

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from the Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh



Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain¹, Dr. Md. Abul Kalam Azad², Dr. Md. Zahidul Islam³,
Dr. Md. Kamrul Hasan⁴

^{1,2}Professor, Department of English, Dhaka International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

³Associate Professor, Department of English, Dhaka International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

⁴Associate Professor (Adjunct), BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT: A specific teaching-learning environment frequently governs EFL instruction and learning through assessment. In order to help students improve their four skills of language proficiency and prepare them for a globalized society, English courses are offered at private universities in Bangladesh. Formative and summative assessments are typically used to evaluate students' progress and achievement in the English language throughout their courses. The current study has attempted to investigate the appropriateness of the English assessment system and how it was related to English language curriculums of Bangladeshi private universities. A questionnaire survey was conducted in this quantitative study to collect data from 60 EFL instructors from fifteen private universities in Dhaka. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods with the statistical software SPSS 26.0. The study has discovered that the current assessment system is not perfectly aligned with the EFL curriculums and syllabuses, teaching approach, language materials, and classroom activities of English teachers at Bangladesh's private universities. The study has proposed that the current assessment method needs to be modified to guarantee high-quality EFL instruction and learning in Bangladesh's private universities.

KEYWORDS: EFL teaching, private universities, assessment, impact, and modification.

INTRODUCTION

The way that English is taught and learned is greatly influenced by assessment (Allison, 1999). Depending on its implementation and design, assessment can have both beneficial and bad effects (Ali & Hamid, 2020). Teachers can learn about their students' strengths and weaknesses through assessments (Brookhart, 2023). This knowledge enables teachers to focus on areas like grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing, speaking and listening in order to better fulfill the requirements of their students (Douglas, 2014). Learning objectives are clarified by assessments (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Instructors can match their lesson plans to certain goals, such as enhancing reading comprehension, writing coherence, or pronunciation (Douglas, 2014). Students who receive timely feedback from tests are better able to identify their errors and grow (Banks, 2012). It increases self-confidence in English language proficiency and cultivates a growth mentality (Dimova et al., 2020). Teachers can implement differentiated teaching strategies, such as assigning students to proficiency-level-based groups or giving problematic students extra help, based on assessment results (McMillan, 2007). However, if teachers place too much emphasis on standardized tests, they may disregard more creative or general language abilities in favor of test-specific material (Phakiti, 2020). For example, writing and grammar may be given less attention in the classroom if tests prioritize them above speaking and listening (Douglas, 2014). Besides, high-stakes tests can put teachers and students under strain, making the classroom a stressful place that prevents learning (McNamara, 2000). Teachers can improve learning outcomes and establish a more stimulating and productive learning environment in the classroom by carefully incorporating assessment into English instruction (May & Shohamy, 2017).

All tertiary private universities in Bangladesh provide both credit and non-credit language courses, such as Advanced Reading Strategies and Writing, English Composition, Public Speaking, Technical Writing and Communication, and Basic English or English Fundamental (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). Theoretically, these language courses are created in response to the needs of students

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

in various departments, ensuring that students not only pass tests and earn good grades, but also advance professionally in their careers (Erling, 2017). This is because learning a language involves more than just knowing it; it also entails understanding how to use it in everyday situations (Hossain & Tollefson, 2017). As we've previously addressed, assessment has a big influence on English instruction and learning. Although English language studies are compulsory at all private universities in Bangladesh, researchers have discovered that relatively few students graduate with the accuracy and proficiency in the language needed to compete in the labor market (Hossain & Tollefson, 2017; Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative that appropriate research be done in order to reevaluate the adequacy of the current assessment method in private universities. Based on the opinions of English language teachers, the researcher aims to investigate the usefulness of the current assessment system for assessing English proficiency. Teaching English to non-native speakers is a physically, emotionally, and intellectually demanding job. To effectively teach English, one must be well-versed in the language, its teaching resources, its evaluation system, and how to teach it (Lanteigne et al., 2021). One must also understand how students learn and what it takes to teach them well. English teachers are expected to be well-versed in all areas of teaching and learning in order to help students develop the fundamental language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), increase their understanding of the value of English as a global communication language, prepare them to acquire the linguistic competence needed in a variety of life situations and professions, and enable students to benefit linguistically from English-speaking countries, which would strengthen the ideas of international cooperation (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). Since the assessment system is a crucial and important component of teaching and learning English, English teachers at all levels are thought to have accurate opinions about it, and their opinions may disclose the true nature of the assessments given at that level of education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Assessment is an essential component of the teaching and learning process and is particularly important in language instruction (McNamara, 2000). It is a trustworthy method for assessing how well students understand a subject that the teacher has taught them (McMillan, 2007). Additionally, the students get the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in the subject matter they have learnt (May & Shohamy, 2017). Therefore, assessment is important for both teachers and students (McNamara, 2000). In educational programs, language tests serve a variety of functions, and frequently, the same test is utilized for two or more related purposes: to assess a person's preparedness for educational programs, categorize or assign them to suitable language classes, diagnose their unique learning strengths and weaknesses, gauge their level of language achievement of the learning objectives, and assess the efficacy of the instruction (Lanteigne et al., 2021; May & Shohamy, 2017). The most popular kind of language assessment in Bangladesh is called "summative assessment," which is used at the conclusion of a term, semester, or program for grading, certification, progress evaluation, or research on the efficacy of a curriculum, course of study, or educational plan (Islam et al., 2021). After learning or instruction has taken place, a judgment regarding the efficacy of the curriculum, the teacher, or the student is made using the summative assessment technique (McMillan, 2007). On the other hand, "formative assessment," which refers to the application of systematic and continuous evaluation in the curriculum development, teaching, and learning processes with the aim of improving any one of these three processes, has become widespread in recent years at all educational levels in Bangladesh (McMillan, 2007). However, summative assessments are still the primary focus of the language curriculum requirements for evaluating students' language achievement (Hossain & Ahmed, 2015). Consequently, it becomes difficult for instructors to inspire students to participate in formative activities without providing them with grades or marks for what they have done (Amin & Greenwood, 2018).

Research indicates that, when compared to any worldwide level exam, Bangladesh's English assessment system is not standard due to a lack of adequate assistance and language policy (Ali & Sultana, 2016). The learning objectives stated in the curriculums and the actual methods of instruction and assessment differ greatly (Ali et al., 2018). The discrepancies between the curriculum guidelines and the evaluation procedure have been noted and recognized by numerous academics (Ali et al., 2018). Furthermore, the majority of teachers in Bangladesh believe that speaking and listening skills assessments take a lot of time, and they are particularly challenging to administer in large classes (Rahman et al., 2019). The truth is that students struggle in higher education since there is no system in place for formal assessment of speaking and listening in final assessments, which could lower their proficiency levels in the English language (Sultana, 2019). It's interesting to notice that speaking and listening abilities, which were historically less important than grammar, writing, and reading, are now emphasized in English curricula at all educational levels (Islam et al., 2021). The introduction of these skills, according to the researchers, is a worthwhile endeavor to advance communicative language instruction and acquisition (Erling, 2017). Hence, it is time to think and rethink how listening and speaking skills can be assessed with equal importance like reading and writing. Besides, to engage students in an efficient assessment process, teachers must have access to tools like technology, appropriate practice materials, and suitable classroom environments

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

(Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). Nevertheless, the aforementioned assistance is typically unavailable in Bangladeshi institutions (Hossain & Tollefson, 2017). Furthermore, the execution of formative assessment activities is hampered by large class sizes (Rahman et al., 2019). The cumulative effect is that students' capacity to express them accurately and creatively in the English language is significantly underdeveloped by the end of the course (Lanteigne et al., 2021). It can be said that learners' language progress and achievement and teachers' style of teaching are significantly influenced by the assessment system. Therefore, a comprehensive investigation of the suitability of the current EFL assessment system in Bangladesh's private universities is necessary in order to identify systemic issues while developing an appropriate English assessment method.

Research Objective

The study aims to investigate whether the EFL assessment method in Bangladesh's private universities is appropriate from the viewpoint of the English teachers employed by these institutions.

METHODOLOGY

This empirical study involved a questionnaire survey to explore the suitability of the EFL assessment system in the private universities in Bangladesh. The target populations for the present study were private university English teachers. Among teachers of the private universities, 60 English language teachers were selected for questionnaire survey. The respondents were selected from 15 UGC approved private universities of Bangladesh. Hence, four EFL teachers were selected from each of the university. The present study used "simple random sampling" while selecting the respondents. Random sampling can also refer to taking a number of independent observations from the same probability distribution, without involving any real population. That is, there is no way to assess the validity of results of non-random samples. The universities were selected using "convenient sampling" procedure.

Table 1: Sampling Details

Respondent	Experience	Number
Teachers (from 15 UGC approved Private Universities)	1-5 years	20 (10 male, 10 female)
	6-10 years	20 (10 male, 10 female)
	More than 10 years	20 (10 male, 10 female)

Based on the literature, the research questions have been reformulated into measurable structured questionnaire items that would reveal underlying teachers' beliefs and practices. The researcher has chosen the five-point Likert scale format because they are simple and reliable. The questionnaires were in Five-point Likert scales (Likert, 1932) ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree; strongly disagree). The questionnaire contains 10 statements which tried to bring out the consistency and usefulness of the assessment system of the private universities of Bangladesh from the perspective of the university teachers. The questionnaire survey data were analyzed in several ways. Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, tables, charts, and graphs were applied to clarify and explain the analysis. Survey results were presented in different ways: by text, and in tables. The researcher first relied on frequency counts to know about the frequencies and percentages of the teachers' and the students' responses by category. The researcher conducted ANOVA (F-Test) to determine whether there was a significant difference between three sets of scores. The significance level of differences was examined using ANOVA (F-Tests).

Findings

To explore the research objective, the researcher developed ten questions which were included in the questionnaire. The teacher participants answered the questions spontaneously. The researcher prepared the questions from different angles so that he could get the real idea of the assessment system used at the tertiary level. The results of the analysis of the collected data related to the consistency and usefulness of the assessment system have been presented in a table first. The table will show the number and the percentage of the respondents group-wise for each question. Finally, "ANOVA" which is a statistical tool of SPSS 20.0 will be used for analyzing and showing a comparison of the opinions among the three groups of the teachers.

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

Types and Appropriateness of the Assessment System

Table 2: Appropriateness of the Assessment System

		Experience					
		1 to 5 years		6 to 10 years		10+ years	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q1. Assessment system is suitable for measuring the students' achievement	Disagree	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	0	0.0%
	Neutral	6	30.0%	2	10.0%	2	10.0%
	Agree	12	60.0%	16	80.0%	18	90.0%
Q2. Assessment system supports English Language teaching	Disagree	4	20.0%	1	5.0%	1	5.0%
	Neutral	3	15.0%	4	20.0%	1	5.0%
	Agree	13	65.0%	15	75.0%	18	90.0%
Q3. Assessment system measures students' progress	Disagree	4	20.0%	3	15.0%	3	15.0%
	Neutral	2	10.0%	7	35.0%	0	0.0%
	Agree	14	70.0%	10	50.0%	17	85.0%

Q1 was asked to the teachers to know whether the assessment system is suitable for measuring the students' achievement of the English skills or not. Q2 was asked to the teachers to investigate if the assessment system supports English language teaching or not. Q3 was asked to the teachers to investigate whether the assessment system is suitable for measuring the students' progress in learning English or not. In response to question number one (Q1), most of the teachers, 76.7% (count-46) from all the groups agreed that the assessment system is suitable for measuring the students' achievement of the English skill at the tertiary level. In response to question number two (Q2), majority of the teachers, 65% (count-13) who had teaching experience from one to five years believed that assessment system supports English Language teaching. Similarly, 75% (count-15) teachers (experience from 6 to 10 years) agreed with the claim. And, almost all the teachers, 90% (count-18) of the third group also agreed that the assessment system supports English language teaching. In response to question number three (Q3), majority of the teachers, 68.3% (count-41) from all the three groups believed continuous assessment system is suitable for measuring the students' progress in learning. From the analysis, it can be said that in response to Q2, majority of the teachers having one to five years of teaching experience agreed that continuous assessment system was suitable for measuring the students' achievement of the English skills. On the other hand, most of the experienced teachers agreed on this same issue. In response to question number 2 (Q2), majority of the teachers having low experience opined that assessment system supported English language teaching. Similarly, in response to the same questions, most of the experienced teachers also agreed with the previous group. In response to Q3, most of the experienced teacher having six to ten and 10 plus years of teaching experience agreed that the assessment system was suitable for measuring the students' progress in learning English but, only half of the young teachers agreed on the same issue and a considerable number of them remained chose the option "Neutral".

Alignment of the Assessment System with Curriculum Objectives

Table 3: Alignment of the Assessment System with Curriculum Objectives

		Experience					
		1 to 5 years		6 to 10 years		10+ years	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q4. Assessment measures the students' achievement in light of curriculum outcomes	Disagree	3	15.0%	2	10.0%	1	5.0%
	Neutral	8	40.0%	3	15.0%	7	35.0%
	Agree	9	45.0%	15	75.0%	12	60.0%

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

Q5. Assessment measures the students' progress in light of curriculum outcomes	Disagree	2	10.0%	2	10.0%	2	10.0%
	Neutral	6	30.0%	8	40.0%	4	20.0%
	Agree	12	60.0%	10	50.0%	14	70.0%
Q6. Assessment system is consistent with the teaching method stated in the curriculum	Disagree	3	15.0%	0	0.0%	3	15.0%
	Neutral	6	30.0%	4	20.0%	4	20.0%
	Agree	11	55.0%	16	80.0%	13	65.0%
Q7. Assessment reflects curriculum objectives and goal	Disagree	6	30.0%	5	25.0%	5	25.0%
	Neutral	6	30.0%	6	30.0%	7	35.0%
	Agree	8	40.0%	9	45.0%	8	40.0%

Q4 was asked to the teachers to know whether the assessment system was suitable to measure the achievement of the students in light of the learning outcomes in the curriculum or not. Q5 was asked to the teachers to investigate if the assessment measures the students' progress in light of curriculum outcomes. Q6 was asked to the teachers to investigate whether the assessment system was consistent with teaching method stated in the curriculum. Q7 was asked to the teachers to know whether the assessment reflects curriculum objectives and goal. In response to question number four (Q4), more than half of the teachers of all the three groups believed that the assessment measures the students' achievement in light of curriculum outcomes. It is notable that 30% (count-18) teachers from all the groups were neutral while responding to the claim. In response to question number five (Q5), 60% (count-12) teachers who had teaching experience from one to five years believed that the assessment measures the students' progress in light of curriculum outcomes. Half of the teachers (experience from 6 to 10 years) remarked that assessment measures the students' progress in light of curriculum outcomes. In the same way, 70% (count-14) of the third group agreed with the statement. It is notable that, 30% (count-18) of all the teachers disagreed with the claim. In response to question number 6 (Q6), 55% (count-11) of the first group (1to 5 years), 80% (count-16) of the second group (6 to 10 years) and 65% (count-13) of the third group (11 to 15 years) of the teachers agreed that assessment system was consistent with the teaching method stated in the curriculum. In response to Q7, almost half of the teachers from al the groups agreed that roles and the types of the assessment system reflected curriculum objectives and goals but, a great number of the teachers from all the three groups chose "Neutral" option.

Inclusion of Four Skills and Learners' Anxiety

Table 4: Inclusion of Four Skills in the Assessment System

		Experience					
		1 to 5 years		6 to 10 years		10+ years	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Q8. Assessment system covers testing four language skills	Disagree	13	65.0%	12	60.0%	7	35.0%
	Neutral	2	10.0%	1	5.0%	6	30.0%
	Agree	5	25.0%	7	35.0%	7	35.0%
Q9. Assessment system covers testing only reading and writing	Disagree	5	25.0%	4	20.0%	3	15.0%
	Neutral	2	10.0%	4	20.0%	4	20.0%
	Agree	13	65.0%	12	60.0%	13	65.0%
Q10. Learners are afraid of the Test	Disagree	9	45.0%	5	25.0%	6	30.0%
	Neutral	4	20.0%	4	20.0%	4	20.0%
	Agree	7	35.0%	11	55.0%	10	50.0%

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

Q8 was asked to the teachers to know whether the assessment covered testing English listening, speaking, reading and writing or not. Q9 was asked to the teachers to investigate if the assessment covered testing only reading and writing or not. Q10 was asked to the teachers to investigate whether Learners are afraid of the Test. In response to question number 8 (Q8), only 31.7% (count-19) teachers from all the groups agreed that the assessment covered testing English listening, speaking, reading and writing. On the contrary, 53.3% (count-32) of the total teachers disagreed with the statement. In response to question number 9 (Q29), 65% (count-13) teachers who had teaching experience from one to five years believed that the assessment covered testing only reading and writing. Similarly, 60% (count-12) teachers (experience from 6 to 10 years) and 65% (count-13) teacher with more than ten years of experience believed that the assessment covers testing only reading and writing. In response to question number 10 (Q10), 35% (count-7) of the teachers from the first group believed that the students were afraid of the tests used for measuring their achievement of English. Besides, 55% (count-11) teachers who had teaching experience of six to ten years and 50% (count-10) having experience of more than 10 years believed that students were afraid of the tests used for measuring their achievement of English language. It is notable that one third of the teachers from the entire three group, 33.3% (count20) disagreed on this question.

The Analysis of Variance (F-test)

The researcher conducted ANOVA (F-test) to determine whether there was a significant difference between three sets of scores. The significance level of differences was examined using ANOVA (F-tests). The ANOVA (F-test) compares the scores of three groups on a given variable. Below is the table (table no 5) that shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. As we discussed earlier, the teachers were divided into three groups: group 1(teaching experience-1 to five years), group 2 (teaching experience-6 to 10 years), group 3(teaching experience-10 years).

Table 5: The Analysis of Variance (F-test)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q1	Between Groups	.367	2	.183	.265	.768
	Within Groups	39.367	57	.691		
	Total	39.733	59			
Q2	Between Groups	1.067	2	.533	.726	.488
	Within Groups	41.867	57	.735		
	Total	42.933	59			
Q3	Between Groups	3.933	2	1.967	2.213	.119
	Within Groups	50.667	57	.889		
	Total	54.600	59			
Q4	Between Groups	4.567	2	2.283	3.483	.037
	Within Groups	37.367	57	.656		
	Total	41.933	59			
Q5	Between Groups	1.133	2	.567	.603	.551
	Within Groups	53.600	57	.940		
	Total	54.733	59			
Q6	Between Groups	5.967	2	2.983	4.503	.015
	Within Groups	37.767	57	.663		
	Total	43.733	59			
Q7	Between Groups	4.267	2	2.133	1.361	.265
	Within Groups	89.333	57	1.567		

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

	Total	93.600	59			
Q8	Between Groups	5.650	2	2.825	2.050	.138
	Within Groups	78.533	57	1.378		
	Total	84.183	59			
Q9	Between Groups	.800	2	.400	.353	.704
	Within Groups	64.533	57	1.132		
	Total	65.333	59			
Q10	Between Groups	.150	2	.075	.083	.920
	Within Groups	51.500	57	.904		
	Total	51.650	59			

From the above table, it is seen that the significance for Q1 is 0.76 which is greater than 0.05. It means that the means of the three groups of the teachers do not vary significantly. Their opinions regarding the suitability of the assessment system for measuring students' achievement do not differ significantly. The significance levels of next two questions are 0.48 and 0.11 respectively which are also greater than 0.05. It indicates that statistically, the teachers' opinions regarding Q2 and Q3 do not differ significantly. The results of the other statements show that the teachers had almost similar views while responding to questions related to the alignment of the assessment system with the curriculum outcomes, suitability of the assessment system for measuring four skills, and existence of the test anxiety among the students in the private universities in Bangladesh.

DISCUSSION

The English assessment system implemented by Bangladesh's private universities is well depicted in the analysis section. Both formative and summative assessment processes are used in the private universities of Bangladesh, and according to the teacher responders, the current assessment system generally supports English teaching and learning of this educational level. Indeed, depending on the circumstance, English assessment can be utilized for a variety of purposes (McNamara, 2000). Assessments can occasionally be used to place students in the right course or class based on their present skill level (Douglas, 201). Progress monitoring, which is the process of evaluating a student's development over time and identifying areas that require additional work, is one of the most important aspects of assessment (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). At the end of an academic or professional language course, English assessments also serve as confirmation of the students' achieved level of English proficiency (May & Shohamy, 2017). However, in order to make sure that what is taught in the classroom is accurately measured and evaluated, the assessment method must be in line with the curriculum outcomes (McMillan, 2007). Learning outcomes and objectives specified in the curriculum must be directly or indirectly reflected in assessments (Phakiti, 2020). This guarantees that students are assessed based on their anticipated learning outcomes (May & Shohamy, 2017). For instance, if a curriculum stresses critical thinking, the assessment should not rely on rote memorization but rather on exercises or questions that call for analysis, evaluation, and synthesis (Lanteigne et al., 2021). According to the study's findings, the majority of participants thought that the assessment process accurately gauged their students' overall success and English language proficiency and most of the teachers also believed the assessment system was consistent with the teaching method prescribed in the curriculum. The majority of instructors, however, felt that the evaluation system did not align well with the aims and objectives of the curriculum. It should be noted that the teachers' views differed significantly based on their prior teaching experiences. According to the analysis, for instance, the majority of teachers with six to ten years of experience and those with over ten years believed that the evaluation system was appropriate for gauging the attainment of the learning objectives. However, many instructors from the first and third groups remained indifferent while reacting to this claim, and only about half of the young teachers agreed with this statement. Furthermore, the majority of teachers with one to five years and ten or more years of experience in the classroom believed that the assessment system was appropriate for assessing the language achievement of the learners from the perspective of curriculum's learning objectives. However, many teachers with six to ten years of experience gave neutral answers to the same questions. Aside from this, the majority of teachers with six to ten years of experience in the classroom, as well as the majority of instructors from the other two categories, concurred that the evaluation system aligned with the curriculum's instructions and the methods that teachers were supposed to use when teaching English. Studies reveal that the length of time spent teaching English can have a big influence on how educators, learners, and organizations see the quality and efficacy of English language training or

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

evaluation (Lanteigne et al., 2021). The teachers' perceptions of effectiveness of a language course are significantly shaped by the length of time they spent teaching English (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). Teachers with long-term teaching experience are valued for their thorough comprehension of the entire teaching and learning system, but those with short-term teaching experience are frequently thought to be adequate to comprehend the learners' immediate requirements (Hossain & Tollefson, 2017). Therefore, as many seasoned educators who took part in the study felt that the evaluation system's alignment with the goals and objectives of the curriculum was inadequate, it should be taken into account. Moreover, the teachers' negative response regarding the suitability of the assessment system to measure learners' four language skills should also be alarming for the stakeholders. Many studies show that the language assessment system in Bangladesh, particularly in secondary and higher secondary or tertiary education, does not fully test all four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in a balanced way (Islam et al., 2021; Rahman et al., 2019; Sultana, 2019). Most of the time, assessments focus primarily on English reading skills and writing skills and these two skills are heavily assessed, with little to no formal testing of listening and speaking (Islam et al., 2021). The analysis also shows an alarming picture of the existence of test anxiety among the students. According to research, when test anxiety is present, its washback effects can be both negative and positive, depending on the student's coping mechanisms and the nature of the assessment (Hossain & Ahmed, 2015). Test anxiety can lead to various detrimental effects on students' learning and performance (Ali & Hamid, 2020). For example, students may focus on memorization rather than understanding concepts and anxiety can also make learning feel stressful, leading to decreased interest in English (Amin & Greenwood, 2018). However, in some cases, moderate anxiety can lead to productive learning behaviors, such as, encouraging preparation, enhancing language performance, developing effective coping strategies etc. (Ali & Hamid, 2020).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher has put forward the following recommendations:

- 1 While the curriculum theoretically covers all four language skills, the assessment system in Bangladesh heavily focuses on reading and writing. For a more balanced approach, changes in assessment strategies are needed to ensure students develop full proficiency in English.
- 2 To minimize the harmful effects of assessment while keeping motivation high, teachers and institutions can promote a balanced assessment approach, create low-stress speaking and writing tasks to build confidence, help students manage time, use relaxation techniques, and approach exams strategically, and foster a growth mindset where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.
- 3 The use rubrics or clear scoring guides linked to specific curriculum outcomes should be ensured for consistent and objective evaluation. This helps teachers and students understand how well the outcomes have been achieved.
- 4 Assessment can be developed at the beginning of the curriculum design process. This ensures that teaching strategies and learning activities are aligned with what will be assessed.
- 5 Assessment results should be used to inform curriculum adjustments and teaching practices. For instance, if students consistently underperform on a particular outcome, it may indicate a need for curriculum revision or enhanced teaching methods.
- 6 It should be ensured that assessments are fair and accessible to all students, including those with special needs or learning challenges. Besides, it needs to ensure that assessments measure what they are intended to measure and yield consistent results over time and across different groups of students.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' opinions regarding the appropriateness of the assessment technique for Bangladesh's private universities are reflected in the study. The study investigated how well the evaluation system used to gauge students' proficiency in English was working. The study also looked into how well the assessment system matched the goals and objectives of the curriculum. The results indicate that Bangladesh's private universities' English assessment procedures fall short of expectations. To be appropriate and have a beneficial impact on teaching and learning English, the assessment system requires a significant rethinking.

REFERENCES

- 1) Ali, M. M., & Hamid, M. O. (2020). Teaching English to the Test: Why Does Negative Washback Exist within Secondary Education in Bangladesh? *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 17(2), 129–146.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2020.1717495>.

Instructors' Perceptions of the Suitability of the Current English Assessment System: A Study from The Perspective of Private Universities in Bangladesh

- 2) Ali, M. M., Hamid, M. O., & Hardy, I. (2018). Ritualisation of testing: problematising highstakes English-language testing in Bangladesh. *Compare a Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 50(4), 533–553
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2018.1535890>.
- 3) Ali, C. M., & Sultana, R. (2016). A study of the validity of English language testing at the higher secondary level in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 5(6).
<https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v5n.6p.64>.
- 4) Allison, D. (1999). *Language testing and evaluation: An Introductory Course*. World Scientific.
- 5) Amin, M. A., & Greenwood, J. (2018). The examination system in Bangladesh and its impact: on curriculum, students, teachers and society. *Language Testing in Asia*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-018-0060-9>.
- 6) Angelo, T. A., & Cross, K. P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*. Jossey-Bass.
- 7) Banks, S. R. (2012). *Classroom assessment: Issues and Practices, Second Edition*. Waveland Press.
- 8) Brookhart, S. M. (2023). *Classroom Assessment Essentials*. ASCD.
- 9) Chowdhury, R., & Kabir, A. H. (2014). Language wars: English education policy and practice in Bangladesh. *Multilingual Education*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13616-014-0021-2>.
- 10) Dimova, S., Yan, X., & Ginther, A. (2020). *Local language testing: Design, Implementation, and Development*. Routledge.
- 11) Douglas, D. (2014). *Understanding language testing*. Routledge.
- 12) Erling, E. J. (2017). Language planning, English language education and development aid in Bangladesh. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 18(4), 388–406. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2017.1331496>.
- 13) Fulcher, G., & Davidson, F. (2007). *Language testing and assessment: An Advanced Resource Book*.
- 14) Hossain, M. M., & Ahmed, M. K. (2015). Language Testing: an Overview and Language Testing in Educational Institutions of Bangladesh. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 6(6). <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v6n.6p.80>.
- 15) Hossain, T., & Tollefson, J. W. (2017). Language policy in education in Bangladesh. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 241–259). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315092034-13>.
- 16) Islam, M. S., Hasan, M. K., Sultana, S., Karim, A., & Rahman, M. M. (2021). English language assessment in Bangladesh today: principles, practices, and problems. *Language Testing in Asia*, 11(1) <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-020-00116-z>.
- 17) Lantaigne, B., Coombe, C., & Brown, J. D. (2021). *Challenges in language testing around the world: Insights for language test users*. Springer Nature.
- 18) Likert, R., (1932). The method of constructing an attitude scale. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 44-53.
- 19) May, S., & Shohamy, E. (2017). *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Language Testing and Assessment*. Springer.
- 20) McMillan, J. H. (2007). *Formative classroom assessment: Theory Into Practice*.
- 21) McNamara, T. F. (2000). *Language testing*. Oxford University Press.
- 22) Phakiti, A. (2020). *Language testing and assessment: From Theory to Practice*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- 23) Rahman, M. M., Islam, M. S., Karim, A., Chowdhury, T. A., Rahman, M. M., Seraj, P. M. I., & Singh, M. K. M. (2019). English language teaching in Bangladesh today: Issues, outcomes and implications. *Language Testing in Asia*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-019-0085-8>.
- 24) Sultana, N. (2019). Language assessment literacy: an uncharted area for the English language teachers in Bangladesh. *Language Testing in Asia*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-019-0077>.



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.