

**AN EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING OF READING  
AND WRITING SKILLS OF ENGLISH AT THE PRIMARY  
LEVEL IN BANGLADESH: CURRENT PRACTICE AND  
PROSPECT OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUES.**

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## **TITLE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Teaching is a matter of passion. A teacher is not only a guide but also a facilitator, role model, information provider, resource developer, planner and assessor. A good teacher is more than a mere lecturer. So the research paper focuses on the teaching part of the two important parts of learning a foreign or second language; reading and writing. This study investigates an important area of English language teaching and the importance of the innovative techniques followed by the teachers in Bangladeshi context. It examines how the innovative techniques nurture the student's motivation towards foreign language learning, the level of improvement learners are receiving at their primary level of education, the developing syllabus and curriculum followed by the teachers as facilitators in Bangladesh. The study discusses the recent developments in reading and writing pedagogy. It also presents an evaluation of teaching reading and writing skills through an empirical study. The empirical investigation examines whether the innovative techniques are adopted in the reading and writing pedagogy in teaching reading and writing in Bangladesh or not. The study includes students' and teachers' questionnaire survey, students and teachers' interview, classroom observation and administering reading and writing syllabus.

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# **Chapter-1**

## **Introduction**

There are many different approaches to teaching which developed rapidly over the last part of twentieth century. This development in English Language Teaching (ELT) brought so many changes to the teaching methodologies. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is highly regarded and widely used in the non-English speaking countries as an approach to develop English as a second language.

In Bangladesh also this approach is recommended by NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Board) and being implemented by ELTIP (English Language Teaching Improvement Project), PERC (Primary Educational Research Council), American Peace Corps and by teachers and experts, trained both overseas and locally. Practice-based learning is considered to be more important than grammar-based approach in recent theoretical approaches (Haque, 2006).

Asian countries, Latin American countries and others where English is not the mother tongue, use CLT to teach and learn English as a second language. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered as one of the best approaches in language teaching. Despite the presence of these approaches teachers need to pay attention to students existing experiences inside and outside the classroom to reduce their fear in communication.

Teachers can sometimes adopt some new techniques to their teaching methods. They can bring some books written in English as per the students' interests. Students will get motivated thus, and pick books according to their own wish. It is a good way to improve their reading skills. For the writing skills teachers may ask them to write on

any interesting topic they wish. In this way they will get motivated towards writing also. Before doing these, teachers need to identify the students' weaknesses towards learning a foreign language.

If teachers adopt some different and new techniques to motivate the students' interests, they will be able to get out of the fear of learning a foreign language in Bangladesh. But on the other hand, according to Safford & Costley (2008), "teachers sometimes start underestimating the students when they do mistakes without motivating positively. As a result they become silent in the classroom. This ultimate silence creates much tension between the students and the teachers as well. Teachers need to understand the environment of the classroom from the students' point of view in order to select appropriate methodology for teaching". Now the question arises that, is there really anything recognized as Innovative Teaching Techniques?

As Hurst (1978, p.14) writes, "...by innovation I mean the idea of a change in a behavior of practice". It will be discussed more vividly in the next section of the chapter. The importance of teaching English efficiently is getting higher significance day by day in all over the world. As the world is treating English as the most used communicative language, it's important also that we get to know the standard version of English rather than knowing the wrong variety. As English is a global language, people are more aware of their learning English.

The role and function of English in the contemporary global path has been steadily implanting its value in the Bangladeshi socio-economic and educational scenario. But the question is how much we are contributing in the teaching sectors to this widely practiced writing and reading skills of English?

It's a great matter of concern also that whether the proper learning of English will affect the world of communication or not. The answer is yes; if the basic of the children

in primary level learners are not built properly then they may suffer from the complexity of not being able to communicate in English properly. As a result it will create miscommunication and thus, the greater purpose of knowing English will be hampered.

English is thus, considered as the asset of the country as it is the most commonly used international language throughout the world for educational and economic purposes. The education sectors are trying to develop all the four skills. The educational policy of the government is also giving emphasis on all the four skills as well. But on the other hand, reading and writing is drawing more importance above all. Sometimes these facts are getting neglected also as the students lack their motivation in writing and reading in a foreign language in Bangladesh because of the wrong approaches to teaching of reading and writing.

To satisfy one's thirst for knowledge, reading books is necessary, and most of the books are written in English. This is the reality of the present world. Therefore, teaching of the reading skills of English is very important in Bangladesh, and it has no alternative. (Rahman, 2007, p.4).

### **1.1 Goal of the Innovative Teaching Techniques:**

Every method has some goals. For example, the goal of Grammar Translation method (GTM) is to learn a language through translation. The goal of CLT is to become communicatively competent. This competence involves the ability of the person to communicate appropriately in a language in a social context. The aim of CLT is to help the student to learn the foreign language in their real life situations. On the other hand, Innovative teaching techniques are focused on helping the student to learn the language effectively so that they can communicate well in their target language. This is not

considered as any approach but teaching method. The important point is this method can easily pick any of the approach like- GTM, CLT or direct method whenever it needed. The main goal is to motivate students to the extent so that they become more interested to learn that language. In Bangladesh most of the students are scared of writing and reading in English, as it is their foreign language. Writing words on their own in a foreign language is their great fear. Innovative teaching techniques are those techniques which can remove these fears towards the learning of the foreign language. Student will start to feel free to write their own sentences, essays, or any piece of writing. Reading aloud is needed to improve their listening as well as their speaking skills. So by adopting any method the teacher will construct a method of teaching which will make the study more meaningful and effective method. It can be done using one method at a time or more than two methods together.

## **1.2 Problems students often encounter with reading and writing in**

### **English in Bangladesh:**

It has been observed that students in Bangladesh face many difficulties while using English as a foreign language in reading and writing. These difficulties include lack of vocabulary, lexical inefficiency, weaknesses at sentence level, language inaccessibility, poor reading skills, fear of writing, lack of interests, lack of schemata, and so on. Dechant (1982: 73) has expressed the same opinion and stated that achievement in reading is dependent “upon the pupil’s motivational readiness, and poor reading or reading and writing failure may be caused by lack of interest.” He (p. 79) has also mentioned another cause of failure and explained that difficulties in adjusting to a new environment, poor parent-child relationships, lack of encouragement from home, negative attitudes of parents to learning in general’ etc. ‘may all lead to

failure'. This is why innovative teaching techniques should be used in order to develop the overall situation and generate new ideas for reading and writing skills.

**a) Lack of vocabulary** is the most mentionable cause of students' poor reading and writing. Students from primary level to even higher level are suffering from this problem. Almost in every sentence they come across new words. This inadequate vocabulary makes them fall at each sentence, and soon they begin to lose their patience in reading. It destroys their language learning ability. Long and complex structure of sentences often cause reading barrier for most of the students. Students of primary level often fail to understand the proper subject-verb relationship in a long or complex sentence. To solve this problems of the students they must asked to use dictionary while reading.

**b) Words having multiple meanings** are another constant threats to the students. Students are often unable to adopt the right meanings. Sometimes, they do not understand any meaning at all. As a result, they develop a negative impression about the text, or even about their ability to read and write.

**c) Words having different syntactical functions and varieties of 'inflectional endings'** may also cause difficulties for the students in reading a text effectively. For example, the word best has an 'adjectival function'. But it becomes noun when it is used in a sentence such as "your best is not good enough" (Dechant, 1982: 290).

In Bangladesh, the primary level learners of a foreign language **lack schemata** which play a crucial role. Schemata are directly related to the meaningful reading and writing.

But many students lack sufficient schemata. They cannot associate their own culture and the culture of the target language and fail to figure out the meaning out of a text.

**d) Lack of concentration** is another mentionable reason for students' poor reading and writing skills. Shaw (1959) stated that "Comprehension of a text results from reading with concentration. But students, in most cases, cannot or do not concentrate properly while reading, or they cannot hold their attention for a long time due to their lack of practice and patience. The situation results in the frustration and unwillingness, and prevents them to read further which causes in inefficiency in writing skill also".

**e) Improper classroom activities** are also responsible for students' poor reading and writing skill. In Bangladesh students get little or no opportunity to read and write themselves at their primary level in schools. Most of the schools are focusing memorization at this level. Lesson plans are not focused enough to develop reading and writing ability properly in the class. So, the students should be allowed to come with interesting topics and materials in the class and the lesson plan should allow the students to be creative and thoughtful.

**f) Classroom procedure** is teacher centered at the primary level in our country although the communicative teaching method was introduced in the country 12 years ago. Guardians of the children still are not positive towards student centered classroom activities where student will participate actively and the teacher will encourage only.

**g) Poor visual identification skill** is also a great problem of the students. Students may have deficiency in visual identification, be weak in visual recognition, and have poor

memory for visual sequences, unable to recall familiar word when necessary. Dechant (1982: 436-7) explains that sometimes poor reading results from students' "inability to relate symbols, to associate the proper phoneme with the proper shape, or to match a visual sequence with an auditory sequence.... The pupil has great difficulty acquiring phonic skills."

**h)** Students face enormous difficulties when their '**knowledge of the language is incomplete**'. This lack creates serious difficulties with some texts (Williams, 1996: 4). In such situation, what happens is that EFL students concentrate on learning that language rather than acquiring. As a result, the target of reading and writing loses its value.

**i)** '**Syntactic inference**' is also responsible for students' poor reading because it causes confusion among the readers. For example, in Bengali, the simple sentence structure is 'subject + obj + verb' whereas, an English sentence structure is 'subject + verb + obj'. Thus the sentence in English 'He plays football' is, in Bangla 'He football plays'. (Rahman, 2004).

**j)** **Cultural difference** between the text (the author) and the reader is another problem, especially for the learners in Bangladesh. According to Rahman (2004) "If the author and the reader cannot share a common cultural assumption, text may seem difficult to the reader. A student who has a primary knowledge about western, or more specifically, English culture can enjoy an English text in the true sense. The more a student is familiar with the concerned culture of a text, the more effective reader s/he will be. But many students in our country are ignorant of the social custom and culture of English.

As a result, in spite of being able to translate the word or sentence or text, they cannot understand the implied meaning of the text as a whole.”

Nuttall (1996: 35) has pointed out some reasons of the failure of the students’ reading. They are- negative expectations, unsuitable tasks, the wrong procedures, expecting to run before they can walk the wrong texts.

And finally, the teachers’ role in improving the students reading and writing skill is worth considering. Many teachers of numerous colleges and educational institutions in Bangladesh stick to the traditional teaching system. They ask some selected questions to the students and the students get those answer of the questions memorized. They just vomit them whenever it’s needed. Thus, major parts of Bangladeshi students are the direct preys of the negligence and/or ignorance of their teachers. As a result, not only their capability but also their interest in reading and writing is deteriorating day by day. And its consequence is that most students end their academic life without having least skill in reading even Bengali books, let alone English ones.

### **1.3 Some effective and innovative teaching techniques/methodologies:**

Nowadays teaching methodologies and approaches has developed in such a way that can remove barriers for students and educators all over the world. Innovative ways to teach and learn are redefining the classroom experience. As Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered as the most effective second language teaching technique in our country, we can adopt some of our own innovations while following CLT and other methods (Grammar translation Method, Direct Method, etc.) of teaching , as well. Rahman (1999) in one of his case study to “investigate Teacher” perception of



communicative approach to ELT (English Language Teaching) said that “the teachers viewed grammar as the first priority for learning a language, for something that the innovative approach did not emphasize. It was obvious that the teachers understand the underlying principles of the approach” As a result the teachers did not welcome the new CLT approach to the teaching. There are some innovative techniques given for the teachers in teaching reading and writing skills. There are ways to motivate children by following different strategies like-

- ❖ Through rewards: a reward is not always meant to be materials; it can be encouraging words also like- “Fantastic work”, “Well done” etc.
- ❖ Through competition: the teacher can ask them to bring the most interesting book in the class can be a motivational and a creative way of making them competitive rather than forcing them to get a good grade only.
- ❖ Through group work the students can be motivated also.
- ❖ Through interesting and new tasks
- ❖ Through changing the classroom arrangements in a new way so that they can see each other and communicate properly.
- ❖ Encouraging them through the knowledge of achievement like- they can become a teacher of the class by performing well in a task for a period of time.
- ❖ Through using modern technology and different tools and instruments

These are some ways to encourage the students towards education. These techniques can be adopted in improving all the four skills-reading, writing, speaking and listening. But as the study focuses on reading and writing only, we can concentrate to some Innovative Teaching Techniques directed to create students’ interests in reading and writing only.

### **1.3.1 Innovative Teaching Techniques for Teaching Writing:**

While come to teach writing teachers should concentrate on some areas of students' weaknesses like- sentence structure, words limitations, schemata, incomplete knowledge of language, syntactic inference etc. Writing tasks/activities should consider the above weaknesses of the students. The teacher must plan the writing task in such a way so that the students get attracted towards the writing skill and also become able to overcome those weaknesses. Some innovative techniques will be discussed bellow for the teachers of primary level schools in Bangladesh-

1. The teacher can sometimes use the students' mother tongue (L1) to describe a new word as our students are bilingual. Students become more interested and familiar to that word by doing so. But it must be done with the permission of the authority.
2. To solve the students' problem of unknown vocabulary, the teacher may pick a known L2 (English) synonym. Or s/he can show an object or picture to give a quick demonstration of the word.
3. Students sometimes get scared to use the difficult words spelling. Thus they hesitate to use those words in writing. So, the teachers can break those words into parts and give the meaning of the parts like- Lieutenant: Lie, U, Ten, and Ant. In this way the problem of pronunciation can be overcome.
4. Sometimes students can use "Numerical Device" to remember words to use in writing.
5. Teachers can encourage the students to write their own piece of writing and correct themselves. Students should teach to take responsibilities of their own mistakes.
6. Interesting topics can be introduced as per the students' interests and announce rewards for the best writing paragraph as the students love to have gift from the teachers.

7. Students are asked sometimes to recall their memories from a school trip or their holiday trip and write them down in their own words. It will thus improve their schemata.

8. Students can be asked to work in groups organized by their teacher and by this they can produce a good piece of writing by sharing their ideas and thoughts with each other. They might be provided with some good piece of reading also, so that they can produce some good piece of writing.

9. Teachers can sometimes change the sit arrangement of the classroom so that the students feel fresh and new in the class and become active.

10. As the study focuses the English medium schools in Bangladesh, it's obvious that most of the students of English medium schools have rich economic background. So, the teacher can ask the students to surf over internet, use Microsoft Word to make assignments, and paint as well. Most of the students are interested towards the use of these technologies.

### **1.3.2 Innovative Teaching Techniques for Teaching Reading:**

The technique of teaching reading is very important to get the students' involved in reading activities. Teachers should help and encourage the students to read effectively. To perform the job, teachers must design effective reading tasks for teaching reading in the class because a successful teaching of reading depends largely on the proper planning of reading lessons. Williams (1996) has suggested that for effective teaching of reading in the classroom, the lesson should be divided into three consecutive phases. They are pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading phases. But it's important to know that the lessons divided in phases are getting the students' response properly or not. In Bangladesh as English is a foreign language to the students it's more important to give emphasis on teaching strategies and the tasks. Based on

Vygotsky's ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), he discussed many innovative and effective strategies in his theory of "Reciprocal Teaching". The teacher can thus make the reading classroom more effective by adopting the following strategies taken from the Vygotsky's "Reciprocal Teaching" method and from others as well mentioned below. Some are also adopted from the real life teaching experiences-

**1.** According to Vygotsky's "Reciprocal Teaching" method the reading process falls under four strategies- predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing. According to ), Hashey et al (2003 as cited in Clark, 2013) "Effective reciprocal teaching lessons include scaffolding, thinking aloud, using cooperative learning, and facilitating metacognition with each step. Each strategy is taught by the teacher and is clearly understood by students before they go on to the next strategy."

**2.** Students should take ownership of their roles in "Reciprocal Teaching" when they feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions in open dialogue. All members of the community have shared responsibility for leading and taking part in dialogue during learning (Hashey and Connors, 2003). So, teachers and students performance in the class should be equal.

**3.** Teacher must provide the students with some interesting texts. According to William (1996) "Interest is vital, for it increases motivation, which in turn is a significant factor in the development of reading speed and fluency." The teacher should try to know the interest-level of the students. The teacher may bring some book in the class and ask the students to pick any of them as per their interests. The goal of "Reciprocal Teaching" is also to achieve overall improvement in motivation.

**4.** In reading activities a student must have concentration on the reading text otherwise the goal of reading will not be successful. To do that, the teacher may announce some

achievement awards like- “the most quite student of the class” title to one of her student at the while reading period.

**5.** The most important thing about reading English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is that students must have adequate vocabulary in their mind otherwise they may find it very difficult to read a text. So, the teacher may introduce word game to the students sometimes. They will learn words by having fun. They can even try to predict the meaning of the word suggested by Hashey (2003). He said, “When students use the skill of predicting in reading, it helps them to realize the value of picture and word clues. It also helps them to develop higher level thinking about what is going on in the story.”

**6.** The teacher may make some small groups of students and let them discuss their own experience about the culture of the target language. As the students of English medium schools of Bangladesh nowadays are more familiar to the culture of English speaking countries, they will be able to match their experiences with their text through such group discussions and then take turns to summarizing about their discussion. The teacher has to make sure that each member of the group takes a turn to be the discussion leader at once suggested by Hacker and Tenent (cited in Foster and Rotoloni, 2013, p.9).

**7.** The teachers should encourage the students by some rewarding words like Mrs. Clark says, “Fantastic, you have just done a great job of summarizing! Now we will try that with our reading. Just tell the main idea and the most important details in your own words, and that is it.?” The students will get excited about their success and eager to talk about the topic given. (Foster and Rotoloni, 2013, p. 9).

**8.** According to Oczkus (2003), “Text must be at a level that can be effectively shared, not too easy and not too difficult. Appropriate support and feedback must be given to facilitate learning during reciprocal teaching activities”, taken from Vygotskys’ theory of “Reciprocal Teaching”.

**9.** Leading students to the discussion of their questions and answers in a small group (not more than six in each group) may guide them towards independent reading activity. They can bring questions after reading a journal and a different student in each group serves as the group leader each day and guides the discussion in each day. (Foster and Rotoloni, 2013, p. 6).

**10.** Teachers must learn to be quit all too often. Teachers interfere with and so impede their learners’ reading development by being too dominant and by talking too much. In Bangladesh, the traditional method of teaching is still followed by some teachers. Thus, group work will be relaxing and enjoyable to the students. So, teachers should act like guides under whom students will develop their individual reading skill.

**11.** Reading is not simply a matter of taking out information, opinion, enjoyment etc. from a text; it involves contributing attitudes, experience, pre-knowledge etc. This natural characteristic of real reading must be encouraged and developed in teaching EFL reading. This can be done by asking the students to relate their real life situation with the provided text.

**12.** The teacher should encourage the learners to listen to texts such as recorded tapes, the teacher reading to the class, older learners reading to younger learners, and better readers reading to weaker readers in their group. The process is called MKO (The More Knowledgeable Others).

13. Rereading, Outside resources and Prior knowledge are suggested for clarifying the reading materials. The teachers may ask the students to use these sources to understand their text suggested in Vygotsky's "Reciprocal Teaching" theory of clarifying.

#### **1.4 How the innovative teaching techniques motivate the students to read and write?**

Motivation is one the most important factors that leads the students to learn a foreign language. As the students are scared to read and write in a foreign language, they need to be motivated towards their language learning. Motivation is some kind of tool that interests a person to achieve his or her goal. Teachers are responsible to create motivation. To achieve a language, positive motivation works well. Once the students are being motivated they learn the language properly. There are two types of motivations- intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation comes from the inside of the learners. For example- to get pleasure by reading a text, to search for knowledge and search for freedom like Fredrick Douglas. Fredrick Douglas is the finest example of intrinsic motivation. He fought to get rid of slavery. Extrinsic motivations are like passing the exams, getting good jobs etc (Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project, Module 1, 2006).

#### **1.5 The role of the syllabus in selecting teaching methods**

In most of the cases the role of the syllabus plays a great role in adopting new teaching techniques. If the allocation of the curriculum does not support the view of adopting DIY (Do It Yourself) materials then the teachers might not be able to do such. In this case they need to talk to the authority which is avoided somehow in most of the cases in this country. The allocation of the time of the class also is a great factor. If the

syllabus can be covered in the given time period then the teachers will be able to think something creative to do in the class otherwise they will be so much busy finishing their content that the teacher would rarely think of such creation. So, the authority should be co-operative with the teachers in this case.

## **1.6 Problem Statement**

In Bangladesh English is treated as a foreign language as this is still not declared as the official language here, it's not considered as a second language in Bangladesh. But for the development of the country in trade and business and other important areas English plays a very important role in our education sector. So the importance of the quality of teaching English is a matter of concern also. Different methods and techniques are followed to improve the quality of teaching. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of them. In the past few years CLT became much popular amongst all the educational institutions. But are they providing adequate support for the teaching of English?

Most of all, the methods including CLT and others are not supporting the DIY (DO IT YOURSELF) materials. So teachers are not allowed to teach their own materials at the classrooms. Thus, teachers are deprived of using or creating their own innovative techniques. Now the question arises, "Are the teachers proficient enough to make their own syllabus or teaching material for such language classes?"

It's true that teachers also do not have necessary training for that. Greenwood (1998: 5) rightly points out that "teachers fail to recognize the potentiality of reading and writing, and they neglect and/or ignore it in the classroom. According to him, the responsibility of this failure goes to the attitude first of the teacher and then of the students." In Bangladesh, most of the teachers' are not highly educated. Especially in primary level



schools education, we will not be able to find any. So as a result, they are not able to add innovative techniques properly and not allowed to use their own materials.

There are some other factors related to the unsuccessful teaching of reading and writing also. The study shows that students lack the interest to read and write as they are not provided with interesting materials. Students' proficiency of reading and writing English is very poor in Bangladesh. A large majority of students at the undergraduate level in our country cannot access English textbooks prescribed in their syllabus for their lack of required proficiency of reading skills in English and they fail to write correctly for the lack of their proficiency level. Therefore, they depend only on Bengali books, and the vast resources in the libraries being in English remain unutilized. As a result, in most cases, higher education in this country suffers despondently. Some schools also prefer memorizing. They promote students to memorize sentences, grammatical rules, words and spellings to build their base. As a result students lose interest to write on their own. So the teachers are facing a big problem to improve student's reading and writing skills by using innovative techniques or motivate them towards reading and writing.

### **1.7 Purpose Statement**

It has already been stated that this dissertation seeks to investigate the problems students face during their reading and writing in English as a foreign language, examines the actual state of teaching of reading and writing skills at the primary level in Bangladesh, find out the extent to which Innovative Teaching Techniques are implemented in the teaching of reading and writing skills in Bangladesh. The study also tries to know whether the English syllabus at the primary level is providing the teachers with the right to use new teaching techniques or not. It will also examine the

level of using innovative teaching materials in the classroom. So it's a great concern that the teaching techniques adopted by the teachers are helping the students to improve their reading and writing skills or not.

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

The significance of this study lies in the fact that as much research has not been done regarding Innovative Teaching Techniques in Bangladesh, this work will create a new dimension into this area. . It is supposed to reveal the problems going on regarding the learner's acceptance and their reliability on the DIY materials used for the language teaching. The study is aimed to reveal whether the Innovative Teaching Techniques is helping the students or not. The study also intends to recommend solutions of the above problem by revealing those issues. Thus both the education sectors and the learners of foreign language might get benefited by this work.

It is important to examine those developments for insights that can help us bring about significant changes in reading and writing pedagogy in Bangladesh. Research in this field is very significant for Bangladesh, because standard of education of the country depends on students' reading and writing proficiency in English. For meaningful education, it is very important to improve the reading and writing proficiency of learners in English. It is admitted that higher education of the country suffers a setback because of students' poor level of reading and writing proficiency. To improve the situation in the country, some measures must be taken to identify the problems, address them, and improve the situation. This study is an attempt to do so. Therefore, the study will be of great significance and interest for the country as a whole. (Rahman, 2007).

### **1.9 Central Research Question(s):**

To serve the research purpose, the following questions have been set out and the answers of these questions are embedded within the analysis:

#### **Question 1:**

How far the Innovative Teaching Techniques helping the students to improve their interest in reading and writing in the classroom?

#### **Question 2:**

Does the reading and writing components of the English syllabi provide the teachers with the right to use their own teaching techniques?

#### **Question 3:**

To what extent the Innovative Teaching Techniques are being implemented on the students by the teachers.

### **1.10 Limitations:**

This study does not deal with the overall condition of the teaching pedagogy; it only focuses the new and innovative techniques adopted by the teachers themselves and the administration. It does not deal with the improvement of the syllabus of the primary level and focuses only the implementation of the different teaching methods followed by the teachers. Moreover, as the research will be conducted by individual interests for Masters Level, it is limited to Dhaka city only. More specifically, it is limited to some English medium schools and the informants who participated in the study. The study is only on the students of level 5 of some well known English medium schools because it is impossible to conduct the survey at all levels and at every schools in Dhaka in this limited time span of study.

## **1.11 Delimitations**

This study is confined to the evaluation of the innovative teaching techniques only in some selected English medium schools of level 5 in Dhaka which makes the study more specific and reasonable and clear to the readers of the study. It narrows down all the probable problems with the acceptance of the teachers' and learners' perspectives. It only deals with the present states of the teaching evaluation which will be more authentic to the readers in a sense. Therefore, the study is going to focus on 5 well known English medium schools to collect data from minimally 100 students, 50 teachers to find out the research purpose. Thus it will not create any further confusion to the reader's mind.

## **1.12 Operational Definition(s):**

### **1.12.1 Innovative teaching techniques:**

In the past the teachers were not allowed to adopt any creative methods of teaching. Nowadays EFL teachers are more often free to use their Innovative teaching technique. "The term innovation has been in extremely varied ways throughout the main stream educational literature on educational innovation. Most definitions seem to make use of at least one of four key terms to characterize innovations: change, development, novelty, or improvement (De Lano et al, 1993: p.488).

#### **1. Change:**

As Hursts (1978) writes, by innovation I mean the idea of a change in a behavior or practice (p.14). Change certainly entails the notion that innovative educational practices are somehow different from the existing practices.

## **2. Development:**

A second major term pointed by De Lano in discussion of innovation is “Development”. For Richards and Rodgers innovation is primarily curriculum development though there are some other developments like- professional developments, focusing on teachers (Nunan, 1991) and program development, relating to administration (Brown, 1995).

## **3. Novelty:**

The novelty of innovation cannot be defined in individual terms as this varies in person to person. The thing that is new to someone might not be new to someone else. Thus the term is a bit controversial.

## **4. Improvement:**

To understand the term innovation its needed to know the motion of improvement which indicates changes those are better than what has been done before. As Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: p.4) sate, “resisting certain changes may be more progressive than adopting them”. (De Lano et al, 1993: p.488-489).

### **1.12.2 DIY materials:**

DIY materials are known as *DO IT YOURSELF*. The materials to follow teacher’s own teaching techniques demands their self made teaching materials are called DIY materials.

### **1.12.3 Empirical study:**

Empirical research is a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation or experience. Empirical evidence can be analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively. Through quantifying the evidence or making sense of it in qualitative form, a researcher can answer empirical questions, which should be clearly defined and answerable with the evidence collected (usually called data). (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

### **1.12.4 Language teaching methodologies:**

According to Diane Larsen-Freeman, language teaching method is a coherent set of links between actions and thoughts in language teaching. The actions are the techniques and the thoughts are the principles. (p.1). Freeman introduced many teaching techniques; GTM Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, Silent Way, and many that will be discussed in the later chapter.

### **1.12.5 ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development):**

Vygotsky (1978) sees the Zone of Proximal Development as the area where the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given-allowing the child to develop skills they will then use on their own- developing higher mental functions.

### **1.12.6 MKO (The More Knowledgeable Other):**

According to Vygotsky (1978), “The MKO is somewhat self explanatory; it refers to someone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process or concept. Although the implication is that the MKO is a teacher or an older child”.

### **1.12.7 Reciprocal Teaching:**

Reciprocal teaching is based on Vygotsky's theory of the fundamental role of social interaction (dialogue) in the development of cognition. According to Allen (2003) “Reciprocal teaching is a cooperative learning instructional method in which natural dialogue models and reveals learners' thinking processes about a shared learning experience. Teachers foster reciprocal teaching through their belief that collaborative construction of meaning between themselves and students leads to a higher quality of learning. Students take ownership of their roles in reciprocal teaching when they feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions in open dialogue”. (Foster and Rotoloni, 2013).

## **Chapter-2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Innovative teaching technique**

According to De Lano et al, “in the past the teachers were not allowed to adopt any creative methods of teaching. Nowadays EFL teachers are more often free to use their Innovative teaching technique. The term innovation has been in extremely varied ways throughout the main stream educational literature on educational innovation. Most definitions seem to make use of at least one of four key terms to characterize innovations: change, development, novelty, or improvement”.

#### **2.2 Some popular teaching Method(s)**

##### **2.2.1 CLT (Communicative Language Teaching):**

From Duncan Hunter, “given the persistence of the influence of CLT as a methodology, and its continued dominance in the discourse and practice of the profession, it is surely essential that ordinary practitioners possess a clear understanding of its central ideas. The absence of a clear shared definition for CLT and the eclectic nature of the methodology appear, in fact, to form part of its identity. Hiep, explains, CLT describes ‘the nature of language and of language learning and teaching’. Yet ‘many different ways of understandings, descriptions, and uses of CLT’ exist (p. 193).” (Hunter, p.3). Littlewood states, "One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language," (Rodgers, 155:14).



Ann Galloway in "Communicative Language Teaching: An Introduction And Sample Activities" said, "Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication." It is noted that "being able to communicate required more than mastering linguistic structures. It became clear that communication required that students perform certain functions as well, such as promising, inviting, and declining invitations within a social context" (Larsen-Freeman, 121 :7). This means being able to communicate accurately requires communicative competence rather than linguistic competence. It is observed that sometimes students can utter sentences correctly in a classroom but is not able to utter properly in an authentic situation. Therefore, "Communicative Language Teaching aims broadly to apply the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication" (Larsen-Freeman, 121: 19).

### **2.2.2 GTM (Grammar Translation Method):**

Diane Larsen-Freeman in "*Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*" said "According to the teachers who use the Grammar-Translation Method, a fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able to read literature written in the target language. To do this, students need to learn about the grammar rules and vocabulary of the target language" (p. 17). As it was used for the first time in teaching of the classical languages like Latin and Greek and its main motive is to read classical literature so Grammar-Translation Method was known as Classical Method. Monique Barb in his article named "Language Teaching: The Grammar Translation Method" has noted that "The Grammar Translation Method derived from traditional approaches to the teaching of Latin and Greek in the nineteenth century." "Grammar Translation is a

way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language," (Rodgers, 5:33). This method helps students to improve their ability to read a literary text. Additionally, the students are taught to read and write precisely in their target language. However, its main task is to ask the students to learn grammatical rules and items of vocabulary from bilingual word list, dictionary which is capable to make them bored. Moreover, while learning these they use their native language or mother tongue as a medium of instruction which is not feasible for listening and speaking teaching. This method does not focus on listening and speaking skills rather it emphasizes on reading and writing skills. As a result, students become unable to use the language for communicating with others. (Zewar, 2010).

### **2.2.3 Direct Method:**

Since the "Grammar Translation Method" was not effective to prepare the students to use their target language and communicate properly in that language, then the "Direct Method" became popular. In the Direct Method translation is not allowed. The students directly use the target language to get the meaning of a name and no native language is allowed to use. The meaning of the words is described by the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language. The direct method does not allow the teachers to use the native language use in the classroom. The vocabularies are acquired not memorized in this approach. The purpose of the language learning in direct method is improving the power of communication of the students. This method promotes the idea of ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) by letting the students

correct their own mistake. Students improve their writing skills by the dictation of the teachers (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

## **2.3 The Procedure of teaching writing through innovative techniques by following the process approach to writing:**

The objective of writing in a foreign language is to get learners to acquire the abilities and skills to produce different kinds of written text like an educated person. The things in concern are does it really teach writing or just to use writing as a means to teach other aspects of language (grammar, for example). If it focuses on writing itself, the teacher has to ensure the balance between the ‘micro’ aspects (spelling, punctuation, etc.) and the ‘macro’ aspects (content, organization). (UR,1991)

Most composition theorists make a distinction between process-oriented and product-oriented writing. James McCrimmon sees it as the difference between writing as a way of knowing (process) and writing as a way of telling (product). Karen Gocsik (2007) sees writing as a three-step process: pre-writing, writing, and re-writing.

### **2.3.1 Pre-writing:**

Prewriting includes everything that a student does before beginning to draft a paper. They have further classified prewriting into five activities: reading as a writer, generating ideas, organizing ideas, contextualizing ideas, and coming up with a working thesis. (Gocsik, 2007)

### **2.3.2 Coming Up With A Working Thesis:**

The most important in the prewriting process is coming up with a working thesis (or thesis question). Advise students to post their thesis where they can see it like- on the board, when they write, this sentence if well crafted, will help the writer to stay focused on the topic of argument s/he is trying to make. Let the students know that, they have only a working thesis in order to accommodate shifts in perspectives and new ideas. Gocsik (2007).

### **2.3.3 Generating Ideas for stopping writer's block:**

Experienced writing instructors offer students several strategies for generating ideas. Some of these ideas—like using Aristotle's topoi. Other teachers will ask students to free write, or brainstorm, or write a discovery draft (a bit like free writing, but with more focus). Perhaps the best way of helping students to generate ideas is through good old-fashioned dialogue, asking WH- Questions both in conference and in writing workshops.

- ❖ **Listing:** Listing is one of the most useful ways for writers to get started again when their mind get blocked. Listing is thus faster than free writing. Once the writer has decided a topic for writing, they will need to find out what they know about the topic and anything related to it. The writer then writes down everything that comes into their mind about the topic but do not write sentences. This technique is hardly followed in Bangladesh while teaching writing skill. (Leki, 2004, p.23)
- ❖ **WH- Questions:** According to Ilona Leki (2004, p.25) asking WH- Questions like- who, what, when, where, why and sometimes how may help the writer to clarify the subject they are going to discuss in a composition. This technique, like listing the

questions and finding details about the subject and for restarting the writing helps to stop writer's block. Here the writer is the one who both asks and answer the questions which is a new way of learning to write.

- ❖ **Clusters and Branches:** Leki (2004) mentioned this technique as the most innovative one in writing. it means to gather all the information about the topic from the writers mind and associating them with all the sub points of the topic. It is done by making branches like a tree table.
- ❖ **Looping:** According to Iliona Leki (2004, p.28), "Looping is more similar to freewriting, but it is more focused. Looping can help you focus your thought on a subject, find the core or center of your thought, and pinpoint a main idea on which to elaborate." She said, this invention technique can be used at any time in writing process. It can be more useful when the writers' ideas seem chaotic and vague.
- ❖ **Cubing:** Cubing involves looking at an idea from six different points of view and each presenting one of the six sides of a cube. The writer will look quickly from these six angles to have several perspectives on the subject are-

**1. Describe it (What does it look like?)**

**2. Compare it (What is it similar to?)**

**3. Analyze it (What is it made of?)**

**4. Associate it (What does it remind you of?)**

**5. Apply it (What can you do with it?)**

**6. Argue for or against it (give reasons)**

### **2.3.4 Organizing Ideas/ Outlining:**

According to Leki (2004, p.30), "An outline is a structured method of exploring your thoughts on a subject. Some writers like to use the freer invention strategies to generate

ideas. Then they make a outline to organize their ideas. Thus, outline can be a transition between inventing and writing a first draft. In this way, it functions as a plan for writing”. It can also be done after writing a draft. In this way it works like a checklist to verify the reliability of the paper presented. Though this technique of starting to write is not new but at the primary level schools in Bangladesh it can be a innovative teaching writing procedure.

Moreover, students have several strategies to choose from when organizing their ideas. While students should be permitted to use the organizing strategies that work for them, sometimes young writers rely overmuch on one organizational strategy. If this strategy isn't working, they get stuck. At this point, the instructor can enter the student's process and demonstrate how a different organizational strategy might be effective. (Gocsik (2007).

#### **2.4 Innovative techniques for revision:**

According to Ilona Leki (2004, p.140), “Revision is not a punishment for writing a bad text. All experienced writers revise. In fact, revising can be quite pleasurable, even easier, and more interesting then writing the first draft. Think of revising as a game or puzzle that you control and manipulate”. There are some interesting revision techniques given bellow by Craig D Barnes (2012):

##### **➤ Cut yourself off from equipments:**

Students should remove all the electronic devices such as computers and other gaming equipment that can be a great distraction while doing revision. So they should remove them from their learning environment whilst try to revise. If the students do not have enough willpower to not use them for a few hours, they can give those gaming devices

to their parents to ensure that they will fully focus on the work. This can be an unusual and effective revision strategy for the students. (Barnes, 2012).

➤ **Study with your friends:**

A child may think that studying with your friends will only distract them. But if they compete with a friend and make a goal to do the same amount of revision within a time period, it can help them raise their interests on revision and if the study is for an exam, they can even ask past-paper questions to each other after a useful revision. This will help them to determine what they need to go over and revise again. (Barnes, 2012).

There are some rules that can be helpful to revise effectively while drafting or reading given by University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (2013):

- Find a quiet place to study and make sure you are sitting comfortably,
- Make sure your desk is well lit,
- Keep background noise to a minimum,
- Avoid studying in an area where there will be distractions (like television!),
- Have everything you need to do your revision to hand before you start.
- Study with a friend and test each other's knowledge, but remember you are meeting to revise rather than to chat!
- Attend any revision classes that your teachers may be running at school and get their advice on revision methods.

## **2.5 The procedure for teaching reading through innovative techniques:**

The procedure of teaching reading is very important in teaching reading in a classroom. Teachers should help and encourage the students to read effectively. To perform the

job, teachers must design effective reading tasks for teaching reading in the class because a successful teaching of reading depends largely on the proper planning of reading lessons. According to Rahman (2004), “Teaching techniques should be designed according to the level of the perception of the students. An experienced and efficient teacher knows well when a particular technique should be followed and how. However, in the teaching of reading, there are some tested teaching techniques by recommended experts, and these techniques can be followed in the classroom.”

Grellet (1996) said that, sometimes practicing reading in the classroom should not be done by the teachers or the students only. He, therefore, suggests that students should not read aloud in the class alone because it is an extremely difficult exercise and it may make them poor reader as they will rarely follow the punctuations, intonations and others technical terms while reading. Teachers should guide them beforehand or read aloud to the students.

Williams (1996) has suggested that for effective teaching of reading in the classroom, the lesson should be divided into three consecutive phases. They are pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading phases. Now the researcher will discuss how these three stages can include innovative teaching techniques of reading-

### **2.5.1 Pre-reading:**

In pre-reading stage, teacher should carefully design the activities that prepare the students mentally to accept what he/she is going to teach in the next stage. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 184) have suggested some commonly used pre-reading activities. They are-



1. thinking about the title
2. checking the edition and date of publications
3. reading appendices quickly
4. reading indices quickly
5. reading the abstract carefully
6. reading the preface, the forward and the blurb carefully.

Aims of this phase, according to Williams the aims of this phase are to introduce and arouse interest in the topic, to motivate learners by giving a reason for reading and to provide some language preparation for the text. However, these commonly used pre-reading tasks are still not used in Bangladesh. (Rahman, 2004). Now some innovative techniques of pre-reading activities will be given bellow-

1. List all the information that comes to your mind about the title,
2. Group discussion in the class will help them to discover about the topic.
3. After having the “main idea” of the topic from the teacher, they should develop their mind map around the topic.
4. The teacher may ask them to write some questions about the topic they expect to be answered.
5. Teacher can show some pictures or any visual materials related to the given topic to develop their prior knowledge about the topic.
6. Related reading materials of a topic may help.
7. Meaning of the unfamiliar words should be given beforehand.
8. A discussion about the author of a particular text can be helpful before starting to read.

So, these are some innovative teaching techniques of pre-reading activities that can be followed to improve students' reading skill.

### **2.5.2 While-reading:**

In the while-reading phase, “Students must be taught how to read and respond to books” (Greenwood, 1998: 59). During this period students should be involved in activities which enable them to respond cognitively, emotionally and imaginatively to creative writing.

The teacher should conduct some innovative tasks in this phase for the better output from the students in the next stage. The activities in this stage should be designed according to the level and standard of the students. Shahidullah (1995-96) has suggested some of the while-reading activities. They are-

1. guessing meaning from context,
2. analysing sentences,
3. surveying text structure,
4. extracting specific information,
5. getting detailed information,
6. answering pre-set questions,
7. matching texts with picture, diagrams etc.,
8. guessing meaning of unfamiliar words,

Though these while reading activities above can be considered to be commonly used activities, but in Bangladesh it can be used as the innovative one as the teachers are still not using such methods in while reading activities. Some other innovative addition to these while reading activities can be-

1. Effective use of the dictionary,
2. Paying attention to the grammatical function of unknown words,
3. Distinguishing between fact and opinion,
4. Paraphrasing for the purpose of summarizing,
5. Stop at the end of each section to review and check the students' predictions,
6. Use the comprehension questions as guides to the text.

The while-reading phase is the most active stage among the three. According to Williams (1996, p.38), proper activities enable the students to understand the writer's purpose, to understand the text structure and to clarify text content. (Rahman, 2004).

### **2.5.3 Post-reading:**

In this stage the teachers evaluate what has been taught in the while-reading stage. In this stage the teacher may ask the students to give their reaction to the text, for example, the students may answer whether they have liked and enjoyed it, or found it useful or not. In short, activities at this stage do not refer directly to the text, but 'grow out' of it. Some innovative post-reading activities will be-

1. The students can debate on the topic given by the teacher.
2. The teacher may ask the students to present a reading assignment to the class. After they complete the reading assignment, divide them into groups of three or four to discuss and come up with some ideas to present in front of all.
3. Students can be asked to write a persuasive paper. The teacher need to make the students understand the matter that, they have to write by keeping the readers of their writing in mind.

4. The teacher should ask a question that has many answers so that all students will have a chance to answer. A time limit of two to five minutes should be given for response time.

## **2.6 ‘Top Ten Principles’ for Teaching Reading**

In order to make the teaching of EFL reading effective, it is important for teachers regularly “to take stock of their perception or the nature of the reading process itself, relevant reading activities, and appropriate classroom management.” (Williams, 1986: 42-45). She has pointed out 10 principles and termed them as ‘top ten principles’. They are important to evaluate the successful reading strategy. The principles are:

1. *In the absence of interesting texts, very little is possible.* According to her, “Interest is vital, for it increases motivation, which in turn is a significant factor in the development of reading speed and fluency.” The book should be interesting, first and foremost, to the learner, and then preferably to the teacher. Though it is difficult to know the interest-level of the students, it is not impossible. To make out whether the books, currently in use in EFL reading course interest them, they can be asked to assess them as ‘interesting’, ‘all right’, or ‘boring’.

2. *The primary activity of a reading lesson should be learners reading text.* It should be kept in mind while learning to read that the other activities- listening, writing etc. should not be allowed to hamper the reading activity. Though other activities are not unimportant, teachers should know well that “Learners learn to read by reading: there is no other way.”

**3. *Growth in language ability is an essential part of the development of reading ability.***

Students may have sufficient strategies and schemata, but the most important thing about reading English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) is that students must have adequate vocabulary, the full understanding of the sentence pattern and ‘rhetorical patternings’ of the text. (Rahman, 2004). Without these kinds of knowledge, all their skills and strategies in the world ‘will have little effect’. Alderson (1984: 1- 27) having reviewed the relevant literature, suggests that a minimum language threshold is necessary before reading skills and strategies can successfully operate.

**4. *Classroom procedure should reflect the purposeful, task-based, interactive nature of real reading.***

A psycholinguistic model of the reading process (e.g. Goodman: 1967) holds that the reader is actively engaged in striving to reconstruct the author’s message. “Reading is thus not only active but interactive process”. Classroom activities can help the students by encouraging them to make use of what they have read by means of ‘application’ questions. Teachers should not forget that purposeful, audible interactivity of this nature replicates the interactivity which is characteristic of the efficient, individual, silent reader.

**5. *Teachers must learn to be quiet all too often; teachers interfere with and so impede their learners’ reading development by being too dominant and by talking too much.***

Although reading can and should be fostered by collaborative group work, in the final analysis it is an individual task just like swimming or playing the piano. So, teachers should act like guides under whom students will develop their individual reading skill.

**6.** *Exercise-types should, as far as possible, approximate to cognitive reality.* Teachers need to identify the strategies, skills, and objectives during the process of real reading and help the learner to acquire them to make him/her a more efficient reader.

**7.** *A learner will not become a proficient reader simply by attending a reading course or working through a reading textbook.* Learners should provide the equal hours for both intensive and extensive readings. It does not matter that what learners read in extensive reading if they feel like enjoying the text.

**8.** *A reader contributes meaning to a text.* Reading is not simply a matter of taking out information, opinion, enjoyment etc. from a text; it involves contributing attitudes, experience, pre-knowledge etc. This natural characteristic of real reading must be encouraged and developed in teaching EFL reading. This can be done by including questions or tasks which require readers to combine what is in their heads with what is in the text.

**9.** *Progress in reading requires learners to use their ears, as well as their eyes.* Research suggests that audible reading as well as silent reading involves stress and intonation. So, learners should be encouraged to listen to texts such as recorded tapes, the teacher reading to the class, older learners reading to younger learners, and better readers reading to weaker readers in their group. The process is called MKO (The More Knowledgeable Others).

**10.** *Using a text does not necessarily equal teaching reading.* A particular text might look suitable for a particular purpose. So, to develop reading skills appropriate and suitable texts should be chosen for the learners.

Williams (1996: 109-111) has pointed out some meaningful ways of teaching how to develop students' reading ability. They are: (1) read and match, (2) read and label, (3) read and complete, (4) read and draw, (5) jigsaw procedure and (6) enquiry strategy.

## **2.7 Role of a good teacher:**

According to Jeremy Harmer (1983), Teacher's role may change from one activity to another activity in the classroom. If teachers are fluent at making these changes their effectiveness as teacher is greatly enhanced. Teachers work as a 'facilitator' which is best defined by his/her role as a prompter, controller, organizer, assessor and some others. He states, "All roles, after all, aim to facilitate the students' progress in some way or other, and so it is useful to adopt more precise terms than facilitator".

### **1. Controller:**

According to Harmer (1983) "When teachers act as controllers they are in charge of the class and of the activity taking place in a way that is substantially different from a situation where students are working in groups. Controllers take the roll, tell the things, organize drills, read aloud, and in various other ways exemplify the question of a teacher fronted classroom."

### **2. Organizer:**

One of the most important roles that teachers have to perform is that of organizing students to do various activities. Harmer said, "This often involves giving the students information, telling them how they are going to do the activity, putting them into pairs or groups, and finally closing things down when it is time to stop." It is very important

for the teacher to get this role whenever it is required. If the students get confused about their activities the role might not be fulfilled.

### **3. Assessor:**

Harmer states that, “One of the thing student expect from their teachers in indication of whether or not they are getting their English right. This is where we have to work as an assessor, offering feedback and correction and grading students in various ways.”

Students need to know their level by being assessed by their teacher. They need to know whether they can pass to the next level or not. Then the teachers need to tell them the face of success how it looks like and the student will be able to measure their level.

### **4. Prompter:**

Students sometimes get involved in a “role play” activity and lose the thread of what is going on and how to proceed. In this circumstance, the teacher should hold back and let them work things out for themselves or nudge them forward in a discreet and supportive way. It calls some kind of “Prompting” role.

Harmer said, “When we prompt we need to do it sensitively and encouragingly but, above all, with discretion. If we are too adamant we risk taking initiative away from the student.

### **5. Participant:**

There also time when the teacher may need to participate by entering into the student’s group. The teachers will help the students from inside the group. Harmer stated that, sometimes “ ...students enjoy having the teacher with them, and for the teacher, participating is often more enjoyable than acting as a resource.”



## **6. Resource:**

When students are involved in a piece of group writing, or that they are involved in preparing for a presentation they are to make to the class, then the teachers should not try to take any of the activities mentioned above. But the students may have still need of the teacher as a resource. They may ask about many information related to their work.

## **7. Tutor:**

When students are working on longer projects, such as pieces of writing or preparations for a talk or a debate, teachers can act as a tutor, working with individuals or small groups, pointing them in direction they have not yet thought of taking. In such situation, teachers are combining the roles of prompter and resource, acting as a tutor. (Harmer, 1983, p:62).

## **8. Observer:**

Harmer (1983) said, “We will want to observe what students do so that we can give them useful group and individual feedback. When observing we should be careful not to be too intrusive by hanging on their every word, by getting too close to them, or by officiously writing things down all the time.” Teachers do not only observe students in order to give them feedback either. They also observe to judge the success of the different materials and activities.

## **2.8 The relationship between reading and writing:**

The relationship between reading and writing is based on communication. Both processes should develop as a natural extension of the child's need to communicate (Wilson, 1981). In other words, if reading and writing are to be communicative then the reader needs to read with the sense of the writer and the writer needs to write with the sense of the reader. A reader need to make sense of what the writer is communicating through the text and the writer need to make sure that his/her message is clear and understood by the reader. Children should make the connection that other children will be reading their writing, so that children will need to have a better sense of the writer and write better with the sense of the reader. Children need to develop their communicative skills by having the opportunities to read and write (Aulls, 1985; Holt & Vacca, 1984; Smith, 1983). When a child writes, he/she develops a new text using prior knowledge, imagination and other resources (Brooks, 1988). Thus, all literate persons are readers and writers, constructing meaning from the text in which they read and meaning from the text in which they write (Nelson, 1998).

## **2.9 ELT at the primary level in Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh it is said that they are very much emotional about their language. So the nation has given priority to Bengali ignoring English. But as the English is the global language it should not be ignored as it is needed to survive in this competitive world. Nowadays, many students do not get job after obtaining their university degree. The main reason behind this is their poor English. From primary level to university, students study in Bengali medium. They face the brutal reality when they face job interviews. It is often very tough to get job without knowing English in this competitive job market. So, knowing the importance of learning English, the parents of the children

prefer admitting their children in English medium schools. But while giving emphasis on learning English, the parents should also know the quality of English Language Teaching (ELT) of those schools. The teachers who are conducting classes should be efficient in teaching the language. Moreover the government is still trying to improve the level of teaching English at the primary level in all the educational institutions. But the result is still not that much satisfactory. Write (2005) says that, “Country like Bangladesh must have a national ELT policy for implementing English language program for effective teaching and learning English in Bangladesh”.

According to Shahidullah (1999), “An appropriate method of ELT should be based on the socio-cultural variables of learners. In Bangladesh, as testing is memory based, so language tests do not reflect the students’ actual language proficiency. A country cannot make a progressive mode of teaching and learning system without changing the traditional evaluation system”. So, the progress of ELT cannot be portrayed by the language tests mentioned by Shahidullah (1999). So, this is an important area to reveal the level of teaching in Bangladesh.

## **Chapter- 3**

### **Methodology**

This chapter provides an account of the methodology of the study and discusses issues pertaining to the nature of the study design, theoretical framework, setting and sampling, data gathering instrument, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure. A successful research requires both library research and empirical investigations. Empirical research is important because it helps to support or reject the hypothesis/statement stated in the theoretical arguments of a study. The empirical research of this study focuses the problems students face during their reading and writing, the reading and writing pedagogy, materials currently in use in the classes, present state of the reading and the writing skills of the students at the primary level, and teachers' role in conducting reading and writing activities in the class.

#### **3.1 Research Design:**

The study has tried to investigate the present status of teaching writing and reading in the primary level classroom in Bangladesh. The survey tried to explore the extent to which Innovative Teaching Techniques are implemented in the teaching of reading and writing skills in Bangladesh. The study tried to evaluate the currently followed reading and writing components of the English syllabus at the primary level. It also examines the reliability of the teacher's personal sources used as innovative teaching techniques. So the nature of the study is, thus, quantitative. According to the research

and the basis of methodology, it has been conducted by two ways- a) Survey method b) class observation. To serve the research purpose the questionnaire has been set out which is comprised of both open ended and close ended items for survey. This research is aimed to survey on 5 well known English medium schools to collect data from minimally 100 students (20 students from each school), 50 teachers (10 teachers from each school). This study focuses on the students of class five.

### **3.2 Theoretical Framework:**

A theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts that guide the research for determining what things the researcher tries to find out. This study is inspired by the works of Diane Larsen- Freeman's principles and methods suggested in the book "*Techniques and Principles in Language teaching*", Jeremy Harmer's work on teaching English language, Lev Vygotsky's theory of "reciprocal teaching" and "cognitive development" etc.

This study adopts different theories concerning the Innovative teaching techniques used by the teacher of primary level students in Bangladesh. As De Lano, Relay and Crookes stated that, "ESL teachers' primary function was limited to instruction. More recently, however, we are increasingly involved in the creation and implementation of innovations within educational systems considered more broadly. To discharge this increased responsibility, understanding of innovation itself and of procedures for setting innovations in motion is vital." These positive attitudes towards innovations may inspire our educational institutions in some extent.

Vygotsky's "reciprocal teaching" is used to improve student's ability to learn from text. In this method, teacher and students collaborate in learning and practicing four key skills- summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting. The teacher's role in the

process is reduced over time. Vygotsky is also relevant to instructional concepts such as “scaffolding” and “apprenticeship” in which a teacher or more advanced learner helps the other learner to work on a task successfully. (Vygotsky, 1962).

Vygotsky’s principle of MKO (More Knowledgeable Other) refers to anyone who has a better understanding than the learner is perceived as a teacher. The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher who can be anyone like- a coach, an older adult or even a computer. Successful teaching in a particular task is in the center of concern.

Currently, many institutions are moving towards problem-based learning as a solution to producing graduates who are creative and can think critically, analytically, and solve problems. Since knowledge is no longer the only end but also a means to creating better problem solvers and encourage lifelong learning. Problem-based learning is becoming increasingly popular in educational institutions as a tool to address the inadequacies of traditional teaching. Since these traditional approaches do not encourage students to question what they have learnt or to associate with previously acquired knowledge (Teo & Wong, 2000), problem-based learning is seen as an innovative measure to encourage students to learn how to learn via real-life problems (Boud & Feletti, 1999).

In traditional classroom the teacher is only perceived as a sender who only gives knowledge and the students as the receiver who only receives knowledge from the teacher. The chart can show the perfect scenario of the problem bellow-



So, according to the traditional approach teachers are the medium and only send knowledge but recently teachers are being observed as the receivers also in many

approaches. (Damodharan & Rengarajan, 2008). Harmer (1983) in opposition to the traditional classroom argued that, teacher is a facilitator who is flexible, co-operative and allows students in open discussion. Students as well as the teacher have the freedom to choose the topic in a progressive classroom. So, all these theories and arguments are supportive to the topic of the research.

### **3.3 Setting:**

The data collection will take place in formal setting. During school hours this study will collect the data from the students and the teachers in a formal setting. Students' data will be collected from 5 English medium schools from Dhaka, Bangladesh. Teachers' data will also be collected from the number of the schools mentioned above. The data will be collected through questionnaire and classroom observation. The data collected from the students and the teachers will be in formal setting and the questionnaire will be in English. The participants will provide information for such questionnaire during an appointed meeting in their break time. The participant schools are- **1.** Maple Leaf International School, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, **2.** Marie Curie, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, **3.** Scholastica Concerned Group Ltd., Mirpur, Dhaka, **4.** British Standard High School, Wari, Dhaka, **5.** Australian International School, Gulshan, Dhaka. The questionnaire provides data of primary level students.

### **3.4 Sampling:**

For the research purpose it is important to collect data from five well known English medium schools as it is not possible to cover all the schools in limited time. Data will be collected from 100 students (20 students from each school) and they will be selected randomly. If there is more than one section in class 5, researcher will select the first section; this criterion will be same for all schools. The researcher will go to each school in person and will take permission from authority in order to conduct this questionnaire survey. On the other hand, 50 teachers will be selected from different schools (10 teachers from each school). Only those teachers who are currently teaching in class 5 will be selected for the survey. Hopefully, these numbers will be representative of all. We can thus expect some degree of similarities in their personal characteristics (motivation, intelligence, social and economical background, experience of the world, maturity and so on).

### **3.5 Research instruments:**

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaire Design process:**

To conduct this research three types of questionnaire have been prepared; one is for the teachers and the other is for the students. Questionnaires do not include any sensitive query. The questionnaires do not include any ambiguous words, double-barreled questions, and bias. To obtain the information, questions are designed in simple way to elicit the genuine data and in non-threatening way.

While designing questions for the questionnaire survey, respondents' intelligibility and their level of vocabulary have been considered. To make a purposeful questionnaire, the researcher has taken care of it sincerely. The researcher got the whole research paper checked by the respectful supervisor from time to time on occasions.



In questionnaire, there are 12 questions in part A and 18 questions in part B attached as appendix. In appendix 1 and 2, Part A is formed to answer the central research question 1. Part B is related to answer the central questions 2 and 3. As the questionnaire has been designed in multiple choice question pattern, the teachers and the students might not face any problem to answer the questions. The researcher has added 8 open ended questions both for the teachers and the students, 4 for the teachers and 4 for the students to know the details about the current situation of the student's reading and writing skills.

### **3.5.2 Class observation:**

Class observation is another research instrument to collect data. This study has followed a non-participant class observation strategy to collect data. The teachers were asked to continue their everyday class schedule undisturbed. The researcher prepared a checklist to aid the observation and notes were taken during the classroom observation. Actually, through the classroom observation, the real picture of English teaching practice in the classroom will come out. The outcome of the observation is expected to give some answers to the central research questions.

### **3.6 Data collection procedure:**

Data will be collected through questionnaire and class observation. The study will be conducted in formal setting of five different schools, which might take 4 weeks. The researcher might need formal letter to show and explain the objective of the research to the authority of the schools. In the questionnaire the researcher added 4 open ended questions for the teachers to interview them. The teachers will answer to those open

ended questions briefly. The researcher must consider the hartals and holidays as it will not be possible to collect data properly during that period of time.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedure:**

The researcher will examine the data by analyzing the response of the questionnaires from the students and the teachers. The researcher will provide numerical data for example percentage of different variables in the form of a table. The researcher will give a Statistical analysis of the data. The researcher will provide detailed exposure of the data and describe it as needed. The researcher will interpret it in terms of the theories and identify their relationships with the findings.

## Chapter- 4

### Results and Discussions

#### Part-1

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. The following information, tables, data etc. are given on the basis of questionnaire survey taken with the teachers and the students: the summaries of teachers and students' opinion are presented in percentage in two separate tables. The data will be tabulated first and then presented in descriptive way.

#### **4.1 Tabulation of Questionnaire Data (For Students):**

**Part- A:** The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are helping the students to improve their skills and interests of reading and writing in the classroom and to what extent.

**Total number of the students- 100**

No	Questions	Students' response in percentage (%)			
		a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Do you enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms?	23	58	7	12
2.	Do you enjoy reading books other than your textbooks in the classroom?	9	15	41	35
3.	Do you enjoy writing essays on your own?	17	32	25	26
4.	Do you keep class notes during the class?	37	34	13	16
5.	Does the classroom arrangement really affect you while you are reading or writing?	6	18	29	47
6.	Do you enjoy sharing your own ideas, experience and thoughts with others?	12	19	16	53
7.	Can you recall the related experience or associate knowledge while you are reading a text?	37	26	22	15
8.	Can you write correct and better sentences with the help of your English teacher?	4	7	17	72
9.	Do you find it difficult to understand the	5	8	47	40

	textbook while reading?				
10.	Do you like to have rewards for a successful task?	0	4	12	84
11.	Do you like to work in groups?	8	13	38	41
12.	Do you like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom?	0	0	5	95

**Part- B: The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching techniques are being implemented on the students in the classroom and to what extent.**

No	Questions	Students' response in percentage (%)			
		a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d) Always /Yes
1.	Does your teacher use any book in the classroom apart from your textbook?	55	24	10	11
2.	How frequently your teacher asks you to choose your own topic/ text for reading or writing?	47	32	13	8
3.	Does your teacher permit you to ask questions and give opinion while reading/ writing?	5	8	28	59
4.	Does your teacher help you while doing any reading or writing activities?	15	16	17	52
5.	Does your teacher ever give you a C.W. that you can write based on your own thought?	29	71	0	0
6.	Does your teacher make any effort to encourage you in the classroom activities?	15	13	38	34
7.	Does your teacher encourage you to share your ideas, thoughts and feeling?	8	40	35	17
8.	Does your teacher manage the class hour well?	10	2	29	59
9.	Does your teacher communicate well with you in the classroom?	7	32	39	22
10.	Does your teacher encourage you to take responsibility of your own learning/ mistakes?	38	15	31	16
11.	Does your teacher ever encourage you to think critically about any topic?	75	10	5	10
12.	Does your teacher allow you to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities?	13	38	33	16
13.	Does your teacher willing to learn your problems while doing any task?	18	29	32	21

14.	Is your teacher frank with you?	8	50	30	12
15.	Does your teacher offer you any reward for the winner in the class?	12	43	38	7
16.	Does your teacher promote competition amongst the students?	2	10	18	70
17.	Does your teacher bring various tools to describe a new word in the class?	71	15	9	5
18.	Does your teacher ask you to read additional materials (stories, novels, magazines etc. written in English) at home also?	35	32	15	18

### **Questionnaire Data Analysis (Students):**

This section (Part A) of the Questionnaire consists of 12 questions that deal with students' ability and interests regarding their reading and writing activities. Here, it is seen that-

- The highest 58% students enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms sometimes which is option (b).
- 41% students enjoy reading books other than their textbooks in the classroom most of the times which is option (c).
- Sometimes 32% of the students enjoy writing essays on their own which is option (b).
- 37% respondents never keep their class notes during the class and marked option (a).
- 47% students think that the classroom arrangement always affects their reading or writing activities in the classroom and marked option (d).
- Students always enjoy sharing their own ideas, experience and thoughts with others and marked option (d) in which the percentage of the respondents is 53%.
- The highest 37% of the students marked on option (a) and thinks that they are not able to recall the related experience or associate knowledge while reading a text.

- Students can always write correct and better sentences with the help of their English teacher and you find it difficult to understand the marked on option (d) and the respondents are 72%.
- 47% of the students find it difficult to understand the textbook while reading most of the times, which is option (c).
- 84% students always like to have rewards for a successful task, which is option (d).
- The highest 41% of the students like to work in groups always, which is option (d).
- Students always like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom and marked on option (d) and the respondent is 95%.
- From part- B, question 1, students marked on option (a), which shows that teachers never use any book apart from their textbook in the classroom and the percentage of the respondents is 55%.
- 47% students' view is that teachers never ask to choose their own topic/ text for reading or writing, which is option (a).
- 59% students are agreed with the point that their teacher always permits them to ask question or give opinion while reading or writing, which is option (d).
- 52% students also agreed with the point that their teacher always helps them in their reading or writing activities and marked on option (d).
- Sometimes the teachers give them C.W. based on their own thoughts and 71% students went with the option (b).
- Most of the teachers make effort to encourage the students to perform in the classroom activities and 38% students marked on (c).
- 40% of the students marked on (b), which is the teachers encourage them to share their ideas, thoughts and feelings sometimes.

- 59% students think that their teachers always maintain the class hours properly and marked (d).
- 39% students find their teacher well communicative with them most of the time, which is option (c).
- 38% students never found their teacher encouraging them to take the responsibilities of their own learning/ mistakes.
- Teachers never let the students think critically on any topic, and 75% students marked on option (a).
- 38% students' finds their teacher allow them to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities and goes with the option (b).
- Only 32% students find their teachers willing to learn their problem while doing the tasks most of the times and marked option (c).
- 50% students find their teachers being frank with them sometimes, which is option (b).
- Sometimes teachers offer rewards for the winner for a successful task in the class and the students' response is 43% which is option (b).
- Teachers always (d) promote competition amongst the students and 70% students agreed on this point.
- 71% students' response shows that teachers never bring any tools in the class to describe new or various words.
- Only 35% students are agreed on this point that teachers never ask them to read any additional materials at home, which is option (a).

So, from the above analysis, the researcher can draw a conclusion that Innovative Teaching Techniques are not adapted to a great extent by the teachers and most of the students do not enjoy the traditional reading and writing practices in the classroom.

Thus, the reading and writing practices in our classroom are hardly improving the reading and writing skills of our students. A major observation of the survey is that though the students are very much attracted towards interesting tasks, the teachers are still not able to adapt them properly in their reading and writing activities. Very few teachers use these teaching techniques in the classrooms which can develop their students' interests in reading and writing tasks and improve their skills. The questionnaire survey shows that, though the teachers are following Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method as their teaching approach, Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is still reigning over them. Most of the teachers are not willing to let the students get involved actively and perform independently and individually in their classrooms in the English medium schools in Bangladesh rather students are being instructed as a total group. Innovative Teaching Techniques are not getting implemented in the classrooms by the teachers to that extent to develop students' ability as fully as possible and the result is, the students are not improving their reading and writing skills properly and fully because they still lack their interest in English severely. To improve the students' situation, the teachers should adapt different teaching techniques and strategies to let them write independently. On the other hand, most of the students said that they are not getting the chance to write in their own language. So, it's clear that teachers are not encouraging the students to improve their individual performance. The maximum number of the students are getting a boring and traditional environment in the classroom and losing interest in learning a foreign language in this country. But the study shows that, students are very fond of having creative and innovative tasks. So, the teachers also should try to design some innovative reading and writing activities for the children so that they get more involved



in learning process. However, the authority should also take care of the situation and ensure the learner's better learning of the target language.

#### **4.2 Tabulation of Questionnaire Data (For Teachers):**

**Part- A: The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are helping the students to improve their skills and interests in reading and writing in the classroom and to what extent.**

**Total number of the teachers- 50**

No	Questions	Teacher's response in percentage (%)			
		a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Do your students enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms?	10	20	40	30
2.	Do your students enjoy reading books other than the textbooks in the classroom?	8	16	32	44
3.	Do your students enjoy writing essays on their own?	24	16	32	28
4.	Do they keep journal during the class?	8	50	32	10
5.	Does the classroom arrangement really affect the students while they are reading or writing?	20	20	24	36
6.	Do you think your students enjoy sharing their own ideas, experience and thoughts with others?	18	8	24	50
7.	Can your students recall the related experience or associate knowledge while they are reading a text?	28	36	20	16
8.	Can your students write their own sentences correctly in English?	10	52	24	14
9.	Do your students find difficulty to understand the text while reading?	2	6	48	44
10.	Do you offer rewards for the students for a successful task?	20	40	30	10
11.	Do they like to work in groups?	4	18	36	42
12.	Do they like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom?	0	0	40	60

**Part- B: The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are being implemented on the students in the classroom and to what extent.**

No	Questions	Teacher's response in percentage (%)			
		a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d) Always /Yes
1.	Do you use any book in the classroom apart from your textbook?	20	50	20	10
2.	How frequently you ask the students to choose their own topic/ text for reading or writing?	20	40	30	10
3.	Do you permit your students' to ask questions and give opinion while reading/writing?	4	16	40	40
4.	Do you help your students' in reading/writing tasks?	0	20	38	42
5.	Do you ever give your students a C.W. that they can write based on their own thought?	10	50	20	20
6.	Do you make any effort to stimulate students' interest in the class?	4	12	44	40
7.	Do you encourage them to share their ideas, thoughts and feeling?	24	20	40	16
8.	Are you able to manage the class hour well?	0	0	40	60
9.	Do you communicate well with the students in the classroom?	12	32	36	20
10.	Do you encourage the students to take responsibility of their own learning/mistakes?	40	30	30	0
11.	Do you ever encourage the students to think critically about any topic?	20	32	32	16
12.	Do you allow your students to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities?	18	32	30	20
13.	Do you try to learn the students' problems while they are doing the tasks?	0	16	40	44
14.	Are you frank with the students?	4	46	34	16
15.	Do you offer reward for the winner in the class often?	18	48	20	14
16.	Do you promote competition amongst the students?	16	8	24	52
17.	Do you bring various tools to describe a new word in the class?	36	30	20	14
18.	Do you ask your students to read additional	24	14	28	34

	materials (stories, novels, magazines etc. written in English) at home also?				
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### **Questionnaire Data Analysis (Teachers):**

- Teachers say that the highest 40% students enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms most of the times, which is option (c).
- 44% teachers mark on option (d) that means students enjoy reading books other than the textbooks in the classroom always.
- Most of the times students enjoy writing essays on their own which is option (c) and the number of respondents is only 32%.
- Students sometimes keep journal during the class which is option (b) and the number of the respondent is 50%.
- Only 36% teachers said the classroom arrangement affect always while students are reading or writing which is option (d).
- The highest 50% teachers agreed that, students enjoy sharing their own ideas, experience and thoughts with others and the teachers marked option (d) which means always.
- Only 36% teachers said, students can recall the related experience or associate knowledge while they are reading a text sometimes which is option (b).
- The highest 52% teachers find their students can write their own sentences correctly in English sometimes which is option (b).
- Students find difficulty to understand the text while reading most of the times which is option (c) and the respondents is 48%.

- The highest 40% teachers mark on option (b) that means the teachers offer rewards sometimes for the students for a successful task.
- 42% teachers found the students like to work in a group always which is option (d).
- The highest 60% teachers say that their students always like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom which is option (d).
- 50% teachers sometimes use book in the classroom apart from their textbook which is option (b).
- 40% teachers ask the students to choose their own topic/ text for reading or writing sometimes which is option (b).
- 40% teachers always (d) and 40% most of the times (c) permit their students' to ask questions and give opinion while reading/writing.
- The highest 42% teachers help their students' in reading/writing tasks always which is option (d).
- 50% teachers sometimes give their students a C.W. that they can write based on their own thought and marked option (b).
- 44% teachers answered they make effort to stimulate students' interest in the class most of the times which is option (c).
- The highest 40% teachers encourage the students to share their ideas, thoughts and feeling most of the times which is option (c).
- 60% teachers think that they are able to manage the class hour well always which is option (d).

- Only 36% teachers find themselves well communicative with the students in the classroom most of the times which is option (c).
- 40% teachers never encouraged the students to take responsibility of their own learning/mistakes and marked on option (a).
- 32% of the teachers sometimes (b) and most of the times (c) encourage the students to think critically about any topic.
- Sometimes teachers allow their students to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities and marked on option (b) and the respondents is 32%.
- 44% teachers always try to learn the students' problems while they are doing the task which is option (d).
- 46% teachers are sometimes frank with the students and marked option (b).
- The highest 48% teachers offer reward for the winner in the class sometimes which is option (b).
- 52% teachers always promote competition amongst the students and marked option (d).
- Teachers never bring various tools to describe a new word in the class and marked option (a) and the respondents is 36%.
- Only 34% teachers always ask their students to read additional materials (stories, novels, magazines etc. written in English) at home also which is option (d).

So, the above descriptive data analysis helps us to understand the answer of the research question like teachers are not adapting the Innovative Teaching Techniques to a great extent and it's not implemented properly on the students in the classroom. Every student is not interested towards the reading and writing skill practices in the classroom. Teachers are not encouraging the students properly. Teachers are still following the traditional method of teaching. They are not letting the students to think and perform actively in the class. Though the teachers are claiming that they are maintaining the class hour properly but they are not including interesting tasks as per the students' interests. Very few teachers are willing to know the students' interests. Though students are getting much involved in the interesting tasks in the classrooms in Bangladesh the teachers are not aware of this condition.

Most of the teachers do not even communicate well with the students in their classroom. Teachers are rarely allowing the students to share their own thoughts and ideas. On the other hand students are more attracted towards knowing about each other rather than only learning from the text. Teachers still need to be frank and maintain a good relation with the students in the classroom so that the students can come out of the fear of learning a foreign language and can ask for help to the teachers. Though many teachers are trying to adapt some new and innovative techniques but the practice should be wide spread. So, the teachers need to study about their students' needs and expectations and improve their lesson plan and classroom activities wisely and effectively.

### **4.3 Analysis of the student's open ended questionnaire response:**

There are four open- ended questions that have been designed for the students to know the difficulties of the students while reading a book and the kind of help they get from their teacher/ friends, the kind of reading book they really like, the sort of writing tasks the teachers give for C.W., and the kinds of writing tasks are more enjoyable to them. First two questions are designed to know students' difficulties and likings in reading and the other two are designed to know about the current state of their writing skill. Now students' responses will be analyzed bellow.

**According to the students, the difficulties they face while reading are as follows-**

- The students of the primary level in Bangladesh often lack adequate vocabulary, and they fail to understand the text.
- Words that have multiple meanings (homonym) are also a great puzzle to them, thus, consequently they fail to understand the meaning of the text properly.
- The primary level students do not find syntactical structure easy to understand and lose their interest in reading.
- The students cannot connect their previous knowledge with the knowledge of the text. So, it becomes tough for them to understand the whole meaning of the text.
- Students most of the times do not have concentration on reading.
- Some of the students said, they cannot discriminate one object from another like- they think all the four legged animals are same which is common.
- They sometimes fail to recall similar words (synonyms) also like- poor and weak. They get confused with the meaning of the words.
- As the students are at the primary level of learning English as a foreign language, they lack the total knowledge of the language at this stage and focus more on

learning rather than acquiring the target language. So the purpose of reading gets neglected.

- As the learner of a foreign language, the students lack the cultural knowledge of the language and thus fail to understand the text. This is the major cause of the failure of the students at this level.

**The next portion of the question is, the help they get from their teachers/ friends are given bellow-**

- They always get checked for their C.W. and H.W. every day by their teacher.
- They get feedback for the mistakes they make in the classroom while doing C.W. but sometimes teachers take their copy with them and give the feedback later and they do not get the instant feedback.
- The students want to seek help from their teachers whenever they face trouble with their reading and writing tasks but the teachers are not always helpful, especially during their exam hours even though they are supposed to help them during that time.
- They rarely get help from the teachers in their home work.
- They also mentioned their classmates who help them while they are facing problem. The teacher himself/herself suggest the first boy of their class to help them which can be compared to the theory of MKO (More Knowledgeable Other) given by Vygotsky discussed earlier in chapter-1.

**The books that the students like most to read are as follows and the reasons are also given bellow-**



- The students mostly mentioned books they like to read most are- comics, fairytales, short stories about horrors, action, magic, supernatural, etc.
- The reason behind liking those books are mostly the colorful pictures, story of the fantastic worlds as the children always stay in a world of imagination, good quality of the pages, simple words and sentences, interesting contents etc.

**Students said about the C.W. teachers give as the writing tasks are-**

- Teachers mostly give tasks from the syllabus but sometimes they ask the students to bring some poetry and short stories in the class according to their wish also. Then the teacher reads out those stories aloud and makes them notice some points which s/he asks later and make sure they listened carefully.
- The teachers sometimes tell them to bring pictures for the words provided in the class in the next day.

**The kinds of writing tasks students find more enjoyable are-**

- Writing related to the practical life.
- About personal liking /disliking, interesting or any sad event.
- Writings about their holiday, short trip or surroundings.
- Writing related to students' own ideas and thoughts.
- Any writing that create interests on them.

From the above responses of the students it's clear that, all the students like to read and write as per their own interests. They are more attracted towards other books rather than their textbooks only. They think that their writing will be judged by the teachers when it's from the syllabus and get scared of writing. They are more interested towards

the topics related to their own life. Students are not getting their feedback instantly most of the times. Students are neglecting their past mistakes and not improving. Though the students are enjoying different writing and reading materials, they are rarely provided with those in the classrooms. The teachers are helping them a lot but they still lack the sense of giving the students freedom to their own learning. They are not allowing the students to take the responsibilities of their own mistakes and learning.

#### **4.4 Analysis of the teacher's open ended questionnaire response:**

There are four open-ended questions designed for the teachers also. The researcher tried to know the importance of adapting innovative teaching techniques in the classroom and the reason behind it, the methods the teachers use while teaching and the reason behind it, the role they perform to make students get involved in the reading and writing practices in the classroom, and some obstacles that they find to implement the new and creative teaching techniques in Bangladesh. The teachers' responses will be analyzed question by question-

**According to the teachers, the importance of adapting innovative teaching techniques in the classroom activities are-**

- Most of the teachers find that the innovative teaching techniques are important because it can create students' interests towards reading and writing towards English.
- It can develop students' confidence in writing and reading.
- Improve students' vocabulary, thoughts, and ideas.
- It can improve students' communicative skills.
- It can also make the reading and writing more purposeful.

**The methods that the teachers use while teaching and the reason behind it are-**

- Most of the teachers use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method while teaching said by the teachers of those schools. Because the world now chose English to communicate for its global value. This is regarded as the most important language for communication. So, the authority is more concern about improving the students' communicative skills in English. Moreover, English language is been taught to improve their communicative skills. Thus the teachers are bound to follow CLT in their classroom in Bangladesh.
- Sometimes they follow Silent method also in teaching reading and writing skills to give the students space for their own reading and writing assignments.
- Direct method is mostly followed in English medium schools as they are not allowed to use Bengali. As direct method do not allow the teachers and the students to use their mother tongue. But sometimes the authority allows the teachers to use their mother tongue as the students are monolingual in Bangladesh.

**According to the teacher's response, the role they perform to make the students get involved in the reading and writing practices in the classroom are-**

- They act as a guide to the students.
- They help the students while doing the reading/writing tasks.
- They try to involve the students into tasks as per the content of the syllabus.
- They try to make the students know the purpose of learning the target language.
- However, most of the teachers give emphasis on learning the target language.

**Some obstacles that the teachers find to implement the new and creative teaching techniques in Bangladesh are-**

- The parents of the students still believe in the traditional teaching techniques.
- The pressure to complete the syllabus in a limited period of time.
- Sometimes authority does not co-operate.
- The class hour is not enough to include some extra activities.
- Students' fear towards the foreign language and their tendency towards memorization.
- Sometimes the numbers of the students are a big factor to adapt some new techniques and get it implemented on them.

So, it's clear from the above responses that the teachers are still giving emphasis on the students' learning of English. They are not letting the students acquire the language. Though they claim that they are following CLT as the method of teaching, but the goal of CLT is still neglected. CLT do not guide the students to learn the language rather it guide them to acquire the language by communicating in English with others. Language acquisition is better than language learning. But students still tend to learn and memorize their lessons. Parents also expect their children to do better result rather become a good reader or writer and force them to memorize. As per the teachers' response the authority must take care of the issue whether the students are enjoying their classroom activities or not. They should try to give the teachers the freedom to use the new and innovative teaching techniques which may seek students' interests. They can provide the teachers with some minutes during the class hour also so that the teachers can include such activities in that time span.

## **Part- 2**

### **4.5 Class observation:**

From questionnaire (both close and open-ended) survey analysis, the researcher find a clear conception of teaching situation and the students' reading and writing ability at the primary level schools in Bangladesh. The students said about their interests and difficulties in reading and writing. The teachers also show how far the innovative teaching techniques are getting implemented in reading and writing process in the classroom. Now by the classroom observation survey, the real picture of teaching practice in the classrooms will be revealed whether the Innovative Teaching Techniques are really practiced in the classroom or not. The researcher has observed six English classes (three are language and three are literature) from those five schools. As the study has followed a non-participant class observation strategy to collect data, the teachers were asked to continue their everyday class schedule undisturbed. The necessary notes were taken during the classroom observation. By analyzing the classroom observation results, the researcher tries to find out the truthfulness of the questionnaire survey.

The practical classrooms were Teacher centered. Teachers read and explained the text and the activities of the book were not done as they appear in the book. Students' direct involvement was hardly seen in the classes. The teachers were hardly encouraging the students to perform actively in the class. In almost all the classes the teachers were the only speakers, and they were not concerned about whether the students were able to understand what they were teaching in the class or not. They were also indifferent to learn students' problems. One common feature noticed during the class observation is that all teachers were following the same old Grammar-Translation method in language classes. They were not able to hold attention of the class or grow students'

interest, except some few students at the front rows. Some students at backbenches were gossiping rather than giving attention to the teachers lecture, and the teacher seemed completely unaware of it. Some teachers who made some effort to adapt some new techniques such as group work and made them discuss in some groups seemed unaware of the students' interaction also as most of the students were talking in their mother tongue Bengali and gossiping throughout the class hour. Some students were seen doing drawing Home Work in English class too. Teachers were not frank at all with the students at any stage and teacher-student relationship was very formal. Most of the times teachers were seen busy checking the students' scripts and finishing their syllabus throughout the class hour. They were hardly getting any extra time to make any communication with the students in the class. The students were corrected for their mistakes on their Class Work copy.

So, from the classroom observation the researchers finding is that, the teachers are not adapting the Innovative Teaching Techniques properly and not encouraging the students' learning at all. Though some of the teachers are trying to use some new techniques in the class, they fail to do so. Though ideally a good teacher should choose the teaching methods such as- CLT, Direct Method, and Silent Way but unfortunately it seems that they are not aware of any approaches or methods. They are only focusing on their ultimate goal of finishing the content of the syllabus. So, to improve students' reading and writing ability teachers should follow some interesting methods of teaching and facilitate the students' process of learning by giving them interesting tasks. Besides this, curriculum should be designed in a way that can help the teachers to adapt their own innovative teaching techniques. Warm teacher-students relationship is also an important factor to implement those teaching techniques in the class.

## **Part-3**

### **4.6 Recommendations:**

The purpose of education is to make good, independent and active thinkers and learners. A blind cannot lead a blind. In order to develop our present condition of reading and writing in our classroom, our teachers should be given the knowledge and training of the philosophy of education, teaching methods and approaches properly. The knowledge of education not only gives us knowledge, skills and values but also gives us the power to create and discover things in the world. But this creativeness that already exists in humans are not practiced or given importance nowadays. This is a crucial truth in Bangladesh. The innovativeness in teaching reading and writing skills are hardly seen in the primary schools in Bangladesh. As a result the students are suffering from severe tension with learning English in here.

However, in the light of the present condition of teaching and learning of reading and writing in Bangladesh, this section presents some recommendations with a view to improving students' overall reading and writing skills.

#### **➤ Minimum language ability should be taught at the primary level:**

As Alderson (1984, p.1-27) said, students should have a minimum language ability such as- simple vocabulary, a good sentence structure (syntax), identification of parts of speech, before reading skills and strategies can successfully operate, so the teachers should be alert about teaching the students properly at their primary level before they start having difficult lessons or assignments. The main and foremost goal is to make students become able to read and write adequately for the next step of their academic life.

➤ **Grammar should be taught through reading text using proper context:**

Grammar is getting neglected in all the educational sectors nowadays. Teachers are only focusing on the students' fluency but the level of accuracy is being ignored. We all know that fluency without accuracy is not the proper way of learning a language. Grammar is essential to learn to write meaningfully as well as structurally correct sentence. So this should be taught contextually while teaching reading or writing skills.

➤ **Students should not be encouraged to memorize everything:**

Students should be encouraged to avoid memorizing everything. They can memorize some rules or principles of grammar but they should avoid memorizing the sentences at all level. It destroys their power of language creativity and productivity. The teachers and the parents should let the students write in their own language and discourage them by not motivating them towards memorization.

➤ **Students need to be engaged in the learning process and be attentive:**

Students need to be engaged in the learning process and be attentive in the classroom while reading and writing activities are going on. They should be self dependent as well as work in pairs or groups while doing the reading and writing activities. In other words they should be ready to be able to answer the teachers' question at any time during the class. Thus the students should be active thinkers and organizers, not just passive recipients.

➤ **Teachers'- students' relationship must be improved:**

Teachers should be frank, open minded and helpful with the students so that the students feel free to ask any question to the teachers while doing the reading or writing



task if needed. The relationship of a teacher and student should be easy and natural in order to have right environment for teaching. But unfortunately in our country this matter is not taken seriously. Students must have the freedom to ask the purposeful question. If the situation does not improve by the authority, the teachers would not be able to adapt any new or interesting way of teaching in the classroom.

➤ **Teachers should have the knowledge of the teaching methods:**

Teachers, before adapting any new or interesting teaching technique in the class, must have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding through attending workshops and reading books of the teaching methodologies. Otherwise they might end up in leading them to the ultimate failure in all the tasks or activities.

➤ **Teachers should try to encourage the students' interests in the classroom:**

Teachers should ensure that the students are enjoying their reading or writing tasks in the classroom. They can adapt any new or innovative technique to encourage them. They can offer rewards, ask them to compete with each other, make groups, use technologies like- computer, projector or any other tool to get students' interests in the class to make the reading or writing activities successful.

➤ **Teachers should be an environment creator as well as a facilitator:**

The teachers must create a great environment for the students in the class so that they become attentive in the class by using their own imagination. They can change the sitting arrangement sometimes to get students attention. Teachers must ensure that the students are not distracted by anything while doing their tasks. The teachers also work as a facilitator. They help the students by being an organizer, prompter, tutor, assessor, observer and motivator etc. In the "Reciprocal Teaching" method Vygotsky said that a teacher must handover the leadership of the lessons to the students and become a

facilitator though all the teachers might not be comfortable in this role (Foster and Rotoloni, 2013, p.12).

➤ **Teachers should help the students think critically while reading and writing:**

Teachers should help the students think critically and originally about their reading and writing tasks. They should have the freedom to choose their own reading and writing topics whenever possible. Teachers sometimes can let them take the responsibility of their own mistakes and do self correction. The students will thus improve the problem solving skill related to their writing and reading. It will also motivate the students to become an independent writer and a confident learner.

➤ **Parents should come out of the thought of old teaching methodologies**

Not only the teachers or the students should be aware of the modern and scientific learning process. Parents of the children should also come out of the thought that teachers are the only speaker in the class and the students are the silent recipients. It is said that, parents are the first tutors of the students before the teachers start to teach the students. So, if the parents do not motivate their children at home to work independently as well as expect them to participate actively in the class, nothing will work properly.

➤ **Recommendations for the syllabus:**

The syllabus should be well designed and organized in such a way so that the teachers can get enough facility to use their innovation in teaching. The syllabus should not be overloaded with too many lessons which might scare the students and find less enjoyment in learning in the class. This might result in demotivation.

➤ **Recommendations for the teacher training:**

According to Vygotsky the teachers must be trained to use Reciprocal Teaching strategies when they encounter situations that require modifications (Foster and Rotoloni, 2013, p.12). A large number of teachers in Bangladesh are not competent for implementing the innovative teaching techniques like Reciprocal Teaching Techniques in the classroom. Though some teachers try to use some creative techniques, they are not trained and fail to apply those properly. Therefore, there should be proper programs to train the teachers in the new and innovative approaches to teaching reading and writing.

➤ **Recommendations for the education policy in Bangladesh:**

The most important thing is that the education policy of Bangladesh should be stable, reliable, scientific and modern. They should develop a nationwide teacher training program before the employment of the teachers. This should be a requirement based on the policy of advanced countries. They should also enhance the policy of writing and reading. The authority should be concerned about the teaching of reading and writing process deeply to improve the current condition of the students' reading and writing skills. Not only that, the tests of reading and writing should be internationally accepted and planned.

## **Chapter – 5**

### **Conclusion**

The present study refers to the needs of reading and writing skills for the students of Bangladesh and finds out that students are weak in reading and writing and fully lack their interest in these two major tools of learning. The teachers are not trained properly and it seems that they only come to this profession to earn money. At the same time the study has also proved that the teachers and teaching methods are mostly responsible for the students' poor proficiency in reading and writing. The problems of the students regarding reading and writing are multi-faceted. The study has tried to identify these problems and examine the nature of the present teaching process in our country in some details. The study helps to get some insights into the weaknesses of our teaching system and think of some Innovative Teaching Techniques that are found in modern approaches to teaching reading and writing that are currently in use in advanced countries with success. The recommendations of the findings of this study discussed earlier in previous chapter should be taken into careful consideration, and steps should be taken to implement those in our classrooms. If implemented, it is expected that the state of the teaching and learning of reading and writing skills in our country will improve remarkably.

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## Appendix 1

### Instrument for the Students' Questionnaire Survey

Personal Details:

Name: .....

Institution: .....

Class & Roll: .....

This questionnaire is meant for an MA thesis in English Language Teaching. Your co-operation is very important for the study. I will highly appreciate it if you kindly fill in the questionnaire at your earliest convenience. The information you provide will be strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this study.

– Aporna Sikder (MA, 2013, EWU)

#### Questions: part A

The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are helping the students to improve their skills and interests in reading and writing in the classroom and to what extent.

No	Questions	a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Do you enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms?				
2.	Do you enjoy reading books other than your textbooks in the classroom?				
3.	Do you enjoy writing essays on your own?				
4.	Do you keep class notes during the class?				
5.	Does the classroom arrangement really affect you while you are reading or writing?				
6.	Do you enjoy sharing your own ideas, experience and thoughts with others?				
7.	Can you recall the related experience or associate knowledge while you are reading a text?				
8.	Can you write correct and better sentences with the help of your English teacher?				
9.	Do you find it difficult to understand the textbook while reading?				
10.	Do you like to have rewards for a successful task?				
11.	Do you like to work in groups?				
12.	Do you like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom?				

## **Questions: part- B**

The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are being implemented on the students in the classroom and to what extent.

No	Questions	a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Does your teacher use any book in the classroom apart from your textbook?				
2.	How frequently your teacher asks you to choose your own topic/ text for reading or writing?				
3.	Does your teacher permit you to ask questions and give opinion while reading/ writing?				
4.	Does your teacher help you while doing any reading or writing activities?				
5.	Does your teacher ever give you a C.W. that you can write based on your own thought?				
6.	Does your teacher make any effort to encourage you to perform in the classroom activities?				
7.	Does your teacher encourage you to share your ideas, thoughts and feeling?				
8.	Does your teacher manage the class hour well?				
9.	Does your teacher communicate well with you in the classroom?				
10.	Does your teacher encourage you to take responsibility of your own learning/ mistakes?				
11.	Does your teacher ever encourage you to think critically about any topic?				
12.	Does your teacher allow you to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities?				
13.	Does your teacher willing to learn your problems while doing any task?				
14.	Is your teacher frank with you?				
15.	Does your teacher offer you any reward for the winner in the class?				
16.	Does your teacher promote competition amongst the students?				
17.	Does your teacher bring various tools to describe a new word in the class?				
18.	Does your teacher ask you to read additional materials (stories, novels, magazines etc. written in English) at home also?				

**Questions: part- C**

- 1. What kind of difficulties do you face while reading a book and what kind of help do you get from your teachers/ friends?**
- 2. What kind of reading book do you like to read most and why?**
- 3. Does your teacher give you writing task from the syllabus only or they give something new for the C.W.?**
- 4. What kinds of writing tasks are more enjoyable to you?**

## Appendix 2

### Instrument for the Teachers' Questionnaire Survey

Personal Details:

Name:.....

Institution:.....

This questionnaire is meant for an MA thesis in English Language Teaching. Your cooperation is very important for the study. I will highly appreciate it if you kindly fill in the questionnaire at your earliest convenience. The information you provide will be strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this study.

– Aporna Sikder (MA, 2013, EWU)

#### Questions: part- A

The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are helping the students to improve their skills and interests in reading and writing in the classroom and to what extent.

No	Questions	a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Do your students enjoy reading textbooks in the classrooms?				
2.	Do your students enjoy reading books other than the textbooks in the classroom?				
3.	Do your students enjoy writing essays on their own?				
4.	Do they keep journal during the class?				
5.	Does the classroom arrangement really affect the students while they are reading or writing?				
6.	Do you think your students enjoy sharing their own ideas, experience and thoughts with others?				
7.	Can your students recall the related experience or associate knowledge while they are reading a text?				
8.	Can your students write their own sentences correctly in English?				
9.	Do your students find difficulty to understand the text while reading?				
10.	Do you offer rewards for the students for a successful task?				
11.	Do they like to work in groups?				
12.	Do they like to perform in interesting tasks in the classroom?				

## **Questions: part- B**

The objective of the questionnaire is to find out how far the Innovative Teaching Techniques are being implemented on the students in the classroom and to what extent.

No	Questions	a) Never/ No	b) Sometimes	c) Most of the times	d)Always /Yes
1.	Do you use any book in the classroom apart from your textbook?				
2.	How frequently you ask the students to choose their own topic/ text for reading or writing?				
3.	Do you permit your students' to ask questions and give opinion while reading/writing?				
4.	Do you help your students' in reading/writing tasks?				
5.	Do you ever give your students a C.W. that they can write based on their own thought?				
6.	Do you make any effort to stimulate students' interest in the class?				
7.	Do you encourage them to share their ideas, thoughts and feeling?				
8.	Are you able to manage the class hour well?				
9.	Do you communicate well with the students in the classroom?				
10.	Do you encourage the students to take responsibility of their own learning/mistakes?				
11.	Do you ever encourage the students to think critically about any topic?				
12.	Do you allow your students to speak up and to be active in the classroom learning activities?				
13.	Do you try to learn the students' problems while they are doing the tasks?				
14.	Are you frank with the students?				
15.	Do you offer reward for the winner in the class often?				
16.	Do you promote competition amongst the students?				
17.	Do you bring various tools to describe a new word in the class?				
18.	Do you ask your students to read additional materials (stories, novels, magazines etc. written in English) at home also?				

**Questions: part- C**

- 1. Do you think it's important to adapt innovative teaching techniques in the classroom activities for improving their reading and writing skills? If yes, why?**
- 2. What methods do you use while teaching and why?**
- 3. What do you do to make students get involved in the reading and writing practices in the classroom?**
- 4. What are some obstacles that you find to implement the new and creative teaching techniques in Bangladesh?**

Thank You