagination, thought processes, and prediction power, leading to improved speaking through discussion. Further available resources were the language centres around the city.

As for the limitations on achieving speaking skills, students identified the faulty methodology that promoted rote learning without encouraging them to be imaginative and innovative, and which did not motivate them to speak in English, resulting in a lack of confidence in using the language. There was no test of speaking skills in examinations and, therefore, the teachers did not place emphasis on developing this particular skill, although everyone knew that it was a major requirement in practical life. The use of Bengali during English lessons made the situation worse, resulting in even weaker performances in the target language. The attitude of the teachers regarding making mistakes while speaking in English was another demotivating factor. Negative attitudes towards English conversation were an added hindrance in trying out speaking with friends and family members, resulting in anxiety about using the language in the community. Again, paying extra money to a coaching centre was not readily affordable by everyone, thus making the situation even more difficult for those who wanted to develop in this particular skill.

All the teachers agreed that students were keen to speak in English in order to be able to meet the demands of the competitive world. Regarding positive points that helped develop students' achievement in speaking skills, the teachers identified that the existing materials were helpful resources. Only use of a proper methodology would ensure the development of skills. Students were already good in English grammar and vocabulary and most importantly, they were interested to speak in English, which was an important motivating factor in learning.

They identified non-practice of the language in daily life and availability of easy and short-cut language certificates from some institutions (not requiring hard work), as reasons behind poor performance of the students. Negative attitudes towards the use of the language, terming it as 'showing off', or a 'snobbish' attitude on the part of the user also initiated discouragement of its use in public and personal life.

A few more limitations that may slow down progress were identified to be the use of Bengali during English lessons, lack of motivation and encouragement; and engaging untrained, unskilled teachers who basically had no training in teaching language skills, let alone speaking skills. Finally, the absence of any test of speaking in the examination system made the students think that writing correct English was equivalent to achieving competency in the language.

***Research Question 5: What are the views of the students and teachers regarding making a connection between ‘literature’ and ‘speaking skills’?***

From the data gathered from the questionnaire and interviews, it was clear that the majority of students believed that through discussion of literary texts they could develop their thinking skills, increase knowledge about life in general and develop discussion skills leading to more confidence, more thinking and more speaking. They also observed that through literature they were able to learn language components, such as grammar, structure, vocabulary and real language in use, in an enjoyable and better way, without becoming bored.

Views regarding making a connection between ‘literature’ and ‘speaking skills’ were diverse on the teachers’ side. One teacher thought that there was no direct connection between literature and spoken language or skills, as the language of literature was more formal and literary, whereas spoken language was more informal. Another teacher’s comment was quite opposite to that. She commented that literature would be very useful in teaching spoken English skills, especially with the integration of contemporary literature. Another teacher observed that literature and speaking skills were not directly interdependent, though she thought that literature was a rich resource of language helping develop language skills. The other teacher observed that having achieved overall language development through literature the student would grow in self-confidence, leading to an encouragement to speak with confidence.

***Research Question 6: How do students respond to the approach proposed by the study? What is the reaction of the experimental group teacher in this regard?***

In order to get the students’ responses to the teaching approaches they had experienced, a short post-treatment questionnaire was administered in both EG and CG. It revealed the students’ responses and attitudes towards the lessons and the teaching approaches. The data gathered on EG were compared and contrasted with those on CG. After being exposed to the proposed teaching approach, EG students and their teacher were also asked to respond to a post-treatment interview.

The analysis of the data gathered in EG on the proposed teaching methodology was very positive. The EG students rated the methodology very highly and data revealed that 100% of



them found the teaching process to be systematic and well organised, bringing in something new to the classroom, whereas, in CG, 100% of the students found the process to be normal and no different from other lessons. The CG teacher followed the traditional grammar-translation methodology and played a pivotal role as a figure talking from the podium. It was a teacher-centred, and lecture-oriented classroom, where the students acted as passive recipients of knowledge delivered by the teacher.

The post-treatment questionnaire asked students for their opinions regarding the use of the prediction activities in the class. Data revealed that 100% of students in EG thought that the activities were interesting and motivating, capable of engaging them while initiating talk or verbal communication. They enjoyed them, used their imagination and thinking skills, resulting in improved learning. Data from CG students showed that the majority of 90% thought that the activities used were not that interesting or motivating.

When the responses of students in CG were compared with those of EG, it became evident that students in EG found that the proposed teaching methodology offered more varied activities than traditional ways of literature teaching. This confirmed that the proposed approach contained the necessary elements for more student-centred classes.

The post-treatment questionnaire asked students in both groups to evaluate the delivery of the materials and the teaching approach employed in the class. The results revealed that teaching materials and the approach utilised in the class made a very remarkable impact on EG students. Data revealed that only 5% in EG thought that the delivery of the materials and teaching approach employed was *very detailed*. However, the process was quite detailed according to 100% of the CG students. The finding in EG becomes remarkable when compared with the total percentage of CG students' responses. In CG, the teacher, as the main resource of data, knowledge and interpretation, kept on delivering lectures where students were mainly the passive recipients of the messages.

None in EG thought that the teacher talked all the time and that they did not have any chance to express themselves, showing that they were already experiencing a classroom without much teacher intervention. However, data from CG confirmed that 100% of them were busy listening to the teacher without having much scope to interact with each other. The results

showed that the proposed teaching approach might be a step towards literature classes where teachers were no longer merely information givers, but enablers.

Data also revealed that 100% students in EG found the lessons and activities to be *creative, effective* and *motivating*. However, CG students found the activities and methodology used in their class to be as usual, and not demanding creativity, as both the teacher and the students were busy following the content of the text in order to be able to answer text-based questions. They followed the traditional methodology of listening to the teacher and taking notes.

Interestingly, all forty students (100%) in CG and EG commented that the chosen text was interesting, attention-grabbing and enjoyable and could be studied with enthusiasm. However, data gathered on teaching methodology and approach confirmed that the teaching approach employed in the class surely affects students' opinions of the texts under study.

Data also showed that 90% students in EG found the approach and the activities to be appropriate and were able to cater for their need to express themselves because they evoked curiosity and interest, helping them improve their learning. In CG, only 10% found the delivery of the teaching materials and methods to be appropriate to their needs. The result from EG when compared with CG, can be considered remarkable, again.

Another important result for the present study was to see that 95% students in EG indicated that it was very encouraging for them to be able to contribute to the class discussion, indicating that the activities and delivery of the materials were interesting enough to encourage them to take part in a two-way communication. However, there was no response to this statement from CG, which suggested that there was not much scope for discussion on their part.

No response to the statement '*I kept on taking notes and did not focus on anything else*' from EG indicated that, while following the proposed method, they were rather busy undertaking activities or taking part in discussions which demanded a lot of imagination, thought and use of logic and argument. However, 100% students in CG suggested that, in the classroom, they were busy listening to the lecture and note taking remained a focal point for them. The result in EG was highly complimentary, and encouraging, suggesting that, through the proposed approach, teachers of EFL literature could ensure more student-centred classes.

As for raising language awareness and making students more sensitive to linguistic elements in the text, students' responses revealed that the study had made an impact on EG students and that they liked approaching literary texts from this perspective. Data showed that 100% students in EG felt that, through the proposed approach, they had learnt how to support their intuitions through textual evidence. The given tasks demanded the use of thinking skills, imagination and intuition. Data also confirmed that they found the activities helped support their intuition through the textual evidence, which were in the form of quotes and statements from the text. Thus, they were able to relate the text to their prediction and thoughts combined with logic behind the intuitions that they made. Obviously, such an approach was not the common practice in CG, and there was no response from them regarding this issue.

Data also showed that 100% students in EG agreed that, through the proposed methodology applied, they were able to use clues from the text, based on prediction and imagination, resulting in improved and fluent expression. On the other hand, there was no response to this statement from CG as there was not much scope for using imaginative faculties during their lessons.

The great majority, 95% students in EG agreed that they enjoyed approaching literature from a different perspective, whereas, there was no response from CG regarding this issue. Teaching literature with a capital 'L' made students nervous and uncomfortable, to some extent, about the whole learning process. Moreover, the traditional way of teaching involved a teacher-centred classroom, and the memorisation of answers for examination. The proposed approach, in a student-oriented classroom, worked better as the students began to approach literature with a small 'l' where they were able to apply their own understanding of the text. They were free to discuss and express their thoughts and appreciation of the text. The teacher presented herself as a facilitator rather than a dictator during the lessons.

Data also revealed that 100% students in EG agreed that they had enough opportunity to express themselves during the lessons. However, there was no response to this statement from CG, as they did not have much chance to express their point of views. This result also indicated a great difference in students' responses between CG and EG.

In EG, again, 100% students commented that they did not have to worry about whether the answers they suggested were correct or not, rather they were asked to continue with their

effort, resulting in better self-confidence and performance. The CG did not have to interact much and, hence, there was no response from them to this statement.

100% of the students in EG agreed that they did not have to worry about the grammatical patterns all the timewhile responding to an activity. Less emphasis on correct grammar added extra motivation to the overall learning process, as worrying about correct grammar and structure, resulted in fear of the language leading to boredom. The students, being free of these taboos, were enthusiastic and enjoyed taking part in the oral activities. There was no response on this statement from CG, as there was little interaction during their lessons, hence, no question of being grammatically correct or otherwise.

In EG, 95% students stated that the teaching process and activities helped them to develop their thinking skills, paving the way to improved oral expression. This result also indicated a big difference in students' responses in CG and EG, because there was no response from CG on this particular issue. The activities used in EG, were able to stimulate thought processes that initiated diverse answers to a single question, supported by logic, argument and the proper use of vocabulary.

The reactions towards the proposed approach were that all EG students liked and enjoyed the classes very much, basically because of its learner-centredness, initiation of talk and the tolerant attitude towards mistakes which greatly encouraged them to express themselves in English without hesitation. They felt encouraged to participate equally, resulting in a minimum standard achieved by all, especially in terms of speaking skills. They confirmed that the proposed method completely changed the classroom environment in a positive way. They added that the method helped them become self-confident and encouraged talk even from the most introverted ones. Everyone had to add their individual thoughts making the class environment a source of fun and excitement that added to the class dynamics.

After using the proposed teaching approach the EG teacher stated that she enjoyed the experience which was an entirely new one for her. She was also pleased to discover that the students were much more involved and focused in the lessons when they were exposed to the proposed way of teaching. She added that they were more excited and eager to take part in the lessons and to speak about issues raised, and that they had shown great interest in the text.

The EG teacher reiterated that the method gave her students a chance to think and answer by themselves, which rarely happened in a traditional classroom.

Moreover, the decision not to correct minor mistakes, unless it was necessary to do so, left the students feeling at ease and encouraged them to express themselves freely. The EG teacher added that if the method was followed, then the students would be expected to read more books and learn the language directly from literary texts and that would help them greatly in developing their speaking skills. She commented that the proposed approach was systematic and was appropriate to her objectives and to students' needs and that the prediction activities, clues, prompts, and other language-based approaches helped students to understand the story better. The whole process was practical in the sense that students were to integrate their reading with events and situations in life around them. The proposed method enabled them to discuss and think about an issue in detail, which helped them to answer any question set in the traditional method. Finally, the EG teacher observed that after experiencing the proposed teaching approach, and observing the outcome of it, she was convinced that an integration of language and literature in EFL classes would help learners achieve an overall language development.

***Research Question 7: How does the proposed teaching approach affect classroom dynamics?***

The use of structured observation sheets aimed to see the impact of the proposed approach on classroom dynamics with regard to the relation between the proposed approach and the levels of students' motivation, involvement and appreciation of the literary text under study. Observation Sheet 1 was to measure the levels of learners' motivation triggered by the teaching approach and materials used in their groups.

As can be seen from the above table, in average, all 20 learners in EG were on-task and responded to the activities 233 times out of 240 scans. In CG, in average, 7 learners were on-task and responded 12.71 times out of 240 scans. Data also reveal that EG learners were on-task 97.08% of the time when they were exposed to the proposed teaching materials, activities and methodology, and learners in CG were on-task 5.29% of the time where they underwent the usual. This result indicates that the proposed teaching approach largely increased learner on-task behaviour. Once again, it was encouraging to note that the increase

in learners' on-task behaviour in EG was consistent, suggesting that it was not a result of students' daily mood, or other factors (e.g. enjoying a particular text, or being familiar with the story, etc.) at the time of the observation.

Observation Sheet 2 aimed to assess the overall class motivation generated by the teaching activities and teaching approach in use. The aim was to measure, compare and contrast the levels of students' motivation, interest, enthusiasm, activity, persistence with the teaching process, concentration and enjoyment during the actual teaching in EG and CG.

Results on Observation Sheet 2 indicated that overall class motivation and involvement of the learners increased when they were exposed to the teaching materials and the teaching approach proposed by the present study. The total percentage of overall motivation and involvement counted in EG was 99.43%, equivalent to the score 4.97, little less than 5 (<5), where 5 indicates the highest score. In CG, the total percentage of overall motivation and involvement was 33.14%, equivalent to the score 1.66, less than 2 (<2), where 1 indicates the lowest score on the semantic differential scale of adjectives expressing motivation.

From the data gathered through students' self-evaluation post-treatment questionnaires and scheduled observation sheets in both CG and EG, it can be said that there was a significant relation between the teaching methodologies employed in both classes, and levels of students' motivation, involvement, response to, and appreciation of, the literary text under study. Even at first sight, it became apparent that students appreciated the teaching approach and activities in EG better than those in CG. The findings also suggested that application of the teaching approach proposed by the study significantly increased levels of students' motivation and involvement, and changed classroom dynamics in a positive way.

The use of Observation Sheet 1 also aimed at finding the frequency of English use during the lessons in order to calculate and quantify the EG learners performance in English in order to allow the study to draw a conclusion about improved performance in English.

The data based on the frequency of English use during the lessons suggested that the EG students had a sharp development on their performance in English speaking compared to their performance in Bengali which was 83.80:13.94. It was encouraging to note that the increase in learners' performance in English was consistent, suggesting that it was not a

result of students' daily mood, or other factors (e.g. enjoying a particular text, or being familiar with the story, etc.) at the time of the observation.

***Secondary Research Questions:***

***Research Question A: How about dealing with any 'literature', not only with those prescribed (before and after the treatment classes)?***

The pre-treatment questionnaires and interviews revealed that the students and the teachers, in both CG and EG, mentioned that literature was usually dealt as with a capital 'L', placing emphasis mainly on information about the writer, his works or historical aspects. They commented that this approach to literature teaching made the whole learning process less interesting.

After the classes, data from CG students confirmed that they were still busy listening to the teacher and taking notes based on her lecture without having much scope for interaction between them. They were subjected to the traditional methodology employed by the teacher and therefore were not exposed to anything which they could consider a new perspective on literature. However, data from EG revealed that 100% of the students agreed that after the treatment class they felt encouraged to try books outside classroom. The proposed methodology employed guided them to approach literature with a small 'l', which encouraged them to read further, resulting in more language input and output.

The teachers confirmed that usually they followed a lecture method where the students were expected to listen and take notes based on lectures. After the treatment class, the EG teacher noted that she was inspired by the whole experience and re-confirmed that from now on she would be willing to implement the proposed approach in her class and make use of materials which she finds suitable for her students, in addition to the prescribed ones.

***Research Question B: What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of the students for learning literature and becoming confident in using the language orally?***

Data from the pre-treatment questionnaires and interviews with students and teachers revealed that the students were keen to read outside books and were very interested in literary

texts. They knew many vocabulary and grammar rules, and were keen to learn and practice in English. They were also interested to learn English from literary texts and make use of the language found there.

A proper methodology in dealing with literature, a student-oriented classroom, a sense of learner-autonomy and respect towards their opinions and understanding, were the motivational factors in making literature interesting to the students. Regarding speaking skills, the learners needed to practise in English, inside and outside the classroom, with the teacher being friendly, supportive and tolerant at their mistakes. Finally, examinations should assess speaking skills to make the learners motivated to learn and use the skills when appropriate. The use of the proposed methodology and the element of encouragement were helpful in increasing their motivation in literature and to become confident in using the language orally.

The use of Bengali during English lessons, lack of motivation and encouragement, untrained, unskilled teachers, lack of opportunity and places to use English, and absence of speaking assessment in the examination system were some of the important factors identified by both students and teachers that might decrease motivation in literature and level of confidence in using English orally.

***Research Question C: What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of the teachers in teaching literature?***

The data gathered from the teachers' pre-treatment questionnaire and interview showed that a weak foundation in English from elementary classes, a teacher-oriented classroom and an examination-oriented mentality on both students' and teachers' parts, were among the main factors in decreasing motivation of the teachers in teaching literature. In the current examination system, the students did not have to attempt any question on the literary texts that were included in the syllabus. This added to the demotivational aspect of teaching literature, within a syllabus- and time-bound situation.

However, one teacher thought that gradual introduction of literature using a student-centred methodology and a student-oriented classroom might help overcome the problems in the classroom. Teachers, in general, liked literature and wanted to promote the introduction of



different texts in the classroom in order to make English lessons interesting and vibrant and help ensure an improved learning output.

***Research Question D: What are the factors that could change the existing negative atmosphere from both students' and teachers' perspectives?***

Regarding the factors that could change the existing negative atmosphere, both teachers and students observed that a friendly and free environment was necessary for effective teaching and learning. Adequate facilities, such as trained teachers with limited numbers of students, use of effective materials and methods, and allocation of adequate time, would definitely bring positive change in the classroom. Students should be encouraged to discuss and argue matters freely in order to develop their speaking ability. A change in teacher attitude regarding making mistakes was also necessary to change the current atmosphere. Finally, there was the need to teach, practise and assess speaking skills in public examinations. Both students and teachers confirmed that they would prefer to have more literature in English lessons. All of them agreed that it was likely that a student-oriented classroom would better ensure maximum positive outcome in terms of learning and using the language rather than a teacher-oriented one.

### ***6.1.3 Significance of the Results***

The data for the present study were gathered through pre- and post-treatment questionnaires, audio-recorded pre- and post-treatment interviews and observation sheets in both groups. The qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data and the results indicated that there was a significant relationship between the teaching methodologies employed and levels of students' motivation, involvement and appreciation of the literary text under study. It was also observed that a shift towards learner-centredness from a teacher-centred classroom atmosphere and an introduction of literary texts in the language classroom, with changes in methodology, contributed to motivation, leading to improved performance in English with regard to development of learners' speaking skills.

The findings, therefore, suggested that it was necessary to have a student-centred methodology to ensure improved teaching and learning output, also that language-based approaches to literature could help in establishing the fact that any literary text in English,

(e.g. short story,) when handled properly was capable of creating/evoking interest, curiosity, thought and motivation in the learners. This new atmosphere would also contribute to improved spoken/speaking interactions in English (Hypothesis 1). It was also argued that a shift from the traditional methodology being used in current literature classes to a more flexible, student-oriented simple methodology and a shift away from the teacher's traditional role as a dictator/lecturer would result in improved performance both on the parts of the student and the teacher (Hypothesis 2).

It was also noted that enabling personal engagement with literary texts would help learners shift from a passive role, dependent on teacher's views, to a more creative and pro-active role, thus promoting learner autonomy and increased independence of thought (Hypothesis 3). In addition, prediction activities based on the text would trigger imagination in the learner, enhancing his/her spoken ability in English, particularly interpretative, argumentative and discussion skills (Hypothesis 4).

It was also argued that use of existing teaching materials, in a new activity-based and process-oriented manner, would help Bangladeshi students develop their confidence in spoken skills (Hypothesis 5)

Finally, it is noteworthy for the validity of the present study, that the overall positive feedback has been very encouraging, and has highlighted the necessity for further research in the area.

## **6.2 Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

The study was carried out to propose a rationale for bringing more literary texts into the English classroom and also to propose an alternative approach to the teaching of literary texts in the development of learners' overall language ability, with emphasis on speaking skills in Bangladeshi contexts. The proposed integrated approach to literature teaching in a language classroom, to highlight the impact of the pedagogical practice in Bangladeshi EFL contexts, was activity-based, student-centred, and associated with learner-autonomy and the personal growth model.

One important focus of the study lies in its practical and empirical nature. It is hoped that the present study will contribute to the field of literature teaching, in the EFL situation in particular, in relation to the development of learners' spoken ability, the least developed area among the four language skills. To the best of my knowledge, based on my review of existing relevant literature, this is the first research on the implication of the proposed teaching approach in a real teaching situation in a Bangladeshi EFL teaching scenario. There has been no undertaking of this empirical nature before, as far as Bangladeshi EFL literature in the language classroom in relation to the development of speaking skills is concerned. Therefore, there is an expectation that the present study, conducted in a genuine and authentic context, will provide useful insights into the application of language-based approaches. It is also hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the need and help teachers by providing them with the proposed teaching methodologies, which might enable them to enrich students' involvement and their appreciation of texts, aiming particularly at development in their speaking skills.

It is also hoped that the present study will be of interest to language and literature teachers in Bangladesh, as it will provide them with detailed teaching activities as exemplified in Chapter Three. The prediction activities devised through the present study may work as a model for teaching other literary and non-literary texts in other EFL situations.

Furthermore, the study is a preliminary attempt to investigate the nature of Bangladeshi secondary school students and their responses to the proposed teaching approach, which integrates both language-based approaches and a personal-growth model for pedagogical purposes.

The study is original in its attempt to put the devised teaching activities into practice in a genuine teaching context and make it empirical research by obtaining responses to the proposed teaching approach through adapting established research methodologies and data gathering instruments.

Moreover, although the present research involved an experiment in a single research setting, it resulted in the examination of 85 pre-and post-treatment questionnaires for teachers and students, 32 observation sheets, 28 tape recordings of pre- and post-treatment interviews and various insights gathered from the field notes. The rich data, therefore, apart from providing

triangulation, also provide credible support for the conclusions arrived at by the end of the study.

It is noteworthy that the unique qualities of the research setting provided a desirable and healthy research environment for the research and the researcher. The head of the school, all the teachers, the EG and CG teacher in particular, and the students involved in the study demonstrated a significant element of collaboration and have been consistently supportive throughout the data collection period.

However, although the findings to a certain extent confirm the validity of the hypotheses of the study, several limitations of the study exist and require some consideration.

Firstly, the present study is limited to Grade Nine students. A further limitation is that it focused on the responses of only forty students because of the amount of the data collected and the intensity of the analysis involved. Moreover, there were also considerations of time and financial constraints.

In addition to these limitations, there may also be the question regarding the reporting of a hundred percent results in many cases, which may seem not so common in applied research of this kind. In the light of the present research undertaking, it can be said that this reporting of a hundred percent result could be a phenomenon that was related to the entirely new atmosphere created in EG classroom. The EG students had never come across such a student-centred classroom environment before, where they were given opportunity to do everything by themselves. This may have had the strong motivating effect on them that initiated the data obtained during the research process. A longer study may have introduced some different results.

Therefore, the study does not generalise its findings to other EFL situations beyond Bangladeshi EFL contexts. Secondly, the students who participated in this study responded only to the teaching of short stories. It would be interesting to see their responses to the teaching of other literary genres through similar pedagogical frameworks. Therefore, it should be noted that this research needs to be viewed as exploratory since it is probably the first research known of this type, that investigates language-based approaches and the personal-growth model of literature teaching with Bangladeshi EFL students. Its findings

may serve as a basis for further longitudinal studies, which would involve a larger sample and a longer period.

Assigning the students for EG and CG was done on the basis of their academic performance in the class to maintain an equal standard. Having students from the top, middle and poorer categories seems to be a reliable and established selection method. However, there were other limitations due to uncontrolled variables, such as the personality of the students and the individual differences in abilities between the two groups.

Maximum effort was made not to intimidate students involved in the present study, and all the questionnaires were administered anonymously in order to make them feel more comfortable and free in their responses. However, due to the nature of participant-as-observer type of research, the physical presence of the researcher in the research setting may have influenced some students' responses in favour of the research.

Initially, however, the researcher had to face some problems. For example, after a couple of lessons, attendance in the control group gradually started to decline. It was found later that the CG teacher began to influence the students in discouraging them from attending lessons, telling them that these lessons were not compulsory. Actually, she felt threatened by the thought that the researcher was trying to prove that the proposed methodology was more effective than hers. She started to manipulate her students in such a way that they tried to talk to some EG students in order to discover what was happening in their class, and so to implement some of the elements in CG lessons. She also, at times, prepared her students beforehand for her class to improve performance, although this was not a requirement of the present study.

Moreover, I am also aware of the potential for further quantitative exploration of the data gathered through the present study. However, considering the main aim of the study, which is to produce teaching activities as a model in Bangladeshi EFL contexts, the assumption was that excessive inclusion of quantitative analysis may overshadow the qualitative nature of the study. Therefore, to serve the main aim of the study, mainly qualitative data with some quantitative paradigms were used.

### **6.2.1 Recommendations**

Since the use of English in everyday life, particularly in rural areas in Bangladesh, is almost non-existent, foreign language policy needs to provide financial and administrative facilities to address the following issues:

- Provide necessary training in ELT for those who will teach English.
- Inclusion of literary texts in the syllabus to promote interest in the language.
- To facilitate interactive language practice where possible keeping class sizes between 25-30 students.
- Make available ELT support materials such as books, magazines, equipment, audio-video productions, etc.

Also, considering teachers' levels of proficiency in English, the training programme must have some courses in language improvement. These courses are very important, because it is impractical to expect that teachers who cannot use English themselves for oral or written communication would be able to teach the language properly to their students. There is also the need for making provision for monitoring and supervising English teaching and learning at each level and for pre-service and in-service training in order to give and sustain quality teaching at all levels.

Teachers should remember that it is the students who should listen, speak, read and write in English. Therefore, it is important that students are involved in a variety of activities, e.g. pair work, role-play, question and answer, discussions, projects, reading and writing tasks, either given in a textbook or prepared by teachers for practising language skills. In fact, all these can perhaps be tried out through prediction activities, which are likely to enrich students' thinking skills, resulting in improved expression, in writing as well as orally. Here student participation is much more important than teacher participation. In fact, a teacher should do nothing in class that the students can do on their own.

Some teachers may often question the appropriateness of these activities in a large class. Initially it will be difficult, no doubt. Nevertheless, by training students to work in pairs and groups by demonstrating some of the activities mentioned above, it is possible to do the

activities even in a tightly packed classroom. This will give them an impression of the practical use of English, like the mother tongue, for real life communication. Using English for these purposes will increase the amount of practice in language skills, especially in listening and speaking skills, which the students badly need. In addition, a favourable teaching situation can ensure the application of the method.

Teachers should use all possible means to make English input comprehensible to the students. The first thing they should do is to avoid translating any input into the mother tongue and instead use English in the class throughout so that the students are fully immersed in working only in English. This English immersion might initially pose some problems of understanding for students, as they are not used to listening to or speaking in English in real life. However, if the technique of all English presentation and practice is continued, it is likely that learners will quite soon develop their comprehension capacity. In order to make the technique effective, teachers may undertake the following:

- Use simple, clear English throughout the lesson
- Make use of familiar situations for practising language skills
- Draw on students' subject matter knowledge received in other, Bengali-based situations
- Use suitable aids, i.e. charts, maps, pictures, models, etc.
- Explain a difficult point or part in the lesson by demonstration or acting out.

A successful classroom would be one where the teacher does not control the class from the front, but mingles with students, becomes one of them for the time being, and as such organises and facilitates learning.

Regarding various types of anxieties the learners are likely to suffer, the teacher's role should be to diagnose their behaviour, and help them to reduce anxiety. Using suggestions such as the following, teachers can enable students to deal more effectively with language anxiety:

- Help students understand that language anxiety is not permanent; boost their self-esteem and self-confidence by providing different opportunities for classroom success in the language.

- Encourage moderate risk-taking (that is permitting them to use the language with less than perfect performance) and tolerance of ambiguity in a comfortable, non-threatening environment, reducing the competition present in the classroom.
- Be very clear about classroom goals and help students develop strategies to meet these goals.
- Encourage students to relax through music, laughter or games and giving rewards that are meaningful to them and that help support language use.
- Use fair tests with unambiguous, familiar item types.
- Help students realistically assess their performance.
- Provide activities that address varied learning styles and strategies in the classroom (Oxford, 1999).

Teachers need to realise that they can use literary texts in English classes as vehicles for practising language skills. Contemporary literature can be very useful in this respect. The aim of using literary texts in a language classroom, however, would centre on the fact that ‘the learners derive the benefits of communicative and other activities for language improvement within the suitable works of literature’ (Collie and Slater, 1987:10). Use of proper methods and guidance from teacher can improve student’s spoken ability to a minimum standard. In class practice, teachers should make their students good readers and provide them with the necessary tools to interpret texts adequately.

Since examination results are usually a great incentive for rote learning, they could become instrumental for genuine learning of English. In order to achieve this, a communicative teacher training methodology is a necessary antecedent. Therefore, the flaw in the present public examinations, i.e. SSC and HSC examinations, is that they only measure students’ ability to memorise textbook contents. Therefore, the present system needs reviewing and requires urgent attention of the policy-makers.

The teacher therefore, should know how to measure students’ ability in using English for both oral and written communication and frame questions in a way that students’ memorised answers will not suffice. Instead, students should think through their own answers. The textbook should give some sample questions and the teacher should construct fresh test items based on these models and use them for student assessment.



The above-mentioned recommendations are, no doubt, positive steps for improving the teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh. However, only a commitment from the government to introduce communicative tests, especially in spoken English, and proper training of teachers in communicative teaching and testing, could bring about a genuine change in the public examination system as well as in the teaching-learning strategy of English, thereby producing the desired outcomes.

### **6.3 Implications for Further Research**

The findings of the study confirm that an integrated approach comprising language-based approaches and a personal growth model, especially in Bangladeshi EFL contexts, could be of great interest for the purpose of research focusing on the practical pedagogical applications of using literature in language teaching methodologies. I hope that the findings of the study will contribute to a better understanding of the need to facilitate students with stepping-stones for a better appreciation of literary works. The findings would also encourage teachers to see through language, and trigger more research on literature teaching methodologies in the EFL classroom. The present research, with its findings in an EFL situation, nevertheless, gives rise to several issues for future research, which are listed below:

1. It is apparent that the present study needs to be replicated with different populations, age groups, and type of texts, in order to validate further some of the findings of the study. To this end, a longitudinal study seems to be a good idea for investigation.
2. Due to time constraints, only a single experimental group experienced the present study. It would be desirable to have more classes that are experimental, an issue related to the issue of a longitudinal study.
3. It would be interesting to compare the performance of experimental group and control group students in examination. The observation was that after being exposed to the treatment classes the subjects in EG were confident that they would be able to answer any text-based questions set following the traditional methodology without memorising the answers. For further research, it may be interesting to include the aspects of teaching outcomes.
4. The present study has dealt with a single EFL situation, the Bangladeshi one. A comparative study could look at students' responses in different EFL situations to discover whether the teaching approach, which prioritises language-based approaches

advocating learner autonomy and personal growth, will have similar effects in other EFL contexts.

5. It would also be interesting to see how using such an approach at other levels would affect learners' spoken ability, as the present study only worked with Grade Nine students.
6. The emergence of New Englishes in Bangladesh could be another area of exploration, to discover the preference and use of the variety of the language among the younger generation. The present study discovered that teachers preferred British English, whereas students preferred American English, as a medium of instruction during lessons.
7. It would also be enlightening to observe for a longitudinal period the reactions of, and impacts on, the students and teachers having literary texts included in the language classroom, especially in relation to developing thinking and speaking skills. Further research in this particular area should bring in new and interesting insights for the improvement of the overall teaching atmosphere.
8. There is also the possibility of further research in the area of learners taking moderate risks (this is permitting them to use the language with less than perfect performance) and into tolerance of ambiguity in a comfortable, non-threatening environment, reducing the competition present in the classroom, and seeing its impact on learner confidence and performance in speaking.
9. Finally, during the field research, the necessity of exploiting representational materials to give an idea of how language works and what is done by language was strongly felt. Like any other language Bengali is very rich in proverbs, idiomatic expressions and sayings which are highly representational in their creative use of language, imagery, metaphor, metonym, and the like. This is a further area which is full of potential for research and pedagogic implications. Therefore, I believe that practical work regarding the idea of 'literariness' and 'representational teaching' in a genuine teaching context would be a great contribution to introducing literature in a language classroom in Bangladesh.

#### **6.4 Concluding Remarks**

It is accepted that learners are more likely to read with a degree of personal engagement and effort those texts that deal with topics of interest to them. Having this in mind, I have tried to consider a three-phase approach in reading the text, where students' existing content schemata is activated in an attempt to enhance motivation to read. In doing so I also tried to

make the activities mostly based on prediction, and choose a text having a definite interesting and universal theme, which is also humorous in nature, in order to capture students' attention. In addition, the general conclusion appears to be that readers read with a greater degree of engagement if they are reading for their own purposes, rather than for a purpose imposed by the task. Although in this study students did not read the text all at once, but rather by predicting throughout, they were in line with Olshavsky's (1976) finding that readers with a high interest in a text employ more strategies in reading than those with low interest.

Teaching of English literature and language in most EFL contexts in Bangladesh, especially in government owned schools, has always been traditional, where the teacher gives an explanation or interpretation of the text under study. S/he expects students to reproduce her/his conception and ideas in examinations, which usually test the students' ability to memorise rather than to appreciate what they have read and understood. Usually, students are the inactive participants of the teaching/learning process, taking in what the teacher wants them to know. The teacher is the imparter of knowledge, the provider of the only correct interpretation. Usually, students are not allowed to become actively engaged in the meaning-making process and some of them feel quite comfortable being spoon-fed throughout.

However, as the teachers' and students' responses to the present study revealed, the undesirable effects of the traditional methodology and approach on students proves to be counter-productive and strongly suggests a clear need for alternative teaching approaches to ensure improved learning and performance. Therefore, it is necessary that teaching should move away from teacher-centredness towards student-centredness, in order to develop the capability of the students to appreciate literary texts better and to be able to use what they have learnt from the text in daily life, especially while speaking. Activities developed should aim at involving students dynamically with the text, triggering their thoughts and imagination. This could ultimately help develop their speaking skills alongside developing their perception of the text through active interaction and exploration.

To this end, the proposed teaching approach is argued to be an inspiring approach for communication between students and teachers, between peers, and most importantly between students and the text in Bangladeshi contexts. Furthermore, this allows students to become self-confident and to be actively engaged in the interaction and exploration of the text for the negotiation of potential meaning and for use in their everyday lives.

This student-centred, common ground-based aspect of a communicative methodology provides the principle for the proposed framework. The prediction activities, mainly initiating use of existing schemata and involving thought processes and an imaginative faculty together with language input, were used in the teaching of the text 'The Luncheon'. The activities were used to provide an intensive exposure and examination of language functions which enable students to grasp and learn better about subtle meanings and to make explicit what students might find implicit. Therefore, it can become an ideal introductory means of learning about how language works in literary texts and how to connect and make use of them in their personal lives.

However, although I feel confident that the proposed teaching methodology and activities that were tried out in an authentic setting in Bangladesh can account explicitly for an interpretation and be justified through textual evidence, it must be acknowledged that no analysis can be entirely objective. I am also aware of the fact that literature is always more than language; consequently, there will always be textual elements that language-based approaches cannot describe. However, for the present study it was important to see what impact literature initially has on the development of learners' performance in speaking in class, hoping that it will have positive impact on their speaking ability in English in their practical lives.

Therefore, the present study attempts to provide an accessible method for teachers in the Bangladesh situation to introduce literary pieces into the language classroom with the aim of helping learners to achieve overall language development, especially in speaking. The teaching activities, devised for the study and using arguments put forward in the study, are aimed at providing a desirable pedagogical approach for use in Bangladeshi EFL contexts. They aim to offer a flexible framework to be used as a model to teach other literary and non-literary texts. This study, therefore, should be considered as groundwork made with the hope that it will increase the confidence of Bangladeshi teachers in bringing literary pieces into a student-oriented language classroom, in order to make them self confident in using the language, and become independent in their thought, understanding and expression.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX 1: GRADING OF TASKS

Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairly simple answers are expected from introductory and brainstorming sessions.</li> <li>• Answers are likely to be based on simple prediction, imagination, guess work and schematic knowledge of the learner.</li> <li>• The relationship between the objects/events in the stimulus material is simple and static. The description required from the student is fairly easy.</li> <li>• The stimulus material itself provides all the content that are to be communicated. Therefore, the selection of information and its structure is largely predetermined for the speaker.</li> <li>• The learner has to describe and report explicitly the given information presented to her/him in a simple linear sequence.</li> <li>• S/he has to express ideas that immediately come to mind.</li> <li>• S/he can initiate multifarious reasoning and suggestion.</li> </ul>
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal and content-focused prompts are initiated as aids.</li> <li>• Expected answers need to be based on the topic/matter of concern.</li> <li>• The stimulus material provides all the content that need to be communicated. Therefore, the selection of information and its structure are largely predetermined for the speaker. However, in Level 2 s/he has to describe the stimulus material fully and in detail.</li> <li>• The learner has to be sufficiently explicit, discriminating and consistent in her/his use of language. S/he has to use precise language in establishing points.</li> <li>• S/he has to be precise and concise in her/his choice of vocabulary and expression.</li> <li>• S/he has to describe the principal activities of the characters/objects involved (the characters, and/or objects may appear, disappear and reappear during the course of the task) which change over time and place, clearly and explicitly.</li> <li>• Time and location must be mentioned, if of any significance; clear indication when spatial or temporal changes occur.</li> <li>• Individual long turn is required.</li> <li>• The learner needs to draw conclusion through the expression of reasoning.</li> </ul>
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion is of more abstract nature, based on verbal questions, thematically linked to the text.</li> <li>• Evaluation on the learner is required, for example, on a task that demands argumentation to justify any particular issue.</li> <li>• The learner needs to evaluate, select and structure the information, and be able to</li> </ul>

evaluate and develop ideas.

- S/he has to process a large package of information. S/he has to extract and summarise the basic message, decide, recall her/his own views on the subject, and frame the views as a response to establish her/his point. S/he also has to select information to support the response either from experience or from information from the text, and finally state it clearly.
- S/he has to be precise and concise in her/his choice of vocabulary and expression.
- The learner may require to have a two-way discussion; in most cases, involving interactional tasks.

(Adapted from IELTS Handbook, July, 2001)

## **APPENDIX 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF HANDLING THE TEXT FOR THE PRESENT STUDY**

The idea is to start by encouraging the students to think about the issues that can be discussed in the extracts and to predict the story. This is also to

- draw their attention to the text, generating curiosity and motivation to read further.
- sensitise them to the relationship between the author and the characters.
- encourage analysis of the character's personality and to view the characters from different perspectives. Thinking about the characters could be a right way in for the students if they find them interesting' and can identify with them.
- encourage the students to come up with their first impression about the characters that they have met. They should be free in their judgment but must project enough evidence to support their view.
- encourage them to make a list of ideas/ words/images that strikes them at different stages (could centre around one topic).
- give them practice in finding evidence to support their impression and drawing inferences.
- encourage students to make guesses; make interpretations and after discussion try to come to a decision about the issues raised; draw inferences about the story as a whole.
- orient them to the story by letting them know some key events and to encourage speculation as to how and why these events occur and encourage them to relate to the events and characters of the story in a modern day setting.
- encourage students to understand cultural references and to find parallels for those.
- encourage students to activate their existing schematic knowledge in order to make the text more accessible and manageable.
- encourage them to think about the theme of the story and comparison of the story with any other works having similar themes or events they might have come across in their life/somebody else's life they know would initiate further discussion
- have a look at the plot, the chronology of events in the story and how the casual links between these events can generate curiosity in them to think about the chronology of events and their impact on the development of the characters.
- encourage them to find the extent to which the story is based on actual events, and whether the theme represents 'realism'/realistic views. This is likely to generate curiosity in the learners to decide on actions and reactions if they themselves are to encounter similar situation. They can be motivated to talk about parallel events that might have occurred in their own life or to somebody they know. They can also be asked if any particular place/event triggers anything in their mind.

- draw their attention to the style and writer's use of language – funny, sarcastic, ironic, etc. The stylistic devices could be made interesting to them which are likely to have positive effects on the learners, by motivating them to further reading outside the classroom.
- draw their attention to the contrasts within a text are always useful for exploitation: between the beginning and the end (what has happened?), between characters (any number, active and passive), between paragraphs and even between sentences. These contrasts very quickly take the reader beyond basic 'wh-' questions and open up areas of conflict and narrative tension, inviting the reader to discuss the themes of the passage, and to give concrete references from the text to back up analytical and interpretative affirmations.

The text can also be explored by following a traditional approach that may concentrate on who the characters are, or what happens in the passage. The following areas can offer clearer interaction with the text as pointed by (McRae, 1991):

- ✓ **Prediction** ( 'What do you think might happen now?')
- ✓ **Discussion** ( 'Do you think X was right in doing so?')
- ✓ **Evaluation of character** ( 'Think of some adjectives you would use to describe Y.')
- ✓ **Imaginative extension** ( 'How do you think X feels about Y?') 'What title can you give to the text?'

### APPENDIX 3: ACTIVITY TYPES FOR THE EG

#### Using the title and photographs:

The students can be shown a picture and then can be asked to speculate about the story and mood, as pictures are a useful way of introducing a topic that could kindle the students' curiosity.

The title of the book can be withheld or covered up at the beginning of the discussion. Questions can be formed to initiate the students' curiosity, which will help them start talking. Later on, the teacher may reveal the title of the story and ask the students to come with suggestions about the title. It is a good idea to let students speculate on the plot of the story before they actually come to know about it. This will raise the level of their motivation.

#### Using key words/phrase/ statements:

A number of words, phrases, and statements from the text can be selected. Individually or in groups, students brainstorm for possible narrative links between the words/statements. When each group has decided on a preferred pattern of connection, a story can be built up orally. The key words/statements can also provide the basis upon which students' attempt to build up a first image of the central character, his or her personality, habits, etc.

#### Giving the first and last sections of the story:

By giving the first and last sections of the story students can be encouraged to make guesses and interpretations and then after discussion try to come to a decision about the issues raised. They can also try out their schematic knowledge from the 1<sup>st</sup> and last paragraphs - to establish the extent of their existing world knowledge based on the comments of the narrator in those two paragraphs. The sections can be used to encourage students to try to understand the main idea and give them practice in drawing inferences from the text. They can be used to orient students to the story by letting them know some key events. Students can also be encouraged to speculate as to how and why these events occur.

#### Using the theme:

Major themes can be identified and explored for discussion. Students can be asked to bring out parallel stories from their surrounding centring round similar theme (s).

### Discussions based on questionnaires:

Questionnaires are usually very helpful in initiating discussion. A list of statements with answer boxes to be ticked such as: agree/disagree/not sure could be a format to spark off discussion on their choices (e.g. character A was never genuinely interested in literature/ character B could get flattered easily – agree/disagree/not sure – explain why?)

### Filling in the gaps:

Stories give only fragmentary portrayals of situation and characters, leaving plenty of room for inference. An interesting activity is to ask groups of students to make inferences about missing aspects and then to discuss these and explain the particular part of the text, which led to their conclusion. (e.g. What do you think the life style was like both for character A and character B during the 20 years since they first met?)

### Debates:

Many stories evoke controversial issues that can give rise to interesting debates in the classroom giving the learners opportunity to express themselves with arguments for establishing the point they want to make (e.g. male chauvinism vs. feminism) (e.g. Why do you feel sympathetic towards character A and why not? Why do you feel sympathetic towards character B and not towards A?)

### Improvisations:

At a certain point in the reading of a text, students are asked to devise alternative outcomes to the events they are encountering in the story. They can be asked to plan an improvised dramatisation of one such outcome, and perform it for the class. (e.g. Character A is to call character C for help, can use mobile phone, or send text message, etc./ what if character A wanted to avoid the situation altogether)

### Thought bubbles:

Learners could be asked to become aware of the creative interplay that exists within the text, between the 'outer' world of action and appearance, and the 'inner' world of thought and feeling. They can formulate the 'inner' dialogue that parallels the 'outer' dialogue given in the story. They can fill in the 'thought bubbles' to bring out a character's simultaneous, though unuttered thoughts and feelings as it always happens in our real life. One character might be acting in a specific way, just to keep the

conversation or action going while, the same moment his/her thoughts could be leading towards an opposite direction.

Here and there:

These activities are designed to extend students' understanding and appreciation of characterisation within the story.

Here: students are asked to speculate about how particular characters would behave and what they would feel or say, in an imagined situation which is not part of the work itself (e.g. character A finds character B to be physically attractive and charming, with the same sort of disagreeable characteristics/personality – how would character A respond to character B then?). Ideas for situations are most successful when they are linked to learners' own lives.

There: The preceding situation is reversed. Someone who is not a character in the story is imported into it and his or her likely actions, reactions, and impact are discussed (e.g. character A, a pretty lady meets character B, an elderly person who has read A's books and invited her to dine with him. What would be A's reaction/approach towards B?).

Role-plays:

A successful technique for implementing role-play with stories is to take themes from the text and create parallel settings, but with very different characters. Afterwards, the work itself is compared with the created role-play (e.g. you and your admirer in a restaurant in Bangladesh context).

Retelling the story:

Retelling the story can provide valuable oral practice in a foreign language. A list of required vocabulary (including variety of tenses, link words, and other discourse markers) that is already known to the learners from their reading of the text would now be made use of. They will be encouraged to tell the story in their own words.

(Adopted from Collie, J. and Slater, S., 1987)



## APPENDIX 4: 'THE LUNCHEON': W.S. MAUGHAM

### Section: 1

I caught sight of her at the play and in answer to her beckoning I went over during the interval and sat down beside her. It was long since I had last seen her and if someone had not mentioned her name I hardly think I would have recognised her. She addressed me brightly.

### Section: 2

"Well, it's many years since we first met. How time does fly! We're none of us getting any younger. Do you remember the first time I saw you? You asked me to luncheon."

Did I remember?

### Section: 3

It was twenty years ago and I was living in Paris. I had a tiny apartment in the Latin Quarter overlooking a cemetery and I was earning barely enough money to keep body and soul together. She had read a book of mine and had written to me about it. I answered, thanking her, and presently I received from her another letter saying that she was passing through Paris and would like to have a chat with me; but her time was limited and the only free moment she had was on the following Thursday; she was spending the morning at the Luxembourg and would I give her a little luncheon at Foyot's afterwards? Foyot's is a restaurant at which the French senators eat and it was so far beyond my means that I had never been thought of going there. But I was flattered and I was too young to have learned to say no to a woman. (Few men, I would add, learn this until they are too old to make it of any consequence to a woman what they say.) I had eighty francs (gold francs) to last me the rest of the month and a modest luncheon should not cost more than fifteen. If I cut out coffee for the next two weeks I could manage well enough.

### Section: 4

I answered that I would meet my friend – by correspondence – at Foyot's on Thursday at half-past twelve. She was not so young as I expected and in appearance imposing rather than attractive. She was in fact a woman of forty (a charming age, but not one that excites a sudden and devastating passion at first sight), and she gave me the impression of having more teeth, white and large and even,

than were necessary for any practical purpose. She was talkative, but since she seemed inclined to talk about me I was prepared to be an attentive listener.

#### Section: 5

I was startled when the bill of fare was brought, for the prices were a great deal higher than I had anticipated. But she reassured me.

"I never eat anything for luncheon," she said.

"Oh, don't say that!" I answered generously.

"I never eat more than one thing. I think people eat far too much nowadays. A little fish, perhaps. I wonder if they have any salmon."

Well, it was early in the year for salmon and it was not on the bill of fare, but I asked the waiter if there were any. Yes, a beautiful salmon has just come in, it was the first they had had. I ordered it for my guest. The waiter asked her if she would have something while it was being cooked.

"No," she answered, "I never eat more than one thing. Unless you had a little caviare. I never mind caviare".

My heart sank a little. I knew I could not afford caviare, but I could not very well tell her that. I told the waiter by all means to bring caviare. For myself I chose the cheapest dish on the menu and that was a mutton chop.

"I think you're unwise to eat meat," she said. "I don't know how you can expect to work after eating heavy things like chops. I don't believe in overloading my stomach."

Then came the question of drink.

"I never drink anything for luncheon," she said.

"Neither do I," I answered promptly.

"Except white wine," she proceeded as though I had not spoken.

:"These French white wines are so light. They're wonderful for the digestion."

"What would you like?" I asked, hospitable still, but not exactly effusive.

She gave me a bright and amicable flash of her white teeth.

"My doctor won't let me drink anything but champagne."

I fancy I turned a trifle pale. I ordered half a bottle. I mentioned casually that my doctor had absolutely forbidden me to drink champagne.

"What are you going to drink, then?"

"Water."

## Section: 6

She ate the caviare and she ate the salmon. She talked gaily of art and literature and music. But I wondered what the bill would come to. When my mutton chop arrived she took me quite seriously to task.

“I see that you’re in a habit of eating a heavy luncheon. I’m sure it’s a mistake. Why don’t you follow my example and eat just one thing? I’m sure you would feel ever so much better for it.”

“I *am* only going to eat one thing,” I said, as the waiter came again with the bill of fare.

She waived him aside with an airy gesture.

“No, no, I never eat anything for luncheon. Just a bite, I never want more than that, and I eat that more as an excuse for conversation than anything else. I couldn’t possibly eat anything more – unless they had some of those giant asparagus. I should be sorry to leave Paris without having some of them.”

My heart sank. I had seen them in the shops and I knew that they were horribly expensive. My mouth had opened watered at the sight of them.

“Madame wants to know if you have any of those giant asparagus,” I asked the waiter.

I tried with all my might to will him to say no. A happy smile spread over his broad, priest-like face, and he assured me that they had some so large, so splendid, so tender, that it was a marvel.

“I’m not in the least hungry,” my guest sighed, “but if you insist I don’t mind having some asparagus.”

I ordered them.

“Aren’t you going to have any?”

“No, I never eat asparagus.”

“I know there are people who don’t like them, the fact is, you ruin your palate by all the meat you eat.”

## Section: 7

We waited for the asparagus to be cooked. Panic seized me. It was not a question now how much money I should have left over for the rest of the month, but whether I had enough money to pay the

bill. It would be mortifying to find myself ten francs short and be obliged to borrow from my guest. I could not bring myself to do that. I knew exactly how much I had and if the bill, came to more I made up my mind that I would put my hand in my pocket and with a dramatic cry start up and say it had been picked. Of course it would be awkward if she had not money enough either to pay the bill. Then the only thing would be to leave my watch and say I would come back and pay later.

The asparagus appeared. They were enormous, succulent and appetising. The smell of the melted butter tickled my nostrils as the nostrils of Jehovah were tickled by the burned offerings of the virtuous Semites. I watched the abandoned woman thrust them down her throat in large voluptuous mouthfuls and in my polite way I discoursed on the condition of the drama in the Balkans. At last she finished.

I was past caring now, so I ordered coffee for myself and ice-cream and coffee for her.

“You know there’s one thing I thoroughly believe in, she said, as she ate the ice-cream. “One should always get up from a meal feeling one could eat a little more.”

“Are you still hungry?” I asked faintly.

“Oh, no, I’m not hungry; you see, I don’t eat luncheon. I have a cup of coffee in the morning and then dinner, but I never eat more than one thing in luncheon. I was speaking for you.”

“Oh, I see!”

Then a terrible thing happened. While we were waiting for the coffee, the head waiter, with an ingratiating smile on his false face, came up to us bearing a large basket full of huge-peaches. They had a blush of an innocent girl; they had the rich tone of an Italian landscape. But surely peaches were not in season then? Lord knew what they cost. I knew too – a little later, for my guest, going in with her conversation, absentmindedly took one.

“You see, you’ve filled your stomach with a lot of meat” – my one miserable little chop – “and you can’t eat anymore. But I’ve just had a snack and I shall enjoy a peach.”

### **Section: 8**

The bill came and when I paid it I found that I had only enough for a quite inadequate tip. Her eyes rested for an instant on the three francs I left for the waiter and I knew she thought me mean. But when I walked out of the restaurant I had the whole month before me and not a penny in my pocket.

“Follow my example,” she said as we shook hands, and never eat more than one thing for luncheon.”

"I'll do better than that," I retorted. "I'll eat nothing for dinner tonight."  
"Humorist!" she cried gaily, jumping into a cab. "You're quite a humorist!"

**Section: 9**

But I have had my revenge at last. I do not believe that I am a vindictive man, but when the immortal gods take a hand in the matter it is pardonable to observe the result with complacency. Today she weighs twenty-one stone.

## APPENDIX 5: PRE-TREATMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

### Questionnaire

I would be grateful if you please spare some of your time completing this questionnaire. The questions serve to explore the attitude of learners towards the use of literature, here short stories, at the lessons of English; especially in developing student's spoken skills. Your participation is highly valued and appreciated.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone nos. are: 8918746, 018248181 and e. mail is: [ainy@agni.com](mailto:ainy@agni.com)

I must reassure you that all the personal information and data collected from the questionnaire would be held in strict confidence and used with the sole aim of research, and would not be used for any other purpose without prior permission of the participants. Analysis and discussion of the professional data will not reveal identities anyway. All data will be discussed under pseudonyms.

I would request you to return the completed questionnaire either to your Headmistress of the school or to your English teacher or you may directly hand it in to me as well by *September 30, 2002*. Thank you for your time and help.

With compliments

Salma Ainy, PhD Research Fellow at the University of Nottingham, UK  
September 20, 2002

#### **Section A: Participant profile**

Name:

Age:

Contact address with phone number (if any):

#### **Section B: General queries**

*Please circle the score where appropriate*

1. Your preference for models of English instruction (*please circle*):

American English

British English

Local variety/New English

Do not know

2. Your 'self-labelling' of the variety of your English, that you use (*please circle*):

American English

British English

Local variety/New English

Mixture of all three

3. Give at least three reasons for learning English in Bangladesh:

---

4. Where do we need to use the language and why?

---

5. What is the frequency of your using English in different social interaction:

People	Frequency: (all the time/often/rarely/never)
--------	--

Family Friends Teachers Strangers Others (please specify)	
---	--

6. Your use of English in reading general 'literature'

Type of material	Frequency: (always/frequently/rarely/never)
Newspapers/magazines Story books Comics Other types (please specify)	

**Section C: Aspects of literature and language teaching and learning:**

1. In the classroom, what is the expected role of your teacher?

---

2. Have there been certain issues in your classroom that demanded special attention from you? If yes, what were these?

---

3. What impact have these issues had on your present learning practice?

---

4. How is literature usually taught in the classroom? You are: (Please circle):

- asked questions by your teacher about characters, plot, setting and your teacher explained the important points to you
- involved in group discussion as a whole class
- grouped in pairs and let discuss
- asked to express your feelings and support them through linguistic evidences in the texts
- asked to do projects/ write essays/make presentations
- to prepare for examinations
- others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. You like literature classes because: (please circle)

- you like literature in general
- literature classes are taught with competence
- the content of the works analyses in class is relevant to your experience of life
- others (please specify ) \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. You dislike literature classes because: (please circle)

- the language used in literary work is too difficult
- the content of literary works is irrelevant to your experience of life
- the cultural references in these works are inaccessible
- the way teachers handle literature classes lacks a proper and systematic methodology and classes are boring
- other(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

7. What strategies do the teachers usually resort to in the teaching of literature? (please circle)

- s/he usually lectures the class are you take notes
  - translation
  - paraphrase
  - s/he uses systematic methodologies to encourage you to attempt your analysis and speak about it
  - other (specify):
- 

**Section D: English language, literature and spoken skills:**

*Please answer to the following questions*

**Key to rating:**    1 strongly disagree    3 agree  
                         2 disagree                    4 strongly agree

*Please circle the score where appropriate*

1. What do you understand by the term 'literature'?

---

2. What is the amount of literature you are studying in your English class at present? (*Please circle*):  
None, very little, moderate, quite a lot

3. How do you find English literature classes?  
Very interesting, interesting, moderate, boring. *Please circle and give reasons to your preference.*

---

4. Are different texts such as advertisements, newspapers, magazine articles, etc. used in literature classes to give idea how language operates, for example, through prediction? (*Please circle*):  
Always, sometimes, never

5. Would you prefer to have more literary pieces in the classroom, why?

---

6. What is your opinion in making a connection between literature and spoken skills? Please suggest some ways of making the connection.

---

7. Why do you think that no speaking skills are being taught /practised/examined at present?

---

8. Would you be interested to develop your spoken language, why? 1 2 3 4

---

9. You enjoy reading books in English 1 2 3 4

10. What genres do you like most (*please circle*)  
a) poetry    b) dramas    c) short stories    d) novels    e) others (please specify)  
*Please comment on your preference(s)*

---

11. Literature texts in the lessons of English can help you to improve your English. 1 2 3 4

12. If literary texts help, they help:





- they are valuable authentic materials. 1 2 3 4
- they help students to get better understanding of the culture of English speaking community. 1 2 3 4
- students get in touch with universal human values through literature. 1 2 3 4
- they bring students into contact with real language. 1 2 3 4
- they help increase the student's vocabulary. 1 2 3 4
- they provide examples of the language grammar structures in use. 1 2 3 4
- they have motivating effect on the learner in language learning. 1 2 3 4
- they can stimulate personal involvement of the students. 1 2 3 4
- they can create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion. 1 2 3 4
- they can stimulate the development of conversational skills. 1 2 3 4

4. Literature texts can promote individual development and general education of the whole person by:

- stimulating imagination 1 2 3 4
- encouraging students to work creatively 1 2 3 4
- providing materials for creating analytical and critical abilities 1 2 3 4
- developing confidence and independence in expressing students own ideas, opinions and emotions in English 1 2 3 4

5. You are satisfied with the variety of the texts given in your textbooks. 1 2 3 4

6. You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. 1 2 3 4

7. These activities are appropriate for your learning purpose. 1 2 3 4

8. They are motivating. 1 2 3 4

9. They can stimulate natural conversation. 1 2 3 4

10. They can help you develop your conversational skills. 1 2 3 4

11. What activities do you consider to be most effective in developing your own conversational skills

---

12. Your teacher encourages you to use literary texts available outside classroom/ given textbook. 1 2 3 4

---

13. What are your suggestion concerning English literature learning/teaching? What do you think a good literature learning/teaching process should include?

---

14. What suggestions would you have for practicing speaking skills outside classroom?

---

15. Please put any other comments you have:

---

Thank you very much once again.

## APPENDIX 6: POST-TREATMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the value of the teaching methods and materials, which were used in class today, not to assess the performance of you or your teacher.

This is not a test either. There are no right or wrong answers; we want your own ideas and impressions.

Please answer the following questions: please circle your choice:

1. The teaching process was
    - a) not any different from the others
    - b) systematic
    - c) disorganised
  
  2. The prediction activities used in the class were:
    - a) nothing interesting
    - b) quite interesting and motivating
    - c) initiated talk on our part
  
  3. Mark the points that describe best the lesson's and your overall evaluation of the delivery of the materials and teaching approach employed in the class:
    - a) very detailed
    - b) instructions were made clear
    - c) the teacher talked all the times and I did not have any chance to express myself
    - d) creative
    - e) effective
    - f) motivating
    - g) the text chosen was interesting
    - h) appropriate to our needs
    - i) catered for our need to express orally
    - j) the teacher talked about the important points and sometimes asked us to take notes/underline important parts
    - k) very encouraging to contribute to the discussion
    - l) I kept on taking notes and did not focus on anything else
    - m) pair work and group works were really good and useful
    - n) I have learnt that I can support my intuitions through textual evidence.
    - o) I have learnt that by using the clues from the text , based on prediction and imagination, I can express myself more fluently
    - p) I enjoyed approaching literature from a different perspective
    - q) repetitive
    - r) I had enough opportunity to express myself
    - s) I did not have to think whether my answer was correct or not, all the time
    - t) I enjoyed the activities and responded to those without thinking much about grammatical pattern all the time.
    - u) I think I would like to read books of my own outside classroom
    - v) I think this will help me developing my thinking skill that will lead to better oral expression
  
  4. Your overall impression about the lesson (e.g. interesting, boring, enjoyable, unenjoyable, etc).
-

## APPENDIX 7: PRE-TREATMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

### Questionnaire

I would be grateful if you please spare some of your time completing this questionnaire. The questions serve to explore the attitude of teachers towards the use of literature, here short stories, at the lessons of English, especially in developing student's spoken skills. Your participation is highly valued and appreciated.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone nos. are: 8918746, 018248181 and e.mail is: [ainy@agni.com](mailto:ainy@agni.com)

I must reassure you that all the personal information and data collected from the questionnaire would be held in strict confidence and used with the sole aim of research, and would not be used for any other purpose without prior permission of the participants. Analysis and discussion of the professional data will not reveal identities anyway. All data will be discussed under pseudonyms.

I would request you to return the completed questionnaire either to the Headmistress of the school or you may directly hand it in to me as well by September 30, 2002. Thank you for your time and help.

With compliments

Salma Ainy, PhD Research Fellow at the University of Nottingham, UK  
September 20, 2002

#### **Section A: Participant profile**

Name:

Contact address with phone number (if any):

Qualifications:

How long have you been teaching English? \_\_\_\_\_ years

The age group of your students. \_\_\_\_\_ years

#### **Section B: General queries**

*Please circle where appropriate*

1. Which classes do you teach?

---

2. How many hours a week do you teach? What is the ratio of teaching hours between English and Bengali classes?

---

3. Your overall comment on the existing English syllabus

---

4. Have you ever had the opportunity to attend any literature teaching methodology seminar/ in-service training? If any, could you please specify the content and outcome of these?

---

5. What do you think about using of mother tongue Bengali, in the English classroom?

---

6. Do you think there are any similarities or differences between teaching Bengali literature and English literature?

---

7. Your preference for models of English instruction (*please circle*):

American English

British English

Local variety/New English

8. Give at least three reasons for teaching English in Bangladesh

---

9. How is literature usually taught in the classroom? (*Please circle*):

- you ask questions about characters, plot, setting and explain the important points
- involve the whole class in discussion
- group students in pairs and let them discuss
- they are asked to express their feelings and support them through linguistic evidences in the texts
- they are asked to do projects/ write essays/make presentations
- prepare for exams
- others (*please specify*): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Is there any difference in terms of facilities between the government and private schools? What are the impacts of schooling the learners have in their personal and future life/career?

---

11. Why no speaking skills are being taught /practised/examined at present?

---

12. Do the students need to develop speaking skills? Why?

---

**Section C: Aspects of language and literature teaching and learning:**

1. When you first started teaching, what were your ideas about the role of the teacher in the English classroom? Was it any different from the role of your teacher when you were being taught in the school?

---

2. How have those views changed since then?

---

3. Have there been certain issues in your classroom that have demanded special attention from you? If yes, what were these?

---

4. What impact have these issues had on your present teaching practice?

---

5. What are the barriers to teaching speaking skills in your English class? How can these be overcome?

---

6. What can be done to enhance students' spoken skills outside classroom?

---

**Section D: English language, literature and spoken skills:**

Please answer to the following questions

**KEY to rating:** 1 strongly disagree      3 agree  
                         2 disagree                      4 strongly agree

*Please circle the score where appropriate*

1. How would you define 'literature'?

---

2. What genres do the students usually relate to 'literature'?

---

3. What are the genres that you would usually relate to literature?

---

4. What are the genres that the students are most comfortable with?

---

5. What amount of literature are you teaching in your English class at present? (*Please circle*): None, very little, moderate, quite a lot

---

6. Would you prefer introducing more literary pieces in the classroom, why?

---

7. What are your views in handling a text in the classroom?

---

8. How the teaching of literature can be made interesting in the classroom? What could be the motivating factors? (*list at least three factors*)

---

9. What is your opinion in making a connection between literature and spoken skills? Why and how to make the connection?

---

10. What genres do you like most to be handled in the class (*please circle and comment on your preference*)  
(a) poetry b) dramas c) short stories d) novels e) others (*please specify*)

---

11. Literature texts in the lessons of English can help your students to improve their English

1 2 3 4

---

12. If literature texts help, they can help:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| a. to learn new words  | 1 2 3 4 |
| b. to get to know the culture of the English speaking countries.                                 | 1 2 3 4 |
| c. to speak English. (to express your opinions and emotions in English)                          | 1 2 3 4 |
| d. to have access to varied examples of the language grammar structures in use.                  | 1 2 3 4 |
| e. broaden their imagination and prediction that ultimately help you express vividly and clearly | 1 2 3 4 |

1 2 3 4

- f Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Working with literature texts in lessons of English is a source of enjoyment. 1 2 3 4  
Please, give at least three reasons why
- 
14. You like the literature texts used in your lessons. 1 2 3 4  
Please, give at least three reasons why:
- 
15. You find them suitable for your teaching purpose. 1 2 3 4  
Please, give at least three reasons why:
- 
16. What activities based on literary texts do you do in your class? (please, circle and comment on your preference):  
prediction activity, reading aloud, question-answer work, prediction activities, retelling, gap-filling, problem solving, role-playing, discussion, others (please, specify).
- 
17. These activities make your students interested in the texts. 1 2 3 4
18. They make them speak, express their opinion. 1 2 3 4
19. Literature texts motivate your students in their lessons 1 2 3 4
20. Positive comments about using literature texts at your lesson of English.
- 
21. Negative comments about using literature texts at your lesson of English.
- 

**Section E: Attitudes towards using literature in the foreign language classroom and methods used:**

1. Literature in the language classroom is irrelevant. 1 2 3 4
2. Literary texts provide many possibilities for foreign language teaching and learning 1 2 3 4
3. Literary texts provide many possibilities in the ways that:
- they are valuable authentic materials. 1 2 3 4
  - they help students to get better understanding of the culture of English speaking community. 1 2 3 4
  - students get in touch with universal human values through literature. 1 2 3 4
  - they bring students into contact with real language. 1 2 3 4
  - they help increase the student's vocabulary. 1 2 3 4
  - they provide examples of the language grammar structures in use. 1 2 3 4
  - they have motivating effect on the learner in language learning. 1 2 3 4
  - they can stimulate personal involvement of the students. 1 2 3 4
  - they can create a genuine context for natural interactive discussion. 1 2 3 4
  - they can stimulate the development of conversational skills. 1 2 3 4
4. Literature texts can promote individual development and general education of the whole person by:
- stimulating imagination 1 2 3 4
  - encouraging students to work creatively 1 2 3 4

- providing materials for creating analytical and critical abilities 1 2 3 4
  - developing confidence and independence in expressing students own ideas, 1 2 3 4
  - opinions and emotions in English 1 2 3 4
5. You are satisfied with the variety of the texts given in your textbooks. 1 2 3 4
6. You use available literary texts if you think they are suitable for your students. 1 2 3 4
7. You use group-work in dealing with literature. 1 2 3 4
8. You use pair-work in dealing with literature. 1 2 3 4
9. You are satisfied with the range of activities based on literary texts provided in textbooks. 1 2 3 4
10. These activities are appropriate for your learners. 1 2 3 4
11. They are motivating. 1 2 3 4
12. They can stimulate natural conversation. 1 2 3 4
13. They can help the students to develop their conversational skills. 1 2 3 4
14. What activities do you consider most effective in developing conversational skills of your students. 1 2 3 4
15. You devise activities using texts other than the given texts. 1 2 3 4
16. You encourage your students to use literary texts available outside classroom/ given textbook. 1 2 3 4
17. In most cases, how do students respond to literary texts? (*Please circle*)
- they respond without the teacher's guidance
  - they do not respond without the teacher's guidance
18. The students do not readily respond to literary texts because (you may circle more than one reason)
- they lack motivation
  - they lack reading abilities
  - some texts are conceptually inaccessible to the students
  - they lack linguistic competence
19. The teaching of English literature in Bangladesh emphasises: (*please circle*)
- the historical aspects of the text and the author
  - the development of competence in the English language
  - awareness of different literary genres and their place in English literature
  - the ability to respond appropriately to any literary work
20. What are the factors that could change the existing negative atmosphere in the English classroom, both on students' and teachers' part?
- 
21. What are your suggestions for the students for practising their speaking skills outside classroom?
-



22. What are your suggestions for a better teaching of English literature in connection to developing spoken skills in Bangladesh? Could you express your opinion in relation to syllabus, methodology and training of teachers in particular?

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Thank you very much once again.

## **APPENDIX 8: PRE-TREATMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS**

1. What does 'literature' mean to you?
2. Do you think it is important to introduce literary texts in the English classroom? Why? Why not?
3. Are you interested in literature? What sort of texts/genres of literature are you interested in? Why?
4. Do you read any books/texts outside the syllabus content?
5. Do you think literary texts would be able to motivate you to read more and express yourself better in English language?
6. What are your experiences with English literature in the classroom? In your opinion, how do you think literature should be taught?
7. What are your opinions of teaching strategies for literature used by your teachers?
8. Do you face any problem in the literature classroom?
9. How can these problems be overcome?
10. What is your opinion about the methodology that is being presently used in the classroom?
11. What are your opinions about speaking skills in English and the standard of spoken English, in general?
12. Do you think you need/want to speak in English? Why?
13. What do you think are the plus points that help develop your achievement in speaking skill?
14. What do you think are the limitations that slow down your achievement in speaking skill?
15. Does literature have any positive effect on you, in terms of learning the language? How?
16. What are your views regarding making a connection between 'literature' and speaking skills'?
17. What kind of teachers would work well in teaching English, especially literature in a language classroom? Why?
18. What kind of materials/activities will work effectively in teaching English in a language classroom? Why?
19. What kind of environment will work well in teaching English in a language classroom? Why?
20. What is your overall impression on the textbook prescribed by the textbook board?

## **APPENDIX 9: POST-TREATMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS**

1. Comment on what the class was about?
2. How did you find the 'new' approach proposed by the study?
3. How does the proposed teaching approach affect the classroom dynamics?
4. Did you feel motivated and encouraged to respond, orally?
5. How did you find the methodology followed in the class?
6. Was it any different from the traditional methodology? In what respect?
7. Did the prediction questions/activity types/ clues and prompts given, and other language-based approaches help you to understand the literary text better?
8. Do you feel more confident to work on your own on a literary text, from now on and talk about it and able to relate it to your daily life usage of the language?
9. Mention positive and negative aspects of the teaching approach used in the treatment class.
10. What is your opinion about the activities used in the class?
11. How did you find working in pairs/groups?
12. What skills do you think you have been using while trying to answer the prediction questions?  
For example: prediction, argumentation and discussion skills.
13. How about dealing with any literary piece and not only the prescribed one? Do you think that will have any positive effect on you in relation to speaking skills? Why. Why not?
14. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease your motivation in learning literature and become confident in using the language, orally?
15. If you were the teacher in the literature class, how would you teach the lesson?

## **APPENDIX 10: PRE-TREATMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

1. What does 'literature' mean to you?
2. Do you think it is important to introduce literary texts in the English classroom? Why? Why not?
3. Are you interested in literature? What sort of texts/genres of literature are you interested in? Why?
4. Do you try out texts outside the syllabus in the classroom? Why?
5. Do you think literary texts would be able to motivate your students to read more and express themselves better in English language? How?
6. What are your experiences with English literature in the classroom? In your opinion, how do you think literature should be taught?
7. What are the teaching strategies that you can currently use in the classroom? What are your opinions of teaching strategies for literature used by yourself in the classroom?
8. Do you face any problem in the literature class? What sort of problems do you face?
9. How can these problems be overcome?
10. What is your opinion regarding the current methodology used in the classroom?
11. What are your opinions about speaking skills in English and the standard of spoken English, in general?
12. Do you think the students need/want to speak in English? Why?
13. What are the plus points that help develop your students' achievement in speaking skills?
14. What are the limitations that slow down your students' achievement in speaking skill?
15. Does literature have any positive effect on you, in terms of teaching the language? How?
16. What are your views regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills'?
17. What kind of materials/activities will work effectively in teaching English in a language classroom? Why?
18. What kind of environment will work well in teaching English in a language classroom? Why?
19. Do you think there is any relationship between subject/faculty and performance (considering issues like, staff/qualification, study materials, teaching hours, no. of staff, number of students, etc.)?
20. What is your overall impression on the textbook prescribed by the textbook board?

## **APPENDIX 11: POST-TREATMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TEACHER**

1. Were the overall approach and activities used in the class any different than other lessons taken in the traditional classroom?
2. How did you find the methodology followed in the class? Was it any different from the traditional methodology? In what respect?
3. How did you find the 'new' approach proposed by the study?
4. How does the proposed teaching approach affect the classroom dynamics? Did you feel motivated and encouraged to teach?
5. How did you find the learners reacting to the new approach? Mention:
  - positive aspects of the teaching approach used in the treatment class
  - negative aspects of the teaching approach used in the treatment class
6. What is your opinion about the proposed approach after your own experience with the approach? What do you think about the teaching process? Was it:
  - Systematic?
  - Appropriate for your own objectives and students' needs?
  - Too complicated?
  - Difficult to handle?
7. Did the prediction questions/ activity types/ given clues and prompts, and other language based approaches help you to make the students understand the literary text better? Did they have any effect on motivation and encouragement? Do you think the teaching approach was beneficial for students? In what sense? What is your opinion about the activities used in the class?
8. Did you find the students using their prediction, argumentation and discussion skills while trying to give answer to the prediction activities?
9. Do you feel more confident to work on your own on any literary text to initiate talk among the students that will make them confident to use the language in their daily life, as and when required?
10. How about dealing with any 'literary piece', not only the prescribed ones? Do you think that will have any positive effect on the learners' speaking skills? Why, why not?
11. How did you find the students working in pairs/groups? How did you find yourself seeing them working independently in pairs/groups? Did you find pairing them easy or difficult?
12. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of your students for learning literature and become confident in using the language, orally?
13. What do you think about the integration of language and literature in the English classroom?

14. What are your views regarding making a connection between 'literature' and 'speaking skills'?
15. Would you consider adapting the proposed approach in your classes and utilising simple prediction questions to help students develop their speaking skills?
16. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease the motivation of the students in learning literature and help them develop in their spoken skills?
17. What are the most important factors which increase/decrease your motivation in teaching literature and help your students develop in their spoken skills?

## APPENDIX 12: OBSERVATION SHEET 1

**Observation Sheet 1, on task behaviour: individual student (Adapted from Hopkins, 1985 and Peacock, 1997)**

Observer/Teacher:

Description of text:

Activity/ level of activity:

Day: , Duration of class: 45 minutes-1 hour

Subjects: , Age group:

**Instructions:**

- These observations are designed to measure levels of learner’s motivation generated by the teaching materials in use.
- Do not participate in the lesson. Place yourself in an unobtrusive position in the classroom
- Start the observation when the teacher begins to teach his/her lesson. Concentrate whether the students work together in groups or pairs, and whether they make any contributions to the discussions
- Observe students one by one, consecutively clockwise around the class. Try to identify students by name.
- Periodically, (i.e. every 30 or 45 seconds) write down the category best describing the observed student’s behaviour at that moment, then pass on to the next student.
- Write the number in sequence down the Data Sheet
- Continue until all students have been observed 12 times, then complete Observation Sheet 2.
- Students are categorised in 2 different categories: 1 = student off task, 2 = student on-task

On-task: engaged in the discussions and pedagogic work of the day

Off-task: complete lack of attention to the lesson and/or set task

Student No.	Scan No. 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												

## APPENDIX 13: OBSERVATION SHEET 2

**Observation Sheet 2, on task behaviour: overall class motivation (Adapted from D Nunan, 1989 and Peacock, 1997)**

Observer/Teacher:

Description of text:

Activity/ level of activity:

Observation focus: levels of student motivation generated by the teaching approach and materials in use. 3 is an average mark for any one item.

Instructions:

- This sheet is for observing the class as a whole, *not* individual students
- Complete this sheet when the lesson/activity is drawing to a close
- Circle ONE number for each statement below.
- Add final comments at the bottom of the sheet if you wish.

1. How involved in the learning process the students are.

Not very involved    1    2    3    4    5    very involved

2. The level of student concentration on the learning task.

Low    1    2    3    4    5    high

3. The students are enjoying the activity

Not really    1    2    3    4    5    very much so

4. The students are paying persistent attention to the learning task

Not really    1    2    3    4    5    very much so

5. Student activity level (effort/intensity of application)

Low    1    2    3    4    5    high

6. The students find the teaching materials interesting

Not really    1    2    3    4    5    very much so

7. The materials in use are challenging for students

Not really    1    2    3    4    5    very much so

8. The prediction activities used were able to trigger imagination in the students

Not really    1    2    3    4    5    very much so



9. The students felt motivated to express themselves  
Not really 1 2 3 4 5 very much so

10. The approaches in use are appropriate for a student-centred class  
Not really 1 2 3 4 5 very much so

## APPENDIX 14: SAMPLES OF PRE-AND POST-TREATMENT INTERVIEW

### TRANSCRIPTS: Teachers and Students

#### 1. Pre-treatment Interview Transcript: Teacher

Answer 1: Literature is the reflection life and has universal value. Literary pieces are read in every country around the world. Different genres of literature, i.e. poem, story, novel, etc., make us think and realise about the people and the society in which we live. We look for ourselves in the pages of a book, we become one with the characters in a writing and try to feel the pains and pangs of others. So, to me literature is the reflection of life mingled with the rich imagination of the writer.

Answer 2: Of course it will. If they (the students) read quality literature, for example, good stories, they are likely to be motivated to read further. From books in English, they will enrich their stock of vocabulary, sentence pattern, etc. Moreover, they will start thinking about characters. They will develop their language ability, and will know about cultures of different societies apart from their own. They will be able to compare between cultures around world and realise about the good and bad sides of those cultures.

Answer 3: Yes, I like to read novels. Good novels represent the people of a particular time and their life-styles. Novels give us insight into the lives of men and women.

Answer 4: No, generally we do not try any other text in the classroom. However, sometimes I do refer to books that I have read in my childhood. I ask them to read those for pleasure. I mention that I liked those books and they may also find them interesting.

Answer 5: Of course. Literature will motivate the students to read more. We enjoy a text when it attracts us and gives us pleasure. If the students like any particular writing it is likely that they will continue to read other books by the same author. Not only that, through English literature students will learn, for example, some language components. They will learn grammar, vocabulary that will help them become more confident in their thoughts. A development in thought and better vocabulary stock is likely to contribute to an improved speaking. A student's writing skill will also develop. Therefore, I believe it is a must to introduce good literature in the class.

Answer 6: Yes, my experience in English class is not too bad. Because the method that is being followed in the class is absolutely teacher-oriented. The emphasis is put on the teacher's thoughts and point of views. So when I am delivering lectures and the students seem to be paying attention, then I naturally feel that I have taught them well. So my experience from a teacher's point of view is not bad. I can say that I feel satisfied because I have managed the class well. However, it can not be ascertained as to how far the student has benefited from the class, or how much she has learnt...well, I don't think we think about this issue that much. We teach students in order to prepare them for the syllabus-based examination. We try to follow the syllabus fully. We talk about the issues, which are likely to be tested during the examination. Therefore my experience in the classroom as a teacher is good. But again I should mention that there still remains the question about how far the students have learnt or benefited from the lesson. Now, literature is able to evoke thoughts in us. Reading literature helps us to understand each other better. We learn about the society, human predicament, relationships, about countries, etc. Therefore, I think, it will be better to give the students a chance to think and express their feelings without imposing the teachers' opinion on them. In reality, we do not usually encourage them to do so.

Answer 7: This year we are dealing with a newly written textbook. I try to follow the guidelines mentioned in the teachers' guide. In addition, what I sometimes do is that, I ask two or three students to think about a given topic and the following day I ask them to initiate discussion on that. I also ask them to make a scrapbook on a topic.

Answer 8: Yes, I do face quite a few problems. Our classes are basically teacher-dominated and syllabus-oriented. Students are motivated to prepare for examination. So, when I am teaching literature, they may consider that to be a waste of time, as they need not attempt any questions on literary texts in their final examination. Therefore, they don't have the urge to listen to me with attention. Even when they do listen, I wonder whether I am imposing my thoughts on them. Another problem is with difficult words and language usage. With language difficulties, we must exactly translate the text to the students to make it easier to them. Sometimes this leads to boredom and disinterest in the lesson. Demotivation on the students' part is a problem. They want the teacher to deal with everything regarding study. They believe in spoon-feeding and they are only interested in the items that have the possibility of being tested in examinations. This is not a good thing for literature class; it is important that the students are given chance to think following their reading. They should not only concentrate on examinations because it gets in the way of real learning and understanding. However, there is no reason why they should not concentrate in such exam-oriented study under the prevailing examination system.

Answer 9: In order to overcome these problems we need to teach by following some interesting methods, which should encourage the students to be attentive in the class.

Answer 10: Before opining on the currently used teaching method, I want say a word about the prevailing teaching/learning situation. We, each of us have to take about 5 classes everyday. We are under pressure to complete the syllabus in an inadequate amount of time. The Number of students in one class is quite large. Under the circumstances, the present method that we follow in the class is good enough for finishing the content of the syllabus. However, I am doubtful about the students' achievement in terms of language learning. The current method does not give the student any scope to think about the topic or encourage them to be innovative. As a teacher, I ask the student to memorise what I say in order to ensure a high score in exam paper. Therefore, this method is quite effective for examination purposes.

Answer 11: The standard of speaking language and skills in English is not good in general, although we learn English from the primary classes, where English is given equal time and weight as Bengali. Students coming from Bengali medium schools have a good stock of vocabulary and grammar and yet they are quite weak in spoken English. One major weakness lies in the fact that usually we don't speak in English. There is hardly practice done either at school, or at home. If some one tries to speak in English, her efforts, in may cases, may be regarded as indecent. Some may think that she is trying to show off in front of the elderly people. This attitude towards speaking in English lowers down the standard of spoken English in our country.

Answer 12: Yes, of course. To be able to communicate with the world, for higher studies, to increase self-confidence, and to be able to overcome the problems that might occur in a situation from not knowing English, one has to be competent in the language. Practicing speaking will make one competent and interested to learn more. With the confidence growing, one will feel motivated to read more. One will find better opportunities available in the job sector. Self-confidence will help one to overcome the nervousness and the thought 'I won't be able to speak'. The students want to speak in English to feel better and more confident.

Answer 13: The students know English grammar well because they have learnt grammar since their primary classes. They know how to write correct sentences. Their vocabulary stock is also good. Therefore, if they can overcome their shyness and try to speak out I think they will be able to communicate quite well. The main problem is that they don't practice. They do understand English programmes on radio and television and learn a great deal of English from there. Now, if they were able to make use of their learning, they would surely develop in their speaking skills. Students are interested to speak in English, which is another plus point.

**Answer 14:** We don't speak in English ourselves in the classroom. During English lessons we speak more in Bengali than in English to make the students understand the text fairly quickly. In order to develop their speaking skills, students neither practice speaking in English at home nor with their friends. In many families, speaking in English is regarded as something odd. The student also does not feel encouraged to express in English in the class due to her shyness and the thought about the reaction of others to her efforts. There is no test taken on speaking during examination, and this fact contributes to the thought that writing correct English equals achieving competency in the language. Emphasis is put on writing skills and therefore the teachers are found to be putting their effort on developing students' writing ability only.

**Answer 15:** Yes, of course. Personally, I feel it is important to include literary pieces in the textbook. I always read literary pieces in Bengali. I believe that reading good books allows me to use and apply my thoughts and ideas gathered from the texts in the class. Literature can play a vital role in teaching effectively. Through literature, I will be able to develop my own language and so will the students. In literature a single word is used to convey many meanings or messages. This increases our sense of understanding along with our vocabulary stock. One sentence can be expressed in many ways and one word can be used in many different situations depending on the context. Learning the use of language from literature makes it easier to use the appropriate word in the appropriate situation. It is also comparatively easy to learn dialogue and everyday English from literary pieces. Students are generally interested in the colourful and interesting world of literature. Therefore, it is more likely that they will learn the language from literature without getting bored. For example, if an interesting story is introduced in the class it is likely that out of curiosity, students will be keen to finish the story at home. However, may I point out here that if we continue to follow the traditional method in teaching, then I don't think that we will be able to achieve anything better. Students will still be inclined towards memorisation.

**Answer 16:** When the student learns the language from literature fairly quickly, she will also grow in self-confidence that will encourage her to speak more. Like a child, when she keeps practicing, she is sure to have improved speaking skills. On successfully achieving overall language development, it is likely that she will be interested and motivated to use the language in her daily life.

**Answer 17:** Materials could include literary pieces and topics based on real situations. They need to be easy, interesting and captivating. Subject matter should be suitable to the age and taste of students. It should be practical, so that it can be of use in real life situations. Classics need to be there to develop taste in good literature. Students should be encouraged to speak in English from primary classes so that their oral proficiency is improved. Activities need to be connected to real life so that students feel interested and excited and not get bored. For example, if they are asked to enact a play they will learn dialogues from that and at the same time the activity of acting itself would make them interested in the play.

**Answer 18:** The environment needs to be friendly so that the students are able to discuss and argue matters freely. This will help them talk intelligently when required. Students should not be allowed to speak only in Bengali during English lessons. If a student is not able to express herself adequately at the beginning, she should be given a chance to try again. The teacher herself should mainly speak in English classes. She should also be more patient in acknowledging the fact that students will make mistakes and her role is to encourage them to try again.

**Answer 19:** Yes, there is a relation between subject and performance. If the teacher is qualified but not able to teach effectively, then her performance will not be good enough, although she is good in her subject. Students will not be able to learn much from her. Regarding study materials, well, if study materials are too difficult and not interesting that will prove problematic. Both teachers and students will find them boring. Therefore, if something is not good enough to evoke interest in the students it is likely to lead the teacher towards disinterest in it too. She will not like to teach it in the class, because the students will be non-attentive to the lesson. The next concern is the length of lesson. If the teaching time is either too long or too short, it will pose problem, in both cases. If it is

lengthy there is the question of the teacher performing equally well for a long time. It is difficult to engage students' attention for long periods. If the teaching period is too short then due to time constraints, even a competent teacher may not be able to do what she had planned for the lesson. Inadequate number of teachers and staff result in a heavy workload on each of them affecting their performance. For example, when a teacher is to take five successive classes in one single day, it is quite natural that she will lack energy and motivation when its time for her to take the fifth lesson. Her performance is sure to lack enthusiasm.

Large class size is another problem. It is not possible to teach each of the 60-70 students individually and ask them questions. It is a difficult task to catch everyone's attention. If the room itself is not large enough it will result in congestion and again if it is a large class then there is the necessity to install speakers so that the teacher's voice can reach the last row. If the teacher is to depend on her voice only in such a large class, there remains doubt about the students at the back listening to her. Therefore, students sitting there will not be able to listen to the teacher and obviously will lose interest in the class and after a while will become engaged in their own conversation.

Answer 20: The syllabus is neither so good nor so bad. It has many language activities in it. However, there is almost no literature included. The book is user friendly and the Teacher's Guide is quite clear. But I would say that proper attention was not given in selecting subject matters. Subjects and topics are not good enough to evoke students' interest or enjoyment. There are five poems in the syllabus but the students already know that they do not have to answer any questions from those poems in the examination. Therefore, they are not at all interested in studying them. Also, the teachers do not feel encouraged to spend time on poems which are not connected to the exam. Thus the students do not have a chance to develop their interest in poetry. Sometimes, even if the teacher wants to deal with poetry, she may find that half of the students are non-attentive. The teacher's ultimate attitude is 'never mind...it's not important for the exam, anyway.'

## **2. Post-treatment Interview Transcript: Teacher**

Answer 1: The overall approach and the activities used in the classroom were completely different from the traditional methodology that we usually use in the class. The students received clear instructions at the beginning of the class about the activities to be undertaken. For example, they were to take part in prediction activities; any answer they come up with would be correct if supported by logic. They will not be allowed to repeat answers, however, if a student still wanted to stick to her point, she then had to establish that supported by another logic. They should follow a queue in answering questions, may use a dictionary, and should be ready with 4/5 options for each question. They should write down the points they are making to help them answer the questions quickly. We usually do not follow any of these in a traditional classroom. Therefore, the new method was completely different. Moreover, the class was very student-oriented, as opposed to current traditional practice.

Answer 2: I liked the new method that I followed in the class very much. It is completely different from the traditional method that we usually follow. Well, let me point out how is it different. If I had to teach 'The Luncheon', following the traditional method, I would then be the central figure in the class. I would read out and translate the whole story to them in Bengali with synonyms of difficult words. I would also prepare answers to questions and ask students to memorise those for the examination and would give them some written homework. No such thing happened during the new approach. I was no longer the centre of the class, rather only acted as a guide. Whereas in the traditional method I would be in the central position. I would read, make them understand, and they would just listen to me. They would listen to me, go home and get ready for the exam.

Answer 3: I think the approach that I had followed in the class is very effective. The students were given an opportunity to think about the issues concerned. Moreover, they had to express their feelings with logic. They went through self-learning. They had to participate in group-work activities, which helped them to understand each other better. This will enable them to cooperate better with their

family, friends, and other people in the society and act accordingly. Additionally through speaking English they will improve their speaking skills, which will be very helpful in their future.

Answer 4: This approach gave a new direction in the classroom dynamics. The method that was followed in the class is completely different from the traditional one. The students participated in the class with vigour and enthusiasm. They felt motivated to try answers with logic. Each student attempted to answer better than the other did. They felt encouraged to do that. After being exposed to the treatment class for a few days, a great increase in their ability to predict and put their point logically became noticeable. This shows that they were very motivated and encouraged. Since their mistakes were ignored, they tried out answers with confidence. They also knew that as a teacher I am not going to provide the answer on their behalf. Therefore, they really tried to answer after giving proper thought to the issues.

Answer 5: The method gave the students a chance to think and answer by themselves, which happens rarely in a traditional classroom. Each of them had to think and put an argument in support of their answer, which was a different experience for them.

At the same time paying proper attention and weight to each of their opinions added to the fun of the lesson, because in a traditional classroom they were not expected to initiate different answers. We as teachers do not allow them to be innovative. For example, there was a question in section 6: 'How is the writer feeling at this point?' to which some of the girls have replied for example, 'he felt like killing her'. In any traditional classroom this sort of answer was unexpected and not allowed. The positive side of the treatment class was that students were allowed to express their thoughts freely. We never allow them to do so in a traditional classroom. Moreover, I didn't point out their minor mistakes neither with pronunciation nor with expression. Therefore, they expressed their thoughts with enthusiasm. Moreover, they were at ease, knowing that, unless it was necessary, their minor mistakes would be ignored not constantly corrected. This helped to overcome shyness. This was an important side of the class. Through this method they will be able to read more good books and learn the language directly from them and will develop their speaking skills a good deal.

Answer 6: The teaching process was very systematic. At the beginning of the class both the students and the teacher exactly knew what they were expected to do during the lesson. Clear instructions were given in this regard; I have mentioned this point in my answer to question 1. The questions, clues, prompts, etc. were all methodically arranged with each section, which again helped the students to think about those systematically. They did not find it difficult to think about their answers. Both my objectives and the students' needs were achieved. For example, if I asked them about the dishes that the lady guest had, or about her teeth, or about the most interesting feature of hers, I was sure that without depending on a memorised answer, they would still be able to answer each of the questions without hesitation. They would not face any problem in answering text-based questions meant for examinations. The story was divided into nine sections, each section having questions set on it, with clues that helped the students to think and answer after proper consideration. This helped them to develop their thought process, simultaneously they learnt to think about different aspects of the story and decide upon different dimensions. They were given a chance to analyze the characters from different angles, which will enable them to perform better in their exam. I believe if they keep studying following this method, they will gradually develop the urge to read more and good literary pieces, (e.g. stories and novels) and will be able to appreciate good writings and also be critical of them. That is they will be able to analysis a write up from different angles and dimensions.

Answer 7: The prediction activities, clues, prompts, and other language-based approaches helped the students a lot to understand the story better. Well, about motivation. They felt much more motivated and encouraged. As part of the process, we went through 1 or 2 sections in one lesson but didn't allow them to read the next section beforehand. Instead, students were asked to predict what might happen next, what might happen between the characters, and so on. They were very motivated to make predictions on different issues. They thought about their answers and this was evident from their responses in the class. Well, about the benefits...yes, if we teach the learners in this process it will be of much benefit to them. If the method was followed regularly, the students would be motivated to

read in order to understand. They would be able to think and compare the story from different angles, initiating a better understanding of human relationships and situational reactions which would be useful in real circumstances. Here they were asked to think, predict and guess in as many ways as they can as regards situations and their outcomes.

The whole process was practical in the sense that they were to integrate their reading with the events and situations in life around them. Now while considering the traditional examination, it can be said that the new method has enabled them to discuss and think about an issue in detail, which will again help them to answer any question set in line with the traditional method. Now, personally I think that these kinds of texts will motivate the students to think deeper and will also trigger their imagination; will enable them to answer with logic, and to analyse characters; will motivate them to read good books, and will help them develop their overall knowledge of the language. From the writings they will learn different expressions and culture specific words. They will develop their capacity to work in groups, and most importantly they will be interested in self-learning which is very important in learning. Without self-interest and motivation nobody can learn anything in depth. Therefore one who is interested to know more will be motivated to read and learn more by oneself. The process that was followed in the class was totally student-oriented. Here they were provided with some clues that set them thinking about the plot of the story. Then they started reading the story and the questions were set in a manner that made them think about the possible answers. They had to think logically. This helped them realise that from now on they will be able to handle any text by themselves. Therefore, I believe this process would be very helpful in their process of language learning.

**Answer 8:** Yes, because they had to establish their answers through logic and to do so they had to use their prediction, argumentation and discussion skills.

**Answer 9:** Yes, Of course, it is evident from the way they have started to express their thoughts. If this method is followed in every class from now on, then I am sure that they will achieve an overall language improvement, especially in their spoken skills, fairly soon. Moreover, they are likely to be able to use their knowledge in their daily life.

**Answer 10:** Of course. Not only this particular text but also any text taught following the proposed method is sure to help improve learners speaking skills to a great extent. Here, they will learn it as the children do. A child learns through listening and in the same way, by practising to speak they will have improvement in their expressions. Not only that, they will learn about the specific style and beauty of the language in that particular literary text. They will also learn from the literary piece, different ways in which to express themselves in certain situations.

**Answer 11:** During the lessons, the students helped each other by working in groups or in pairs. For example, if one didn't know the meaning of a particular word, she asked her friend to look it up in the dictionary. So one helped the other finding the word. Again, if somebody did not understand a sentence, the other helped by explaining that to her. Therefore, there prevailed a healthy tendency to work in groups. Moreover, the ones who were able to understand things quicker were found to be helping the less quick ones by trying to make the point easier to them. They read the text by themselves, line by line and through discussion made things clear to themselves about the storyline or the plot. They discussed and interpreted the text by themselves. In addition, if somebody repeated any answer that was already initiated by someone else, then students were quick to identify that and said: 'why did you say that?' This is an indication of their ability to work in groups. I did not face any problem making them work in groups. In fact, I appreciate their tendency to work together.

**Answer 12:** The main motivating issue in reading literature could be the use of proper methodology in the class. Following a completely teacher-oriented method, where the teacher is everything, will not create an interest about literature among students. When the teacher deals with a poem or a story in a traditional classroom, she just imposes her idea and interpretations on the students. The students aren't allowed to think individually or express their opinion. Under this circumstance, the topic turns out to be difficult for her, because she has to remember about the writer of the story, whatever the

writer has expressed in the story and at the same time, has to remember what the teacher said about the story.

Now while trying to deal with all these issues simultaneously, she develops an opinion of her own too that leads her to confusion with the thought about the correct interpretation. Who is right, the teacher or me? This eventually makes her disinterested in literature. Difficult writings demotivate them in literary pieces too. Now in order to motivate them to read literature, the teacher needs to change her technique of teaching. She needs to indicate a connection between imagination of the students and the text. Literature will become an interesting subject if the subject matter is interesting and easy and suitable for the age of the students and if the teacher makes the cultural references easy to them. Also, I don't think that it was always necessary to understand each word unless it was absolutely required in understanding the text in question. The more the student reads, the more developed her language would become. She will become confident not only during exam but she will also become able to use her knowledge while expressing orally.

Answer 13: I think literature in the language classroom will help students' language development considerably. From these lessons, students will learn language skills, especially speaking and writing. Any literary text suitable for them can serve the purpose. From literature they will develop their knowledge about English literature and understand the beauty and grandeur of the language and will be able to use them when necessary, thus they will have development both in their written and spoken language.

Answer 14: To develop our students' speaking ability and skills, appropriate use of literature is a strong plus point. Great literature means great language. Each writer is unique in his or her style, presentation and use of language. If speaking English is taught through literature I am sure that the students will be able to learn about the beauty of the language through literary pieces. They will learn at the same time, sentence structure and grammatical forms, comparatively easily. Not only that, the class would be interesting, unlike the one on grammar. Through reading, perhaps even without being aware or realizing the fact of learning, students will learn the language and this will become a fairly easy task for them. They won't find the need to memorise the answers anymore. Usually in the class, we teach them grammar and structure and ask them to learn those by heart.

Answer 15: I can very strongly say that the proposed approach that is teaching literature for developing speaking skills through prediction activities is a very effective method of teaching. The students had to talk a lot during the lesson, which made them self-confident. They developed their skill of argumentation; thought process and learnt to talk intelligently. They also learnt how to learn from each other. If this method is followed in the class, I am sure that the students will improve in their speaking skills to a great extent. Of course, I will certainly use this approach in my class from next year although there is not much literature in the syllabus. However, I will attempt to teach whatever there is, through simple prediction exercises. I know that gradually my students will be able to speak better, so will I, by practicing the language with them. Because talking to them will help me overcome my own shyness. The new approach is really helpful and effective for both students and teachers.

Answer 16: I think that the current methodology used in the class is the prime demotivating and depressing factor in teaching literature. Sometimes the teacher herself presents the text to the students in a boring manner. As a teacher, I just read out the text to them. I am the one who reads and makes an oral presentation, whereas the students are expected to listen to me without interrupting. English is learnt as a foreign language and is not our mother tongue, therefore, the learners usually learn English just in order to cope with the lesson and to pass the examination. Only a few will be found reading books in English, or an English newspaper. However, they do watch television programmes in English. Since there is almost no practice done in the language, if the teacher presents the text in a boring way in the class and does the lecturing by herself, there is no scope given to the students to develop their speaking skills and ability. That's why I believe that even after completing ten years of



learning English, a student even after completing her MA degree in any subject, remains very weak especially in speaking.

The teachers encounter another problem. Most of them are not trained to teach and therefore are not always aware of the effective methods that should be used in a language classroom. Teachers need to be aware of the effective ways of teaching. Some other problems include large class size, tight schedule, time limitation, pressure with syllabus, etc. The allotment of classes is not adequate compared to the syllabus load and it is not easy to deal with and help so many students within such a limited time. These are the demotivating factors in the English classroom.

If we wanted to change the situation we have to change, ourselves first. We need to change our teaching strategy and technique. Activities need to be interesting, for example after showing pictures to them, students can be asked to talk about those. Students should be given the freedom to speak the way they like without being stopped and especially whenever they make a mistake. After a while we will notice that they are speaking with confidence. We don't actually give them any such opportunity. There is the need for teacher training. Moreover, students should be given an opportunity to read good books. School libraries need to be resourceful, and the teachers need to encourage the students to read books of famous writers outside the syllabus. We don't really do things that we should. For example, we don't use video or charts or flash cards during the lessons. But the fact is if we want we can actually introduce interesting activities into the class to enhance the students speaking ability.

Answer 17: One main demotivating factor on the part of teacher could be that in a literature class she needs to do everything by herself. She has to prepare the answers to the questions, find out synonyms for words, translate the text to make the students understand it, and so on. Everything needs to be handled by the teacher, for example delivering prepared notes for the students to copy - A to Z. Moreover, if the teacher herself does not understand something, it can not be expected that she will be able to make the topic easy to her students. She will end up being disinterested in taking the class at all. In such cases both the student and the teacher will automatically lose interest. In addition to this, time constraint, student number and heavy workload are other demotivating factors. The teacher does not always feel interested in teaching literature due to the syllabus constraint and examination system. In exams, students do not have to attempt any question from the literature that is included in the syllabus. Some teachers consider literature to be something difficult, which will be even more difficult to the students. Therefore in order to motivate students to read literature, firstly the teachers and educators who are responsible for designing syllabus need to be more careful. They need to select materials carefully to suit the learner's taste and age. Teachers should be given training time to time. Interesting activities should be devised in order to motivate students. Most importantly, the speaking component needs to be tested at least in primary classes. Only then from the beginning will the students take this issue seriously.

Teacher's poor knowledge of English literature, too many students in one class, time constraint and disinterest about literature from the teacher herself, are the most important demotivating factors amongst teachers in teaching literature in the English classroom. To improve the existing situation, we need to solve the problems mentioned earlier. If we are able to find some solution to the problems, it can be said that it is possible to bring a positive change in the student's weakest area - that is their English speaking ability.

### **3. Pre-treatment Interview Transcript: Student**

Answer 1: Stories, poems, lyrics, novels, detective stories, science fictions, these are 'literature' to me.

Answer 2: Yes, I think it is important to introduce literary texts in the class. Firstly we will learn grammar, structure, vocabulary, etc, directly from literature. We will learn the language comparatively easily. If the lesson has some literature in it, it will not turn out to be a boring session. However, if we are not taught in a friendly and interesting manner, then the text in question will

become something difficult to us. I can also learn about different situations, and events from many dimensions, from the subject matter and the plot of the literary piece. These can be directly applied to real life situations. The world of literature is vast and broad, it presents life in many different perspectives, so I think it is good to have literature in the classroom.

Answer 3: Yes, I myself like literature. I generally like short stories and poems. Each line of a poem deals with emotion and carries deep, inner meaning. Usually it also has a plot. Although a short story is short in length, it encompasses a rich plot and usually a very interesting theme. It depicts life. The characters represent our life, different aspects, dilemmas and emotions of life, for example, happiness, sadness, dynamics of life - all are nicely projected through short stories. The open ended criteria of a short story also sets us to think, opens up our imagination, and deepens our thoughts.

Answer 4: Yes, I read quite a lot outside the syllabus content. I like to read storybooks, comics, poems and lyrics. Through reading books in English I can learn the language by myself to some extent. I read additional books in order to cope with friends and to be able to communicate with them on different subjects. I learn a lot of words and expressions from these books and I enjoy learning in this way.

Answer 5: Yes, I think as I will read different types of literature with enjoyment, I will keep reading them with interest. As my language will improve through literature, therefore, I believe that this will lead me to converse in English better and with confidence. I will regain confidence to take part in discussions without feeling shy and will be able to express my opinion on the subject.

Answer 6: In our textbook we do not have much literary pieces and what we have is not that interesting. The class is entirely teacher oriented. She reads out the text, and translates the text into Bengali to make it easier to us. We learn the answers to the text-based questions from her. The answer is always textual and we just need to memorise it by heart. Therefore, if we are expected to be creative later on it becomes very difficult on our part, as we are very teacher-dependent. This however is suitable for the current examination system. We are taught English literature in Bengali. If English is the medium of instruction we are unable to cope, perhaps due to our habit. According to me literature should be taught in a way that would help broaden our thoughts and imagination and will help us in learning and using the language in real life. Also while discussing an issue it is important to draw parallel examples from life.

Answer 7: At present the teacher delivers a lecture and translates the whole text into Bengali. She prepares the answers for us and asks us to memorise those for reproduction during examinations, otherwise there remains the risk of scoring low. Our creative thoughts or ideas are neither welcomed nor encouraged and the attitude of the teacher and her style of teaching make us scared of her. We start thinking of English as a hard and difficult subject.

Answer 8: Yes, if I need to ask the teacher I usually don't do that out of fear of being teased by her. Moreover, as the teacher always tends to be attentive towards the good ones, at times, I feel lonely, left out and demotivated. Sometimes some cultural references are not clear to me. Also I face difficulty understanding some expressions made by the characters.

Answer 9: Firstly the teacher needs to be friendly and attentive to everyone. If we are allowed to discuss the text, it will help overcome our English phobia to some extent. Instead of introducing literature as something very grave and serious, I think its better to introduce it as something interesting and easy to handle. We also should talk and discuss in English to reduce our fear of the language.

Answer 10: At present our teacher follows the lecture method in the class. She does everything in the class. We learn the answers to each question by heart. We are to produce those in the exam and we are not expected to be creative in our paper. The text-based questions that demand some creativity are not properly handled in the class. In reality, we memorise those answers and again go for rote

learning. Therefore in reality our imaginative faculty does not have a chance to develop, we do not find it worthy to think and think about the language that I can use in real situations. As a result, even after 12 years of learning English as a compulsory subject we end up remaining weak in the language. As the text is always translated in Bengali, we never get any chance to interpret it in different dimensions.

**Answer 11:** In our country students, particularly coming from Bengali medium schools remain weak in English. The weakest area is in speaking. They can read and write but in speaking they lag far behind. Practically speaking, many educated persons are not able to speak in English correctly or fluently. Comparatively the students from English medium schools are quite competent in using the language. If we think in terms of the whole country then this number is not so high. Surely, speaking skills are the weakest skill among general people.

**Answer 12:** English is an important language both at home and abroad. Most of the books for higher studies are written in English. In the job sector we need English. In government and non-government positions competency in English language is a pre-requisite. Competency on speaking English is an important criterion for selection, and is mentioned in the adverts. In foreign countries, in most cases, English works as a survival language. Moreover, attitude and behaviour of Students coming from English medium schools could be snobbish to some extent. Therefore, to be able to talk to them or to take part in competitions with them, I think it is necessary that we become competent in the language, especially in speaking skills.

**Answer 13:** I need to practice speaking with people around me, for example, with my teacher, friends and family members. English lessons should be delivered in English. If more literary texts are introduced in the class, it is likely that we will learn English with pleasure and more quickly. A discussion on selected radio and TV programmes and also on interesting topics from newspapers, magazines, or books, during English lessons would help us develop our speaking skills. I think I will be able to develop my skills quite fast if these were followed in the class.

**Answer 14:** The attitude of the teacher, teasing of friends and family members, non-practice in speaking in English, and frequent fault-finding attitude of the teacher, while I make the effort to speak in English, can be quite demotivating and slow down my progress.

**Answer 15:** Yes, literature has a positive effect on me as it opens up a wide world in front of me. I learn English, and many aspects of the language, that could be societal or cultural, etc from literature. Moreover, it gives me insight into human life communications that take place between people. Thus, I can learn the language in a better way. The world of literature is able to evoke curiosity in me that makes me interested to know and learn more. Therefore, I think the teacher should introduce more literary pieces in the class and should introduce activities that would motivate us to take part in those. She should make efforts to minimize our phobia in English and should take care not to make the class boring.

**Answer 16:** I think there is a relation between literature and speaking skills. When we read a book we can start discussing about the issues there in the class, thus we will have to practice our speaking skills. We can also learn structure and grammar, also words and phrases from literature, which we can use during a conversation.

**Answer 17:** The teacher needs to discuss the text with us and let us think and suggest different answers. If we are allowed to discuss among ourselves, this will help us become confident and innovative in our thoughts and expression. She must engage us in group and pair work.

**Answer 18:** The text needs to be suitable according to our age, thoughts, and surroundings. It is not wise to bring in any boring text. However, I also believe that a competent teacher would be able to handle even a boring text in an interesting way. Activities should be able to evoke interest, thought,

and insight among us, apart from giving us pleasure. In addition, I think the text must have some message or morale, or deal with some universal themes.

Answer 19: A free and friendly atmosphere in the class would allow us to learn from each other. Our teacher should be more patient with us, especially when we make an attempt to speak in English, so that gradually we become less scared of the language and I think this is very important in learning any language.

Answer 20: Our textbook does not have that much literature in it. I think it will be better to have more literary texts in our syllabus. Activities need to be more innovative. We need more activities on speaking and we must practise them in the class. I think introduction of short stories, poems, etc. would be able to motivate us to read more books in English.

#### **4. Post-treatment Interview Transcript: Student**

Answer 1: The class is on 'literature'. Here we are taught in a manner that is very helpful and motivating. We are developing our imaginative faculty, prediction power, and also our speaking skills. We also feel motivated about English language and literature and are developing our self-confidence. We are able to argue now as we are presenting our answers using appropriate logic and reason.

Answer 2: I am earnestly enjoying the class, because whatever I am saying here is regarded as correct as long as I am able to establish my answer logically. My imaginative faculty is becoming developed and I am given enough time and chance to express myself orally. I am becoming more and more curious to know and learn and as I am expected to support my answer with logic, I am getting better in my argumentation skill.

Answer 3: The class is moving very fast. All of us are involved in the activities and once my turn is over, I am supposed to listen to others carefully in order to note what they are saying and why so that I can prepare myself for my next turn. I am busy thinking about my next answer and thus time passes quickly. All of us have to make the best use of our thinking skills to get ready with an answer. When my fellow classmate says something, I learn from her and her logic and then I can also make use of that particular language and expression later on. During these lessons, none of us is allowed to remain silent. The introverted one, who usually speaks less, also has to come up with her answer. This is how all of us are developing in our self-confidence. We are kept engaged during the whole period without getting any chance to get bored and the class time is passing very fast indeed.

Answer 4: Yes, the method is increasing my motivation a lot because firstly the efforts that I am making are considered as correct if I am able to establish my choice with proper argument and logic. Now, if we were told that the only correct answer is the one suggested by our teacher, then we will learn only one single answer. We won't be able to think any further than that and won't be able to expand out thoughts and imagination. During these lessons, proper attention and emphasis are given to each opinion without us facing any untoward situation for that and therefore we are interested and motivated in the lesson.

Answer 5: Yes, I really am enjoying this method because, here we, the students are the centre of everything. Our teacher throws the question and extracts the answer from us. We are given plenty of chances to speak up. We are given opportunity to think and express ourselves by making use of our logical sense and all of these are helping us to develop our speaking skills. Our grammatical mistakes (minor mistakes) are being ignored and thus we feel motivated and not scared to express our thoughts, rather we feel encouraged to do so.

Answer 6: Yes, this is indeed different from the traditional methodology. Here the students are the centre of everything. We are doing prediction activities, which help us develop our thought process and imagination. Our expressions are regarded as correct. Here, whatever we say is correct, whereas

in the traditional method, the only correct answer is the one that comes from our teacher. Anything other than her words is incorrect. In the traditional method our thoughts and understanding do not have scope to broaden and we are seriously confined in a formulaic situation.

Answer 7: Yes, it will. I am answering the way I want to through the prediction activities. From the clues given in the questions I am able to predict and guess about the characters. What we are learning in the class is used in the next class and the ideas and answers we are initiating are regarded as correct, if logical. If my friend, before me in queue, replies with an answer that I had been thinking of, then very quickly I have to think about another choice or another probable answer. This is how my thinking skill is developing and later on I am able to make use of my thoughts in real life. Also understanding the literary texts in this way will help me to understand other texts better in future.

Answer 8: Yes, I hope to be able to handle other literary texts with confidence from now on. If I don't know any word, I will try to infer and use my imagination or can look it up in the dictionary. I won't need to seek help from others and I will be able to make use of my literary knowledge in my daily life. It will increase my word power as well as my self-confidence. I will be able to use my imaginative faculty freely because the teacher will not point out my mistakes every now and then and thus hinder my free expression. During the lessons, when I am able to express my choice logically, it is considered as correct. The knowledge that I will gather from reading a text will be useful in real life situations. For example, from 'The Luncheon' I have learnt about the situations that may occur in a restaurant, and how to react to different incidents.

Answer 9: If this new method is followed in the class, I am sure that it will eventually develop my imaginative faculty, confidence, and experience about life and I will be able to use my knowledge in real life. For example, now I know how to establish a point and speak logically. My logical expression is regarded as correct and this is motivating me to try and express more, leading to improved speaking skills. I am learning from others because each of my classmates is making use of her own ideas and imagination. I am learning the language, along with vocabulary and grammar-structure. I believe that if I am given a chance to express my own feelings and understanding, I will become less dependent on the teacher and will be less scared of exams. Thus I will achieve better confidence and will feel motivated to speak more by making proper use of my logical sense. I haven't found any negative aspect of this method so far.

Answer 10: We took part in activities such as, matching, open ended questions, discussion, vocabulary exercise, and word-meaning. I have learnt a lot of new words, I am able to imagine and match situations; it was interesting to do pair work. My mistakes were handled in a sympathetic way that helped me become aware of my mistakes. The class was an interesting one and each of us was given equal opportunity to express ourselves.

Answer 11: I enjoyed doing activities in pairs. Through this, I was able to let others know about my thoughts and ideas and vice versa, which I am able to make use in my life. I am able to think and express in many dimensions which are useful in daily life. This is how I am becoming developed in my conversational power and skills. I feel confident to take part in discussions, which is helping me in developing my imaginative faculty. I am also learning from others by sharing each other's views.

Answer 12: I have used my imagination, prediction, arguments, discussion skills, etc. I had to use logic to establish my point. My teacher helped me by giving me a prompt if I became stuck somewhere, and if she was unable to understand me, I clarified my point to her. This is how we proceeded throughout the lesson.

Answer 13: Yes, this will be helpful and interesting. If literature from outside the syllabus is introduced into the class, it will help me in developing my imagination, word-power, speaking skills, knowledge of the world, etc which I will be able to use in real life encounters. As students are initiating different answers, I am learning more and I certainly hope to make use of my knowledge later on.

Answer 14: Literature classes will be interesting if teachers pay proper attention to the students. We must be given adequate time to think in different dimensions and develop our imagination, prediction power, word-power and speaking skills. We must be helped to develop our self-confidence. To make a lesson enjoyable, the teacher needs to create a friendly, congenial atmosphere in the class by not pointing out minor mistakes every moment. If the class is totally teacher oriented, no time is given to express our thoughts, we are made to memorise one single answer and make believe that whatever the teacher says is right and that her answer is the only correct one, then, undoubtedly the class will become quite demotivating. I don't think I will enjoy this sort of class as my learning will become limited, I will go for rote learning, and will never be able to broaden my imagination.

Answer 15: If I were the teacher, first of all, I would make the class a student centred one. I would give them chance to think, and wouldn't tease them if they are some times incorrect. I would engage them in group work. If, at some point, they became stuck, I would help them to overcome the difficulty by providing clues and wouldn't point out mistakes every now and then and thus help them overcome their fear about the subject and me. I would be friendly with them and in addition to the textbook. I would introduce other texts in the class to provide them with additional information. I would be careful enough not to bore them so that the lesson becomes a source of fun and enjoyment. I would teach them in a manner that will discourage memorisation of any answer in particular, but that they develop the skill of understanding the text first. I think if I could follow this method it would help them understand better, and motivate them to read more and learn more in a healthy and happy environment.

**APPENDIX 15: The table of answers from EG on Lesson 1 with indications on use of Bengali**

St. no.	Scan no. 1/Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Scan 6/ Q 5 (repeated)
1	Story	Flower vase	Hotel	Gorgeous	Expensive decoration [in Bengali]	Decorative, expensive wooden furniture [in Bengali]
2	Poem [in Bengali]	Do	Restaurant	5 star hotel	Can see a swimming pool [in Bengali]	Marble statue with fine curving [in Bengali]
3	Story	Do	Night club	Posh	Atmosphere is sophisticated	Soothing lighting
4	Fiction	Do	People having food [in Bengali]	Well decorated	Expensive decoration	Skin of [a] tiger
5	Comedy	Do	Market	Expensive	Duty free shop	Gorgeous light sheds
6	Story	Do	Club	Beautiful sculptures [in Bengali]	Marble and bronze statue	Waiters
7	Historical stories [in Bengali]	Do	Drawing room	Fashionable	Expensive curtains	Original paintings [in Bengali]
8	Comedy	Do	Lobby	Beautiful, expensive flower vase	Decoration of crystal [in Bengali]	Well maintained outside [in Bengali]
9	Novel	Do	Waiting room	Decorative table-chair	Nice curtains	Chandeliers
10	Story	Do	Waiting room	Decorated furnishing	I do not think they are expensive although, at the first sight they look so [in Bengali]	Artistic, professionally done [in Bengali]
11	Poem	Do	Bar	Soothing atmosphere [in Bengali]	The bar outside is nice	Good service
12	Detective story	Do	Restaurant	Less crowded [in Bengali]	Attractive lighting	Expensive drinks available
13	Essay	Do	Hotel	Sculpture of a monkey [in Bengali]	Shining, bronze statue [in Bengali]	Quite place, not for everyone
14	Story	Do	Restaurant	Beautifully decorated	Chandelier [in Bengali]	Good management
15	Science fiction	Do	Hotel	Beautiful light sheds [in Bengali]	Clean dressed and professional waiters	Fine material for the curtains [in Bengali]
16	Poem	Do	Lobby	Nice looking furniture	[Can see some] real, rare plants	Rare show piece
17	Comedy	Do	1	1	Decorative furniture	Decoration is replica, not original
18	Story	Do	Hotel	1	Shinning, decorative cutlery [in Bengali]	People wearing designer clothes
19	Story	Do	1	1	Silver spoons	1
20	Story	Do	Restaurant	Many food items	Dress code maintained [in Bengali]	1

Student no.	Scan no. 7/Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
1	Parents	Friends	Engagement party	Engagement of my best friends.	Opposite characteristics	Selected guests
2	Friends	Family	Wedding reception	Wedding of my aunt	She knew her husband-to-be, have similar tastes [in Bengali]	Crowded but organised
3	Cousins	Colleagues	Birthday party	My friend is turning 16.	Charming girl, her enemy is also invited [in Bengali]	A fine restaurant, soft music
4	Relatives [in Bengali]	Mother	Reception of Jenifer Lopez	To know about her latest movie.	Crowded with journalists	A posh atmosphere
5	Someone my age [in Bengali]	Beloved	Wedding reception	The couple are leaving the country [in Bengali]	Friends and relatives of the couples	Reception hall of a hotel [in Bengali]
6	Sister	Someone close	Meeting of two people	Prospective couples.	Nicely dressed, open-minded	Quite place
7	Brothers and sisters	Husband/wife	Classmates are celebrating examination results[in Bengali]	Future plans.	All friends and favourite teachers	Chinese restaurant
8	Younger brother	Family	Business meeting.	New prospects	Formal tone	Quite atmosphere
9	Whole family, including grandparents	Client	The waiter becomes the customer [in Bengali]	His wishes and dreams.	The waiter and myself	Quite atmosphere
10	Brother	Alone	Marriage anniversary.	30 th anniversary	All relatives from mom and dad's side [in Bengali]	Indian restaurant
11	Grandparents	Elder brother	Cousins having dinner	Meeting cousins who live abroad. [in Bengali]	Cousins of all ages [in Bengali]	Everyone is curious, some want to go abroad as well [in Bengali]
12	Brother-in-law	Cousins	Rag Day, finishing school [in Bengali]	Missing friends.	Friends of nearly 10 years	Everyone wants to talk, quite emotional [in Bengali]
13	Elder brother [in Bengali]	Business partner	Surprise birthday party for dad	Dad has turned 50	Family members	Excitement, nice place for family gathering [in Bengali]
14	Mother	Best friend	Friendship day – opening up secrets to each other [in Bengali]	We will be friends forever [in Bengali]	Friends/cousins	Excitement and tears, not everyone notices though [in Bengali]
15	Elder sister	Grandpa	31 <sup>st</sup> December party.	Chaos.	New people	Noisy
16	Teacher	Parents	Farewell party to the boss.	He was good to us	Colleagues	Formal
17	Sister	Cousins	l	l	l	l
18	Sister	Family	Sister's birthday	How to surprise	Cousin sisters	l



			party.	her		
19	Father	Cousins	Eating out for a change [in Bengali]	Got fed up with our cook at home [in Bengali]	Family members	Quite surrounding [in Bengali]
20	Whole family	Sister	Office party	Annual dinner	Colleagues and their spouses [in Bengali]	Spacious hall room