

The Impact of Sociocultural Contexts on English Language Learning: A Study of Primary Level Education in Bangladesh

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Abstract: The paper focuses the sociocultural impact on learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Bangladeshi context. The aim of the study is to investigate whether this impact exists in primary level education in the country. The data were collected from six schools in Chittagong district through classroom observation and a structured questionnaire, and analyzed following mixed-method approach. The participants for the survey were 120 students randomly selected from Government primary schools located both in rural and urban areas. The findings reveal that the sociocultural contexts have a significant influence on English language learning, though learners follow the same curriculum, text materials, and almost the same medium of instruction. The significance of the study lies in identifying sociocultural barriers to the teaching and learning of English, which may be useful for the policymakers and EFL stakeholders - students, parents, and teachers.

Keywords: *English language, learning, EFL, sociocultural, primary education, Bangladesh*

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1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of Topic Area and General Goal

English is an invincibly massive linguistic force (Demont-Heinrich, 2005) with pervasive social and cultural impacts (Phillipson, 1998, 2004) on the EFL learning environment in the era of science and technology, globalization, modernization, internationalization, and transnationalisation (Tsuda, 1994). It is one of the most important skills in the employment market and higher statuses in society (Abu-humos, 2016; Durga, 2018; Hamid, 2016) and in the scopes for higher education (Alam, 2018). It takes place in different contexts across the globe. These contexts are constituted of some inseparable components like individual identity and learners' gender, race and religion, population mobility, family bonds, societal norms, cultural practices, political issues, technological promotion, and economic statuses. All these components are of the insatiable demand for English as a means for individual and national advancement. However, English as a foreign language confronts many difficulties where it is not a native or first or second language. In some cases, the introduction of English language in the linguistic and sociocultural contexts creates tension because the (native) language or L1 is a product of social and cultural constructs that tend to influence the practices and appearance of English (Murray, 2020). But there has been limited research on the social conditions of the acquisition of legitimate competence in English language (Hamid, 2016).

Language and culture are not distinct but acquired together, promoting each other's growth (Mitchell & Myles, 2004) and onewithout the other makes less sense. The language also concurrently reflects the culture and is influenced and formed by it. Kern (2000) argues that sociocultural discussion is very important in understanding how languages work whereas foreign language learning is influenced by various external and internal factors. Ellis (1994) identifies three principal components in target language learning- social factors/settings, language processing mechanisms, and individual learner factors. Here EFL is the Ellis's target language. Ellis argues that social factors and settings serve as the major determinants of the input that learners receive. Again, during the language learning process, cultural factors can be found as major concerns, seriously hindering the successful learning process that is commonly referred to as cultural barriers (Hossain, 2016). Since society and culture are two vital parts of human life, and an individual is born in a particular society with its cultural ideology and components, it is a common experience that effective language learning is particularly difficult because of cultural issues. Moreover, acquisition, hearing, and interpretation of a foreign language in a distinct context are really a big challenge. Again, cultural, and environmental disparities and differences offer foreign language learners a kind of social -psychological gap and an undeniable difficulty (Amin, 2015). This difficulty arises from various sectors such as social and cultural contexts, learners' psychological statuses, and teachers' cultural

attitudes towards EFL teaching regardless of the curriculum, text materials, and medium of instruction in the rural and urban regions.

Again, English's global spread, along with the demands of learning English, has prompted nation-states to incorporate English into the early years of education and empower their people with English skills to compete for personal and national growth within a global economy (Hamid & Honan 2012). Bangladesh as an EFL country, though some researchers have argued that English is the second language there (Begum, 2015), also experiences the same scenario as its government has a decree for compulsory primary education for all eligible children who at an early age rush to primary schools to be educated as well as to be future contributors to the country.

However, English remains a source of disappointment, anxiety, and low self-esteem for many primary school students in the perspective of Bangladesh since they fail to acquire necessary competency in English on the one hand. On the other hand, it is the source of social injustice and inequality as Tollefson (2000) observed in the Philippines. Bhatt (2005) considered it as the cause of social-linguistic apartheid or legalized discrimination in India, and Hamid (2016) found sociocultural factors create significant differences and social division in Bangladesh.

While planning language-in-education in Bangladesh, policymakers along with other stakeholders are more concerned about economic issues (Hamid, 2016) and collective interest; but they remain oblivious of sociocultural factors that may have a tremendous effect on the English language learning. According to a USAID report on Bangladesh's primary education published on their website (<https://www.usaid.gov/>) updated on 30 November 2020, Bangladesh achieved near-universal net primary enrolment with over 18 million primary school students. Over 98% of primary-school-age children have been enrolled in school. The enrolled number of students, one of the biggest in the world, compulsorily learn English from the very first grade and continue at all levels and the students follow the national curriculum and the same syllabuses until grade 12 (Hamid & Honan, 2012) with some exceptions, i.e., religion-based institutions. The students enter the primary schools with diversified backgrounds like (i) rural; (ii) urban; (iii) rich; (iv) poor; (v) educated parents; (vi) illiterate parents; (vii) parents' interest to educate their children; (viii) parents' interest not to educate their children; (ix) parents' from different professions; (x) different religions; (xi) different languages; (xii) different cultures and practices; (xiii) different community; (xiv) different societal practices; (xv) opportunity for home-study; (xvi) opportunity for private tutoring; and so on. All these characteristics bear the sociocultural identity of a child-student who enters school every day. Hamid & Honan (2012) have observed a relation between students' backgrounds and their English learning potentials. In fact, the state cannot sidestep its commitment toward English though state dedication to English seems unfair and troublesome (Hamid & Honan, 2012).

Most of the people in Bangladesh use Bangla in almost every domain of their lives. Before 1971, the citizens of East Pakistan, especially the Bengalis, had to use Urdu

alongside English for administrative work and inter-state correspondence. Urdu was taught as a Class-3 subject. Many not fluent in Urdu relied on English to interact with their West Pakistan counterparts. Undivided Pakistan was a multilingual nation using Urdu, Bangla, Hindi, and Sindhi in respective states. Compared with India, another multilingual nation, English was for correspondence in such a multilingual setting, and English enjoyed second-language status. Bangla solely became the state language after the Liberation War in 1971. Bangla replaced English in all government correspondence, except communication in diplomatic missions and between countries. Even, the Constitution has ignored any legacy of English in the country (Rahman et al, 2019) and Bangla became the only medium of instruction at all levels of education. Attempts were made to translate English books into Bangla to fulfil the needs of various disciplines. Bangla is now widely used in all large domains of national life. Yet many people concerned about the downgrading educational quality have raised voice for English's necessity as they compare the students' education level with their English abilities and finally find the students relatively less competent in English (Chowdhury, 2018). Subsequently, policymakers have decided to adopt English as a compulsory course from the primary stage.

Since the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 based on Bengali nationalism, policymakers have made remarkable concessions for English by compromising with Bangla. Considering English education policy and practice, Chowdhury & Kabir (2014) identified language wars between Bangla and English in the post-liberation war era. The first Bangladesh Education Commission in 1974 emphasized the overall necessity of the English language at all levels including primary education. English Teaching Taskforce Commission in 1976 progressed a bit and signalled to teach English in class three subject to the availability of English teachers. Bangladesh National Education Commission in 1988 recommended starting English education in class three. English teaching and learning received an impetus in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2000 as kindergartens could adopt EMI (English as a medium of instruction) with translated copies of the national curriculum and text materials, and government primary schools were recommended to introduce English as an extra course in class one and class two, as a compulsory course from class three. National Education Commission (NEC) in 2003 reemphasized English learning at the primary level and set it as an objective of primary education. The objective was to introduce primary students to English as a foreign language. The NEC also recommended foreign training of PTI(Primary Teachers' Institute) trainers. The NEP in 2010 realized the importance of English for building a knowledge-based society and stressed two output skills-writing and speaking from the very beginning of primary education.

English is the most significant linguistic repository for the privileged Bangladeshi elites and the most important foreign language course from primary to higher secondary education in Bangladesh's national education system. But students cannot use it comfortably before and after they

enter for higher education. Students' inability to competently use English has previously been investigated in quite a good number of studies leaving the sociocultural issues to be more precisely researched, especially regarding primary level of education. In the circumstances, this study attempts to explore whether the sociocultural contexts influence primary students' learning of the English language.

1.2. Theoretical Framework:

Individual as an isolated language learner has historically been given more importance than the social elements. Early studies were fluctuating between the individual learner and the learning rules by neglecting the relationship between learners and the world around them (Rampton, 1987). Recently, the tendency to acknowledge the social and cultural aspects of language education has considerably been growing. Most notably, research scholars have started concentrating on the expansion and explanation of Vygotsky's (Vygotsky, 1978), sociocultural theory (SCT) that highlights the interdependence of the individual learners, social community, and interactions for knowledge construction. SCT in EFL pedagogy considers learners' social and cultural contexts as the most essential components. This implies that EFL or ESL learning is mediated by social activity. Not only does social activity influence human cognition but it is the process of forming human cognition (Lantolf & Johnson, 2007).

In this study, the authors have considered key-concepts of SCT to explain the impact of sociocultural contexts on EFL learning in Bangladeshi primary education. Because SCT's mediation connects individual learners and the social atmosphere and allows the learner to integrate social components in language learning. Again, an individual learns much more by collective interactions in a group than working in isolation. In the study, students experience interconnectedness between their social being outside the English language classroom and students being within the classroom. A student interacts within himself as well as collaborates with others. First, the learner relies on activity with grammatical rules, and then s/he goes for collaborative and dialogic interactions within the learning beings and surroundings to accomplish learning.

1.3. Literature Review:

EFL/ESL learning is influenced by various personal and social factors and in some cases, personal issues are socially constructed. In this connection, though learners' motivation is an individual factor, often it is socially and collectively constructed. Motivation is the reason underlying behaviour (Guay et al., 2010). Elliot and Covington (2001) opine that motivation gives reasons for people's actions, desires, and needs. According to Paul & Kauchak (2005, p. 349) "Motivation is a force that energizes, sustains, and directs behaviour toward a goal". Some researchers claim that goals and objectives are a part of the motivation. Broussard and Garrison (2004) define motivation as the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something. Alizadeh (2016) identifies three key motivational factors in learning a second /foreign language. They are (i) positive attitude towards the L2 community (ii) the enjoyment of learning, and (iii) external pressures.

Therefore, such key factors play a significant role in language learning as such issues are related to the sociocultural contexts of learners. If a learner is positively motivated by his surroundings, he can learn a target language better.

Students' passivity and silence in the non-native English teaching classes are a kind of hindrance in the teaching-learning activities. It is really challenging when a language teacher finds that majority of the students are not willing to express their ideas in class. Such silence may have various reasons. Abebe & Deneke (2015) find that students' silence occurred because they were shy, not confident, and were afraid of making mistakes. Silence may have other reasons. Wang (2011) notes that Chinese students in EFL classrooms kept quiet because there were cultural differences. Accordingly, Yates & Trang (2012) also notice that Vietnamese students' silence happened in classrooms because of cultural influences besides language proficiency. King (2011) finds that in addition to cultural reasons, Japanese students were silent because they were not interested in the discussion. In another study, Li & Jia (2006) find that although East Asian students are identified as quiet in class because of cultural issues, when they are comfortable about the topic and with the context, they could be active participants. Such studies indicate that sociocultural issues of learners play a significant role in students keeping silent in the language classroom. Silence in the classroom makes the learning atmosphere passive and unproductive for both teaching and learning.

Interaction between teachers and students in English class is essential for the learning process. Scarino & Liddicoat (2009) argue that interaction is fundamentally a social process of meaning-making and interpreting, and the educational value of interaction grows out of developing and elaborating interaction as a social process. They further elaborate the fact that social interaction (in the classroom) involves participants in different situations, in which, for instance, the teacher communicates with students, students interact with teachers, and with more students. In this respect, teacher talk has usually been established as one of the most essential activities inside a language classroom. Here, it is important to note that many researchers have criticized excessive Teacher Talk Time (TTT) in the classroom. At the same time, active use of the target language (L2) by the learners is considered an integral part of the language acquisition process (Nunan, 1999). An effective learner-centered language classroom should provide an environment in which students can contribute to learning activities and maximize their use of the language (Van Lier, 2001). Harmer (2001) highlights the importance of students' talking claiming that "getting students to speak – to use the language they are learning – is a vital part of a teacher's job" (p.4). He adds that students indeed need a practice of the target language, not the teachers. EFL/ESL Teachers should make sure that TTT is not overly used, leaving enough room for Student Talk Time (STT) to take place. Language teaching is also hampered because of not using the target language in the classroom. The observational study of Haider & Chowdhury (2012) reveals teachers' tendency of slipping into Bangla immediately after starting a sentence in English. In another study by Hamid

and Honan (2012) about classroom discourse and interaction, teachers were found using both Bangla and English while teaching English. In some cases, teachers start teaching in English but switch to Bangla after a while. The study also marks that teacher-dominated pedagogy included such activities as teachers read from the textbook and explain something in Bangla (L1) and English (L2).

ESL/ EFL learning should not be confined only to the language classroom. Nowadays learners get various opportunities to practice it with the help of satellite TV, the Internet, and smartphones outside the classroom. The study of Grau (2009) aims to investigate and compare how German high school students use English outside and then in the classroom. The result shows that German students use much English during their free time. And they do so by using TV, listening to music, playing computer games, and surfing the internet. The study of Ranta (2010) exposed that 80% of the Finnish students at upper secondary schools use English in and out of the classroom and most of the time they use English to communicate with other non-native speakers. Hyland's (2004) study reveals that the most likely reason why EFL learners do not use English for speaking is that they are afraid of making mistakes while speaking and using the language incorrectly. Barker (2004) also agrees that for many students speaking outside the classroom may be a problem. In this respect, his suggestion is to give students speaking homework assignments, which will make them communicate with each other. In a large-scale experiment, Robb & Kano (2013) find that in second language learning outcomes there is a huge difference between those students who do extensive reading outside the classroom and those who do not. A similar implication of positive outcome has been found in Guo's (2011) study: involving students in real-life activities outside the classroom expands students' learning.

1.4. Problem Statement

From the above-reviewed literature, it is seen that the studies focused on learners' motivation, silence in the classroom, excessive teacher talking and less student talking time, using L1 in the classroom, and not using target language outside the classroom, etc. However, the studies were not conducted in integrated ways, focusing on the wide-ranging areas. So, there remains a great deal of scope for the researcher to understand the actual effect of sociocultural issues involved in the foreign language (English) learning in the Bangladeshi context. Therefore, it is evident that relatively few studies in Bangladesh have so far focused on this aspect. Due to such limitations of previous studies, the current study initiates to investigate the sociocultural impact on EFL learning.

1.5. Research Questions

1. Is there any impact of sociocultural contexts on English language classrooms at primary level? 2. Is there any quantitative impact of sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level?

1.6. Research Hypothesis

H.1.: Sociocultural contexts have an impact on English language classrooms at primary level. H.2.: There

are quantitative impacts of sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level.

2. Research Methodology

The study was conducted during the period from January 2019 to March 2019 visiting six Government primary schools. Of these schools, three are situated in the Chittagong city corporation area, and the other three are in rural areas outside the city corporation. During the visits, a total of six classroom teachings were observed and one researcher wrote remarks in the observation against each list of observation. After classroom observation, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and one researcher retranslated and explained the questions in Bangla to them so that they could understand the questions and answer properly

2.1. Sample participants and Sampling method

The sample participants in this research come from various social and cultural backgrounds. There are a total of 120 students, randomly selected from class V (level V). Among the participants, there are boys and girls; however, the gender issue is not taken into consideration. The average age of the participants were 12 years.

2.2. Classroom Observation

The classroom observation has been undertaken as part of the qualitative method to get the answer to research question one, through non-participatory, semi-structured (Appendix-7.1), and direct observation with the physical presence of one of the researchers so that actual data can be collected. Total six classroom teachings have been observed from each of the six schools regarding teaching and learning contexts, student and teacher's use of target languages, students' communication, and participation in classroom activities, etc.

2.3. Student Questionnaire

To find out the answer to research question no. 2, a structured questionnaire is served to 120 randomly selected students from six schools. In the written questionnaire, there are a few demographic and some factual questions related to the topic. Demographic questions have been included to check the background of the respondents and factual questions are asked to know about their motivation for learning English, attitude toward the target language, the ratio of English use, and L1 (Bengali) used by teachers in the EFL classroom, students' perceptions, and attitude regarding the use of English in the classroom and outside the classroom, etc. (Appendix 7.2).

2.4. Gap Analysis Method

To dive into the insights of the impact of sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level in Bangladesh, quantitative reflections of the study are also required. To serve the purposes, the gap analysis method has been adopted by using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to find the gaps or differences between the expectations and perceptions of the concerned respondents

in the Likert scales of 1 to 5 so that quantitative impact either in the form of positivity or severity can explicitly be exhibited. The use of the said method is also qualitatively justified because this helps in addressing the positive and/or negative impact of sociocultural context on learning English at primary level in Bangladesh which may enable in making the necessary course of actions and decisions for the improvement of the same

3. Analysis

3.1. Classroom Observation to Assess Qualitative Impact

Table 1: Classroom Observations

No.	Features/ behaviours	Characteristics/ &	Observational Findings in City Corporation Area	Observational Findings in Rural Schools
1	Classroom settings & Classroom configuration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. School building is in a noisy area of the city where vehicle horns and other noises are heard sometimes. b. On average 45-50 students found present out of 60 to 70 students. c. No modern equipment – Projector, Audio video system exist. d. Two-seat benches and a whiteboard are available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Located in isolated areas of villages where no noises come from outside of the school. b. On average 35-45 students found present out of 60 to 70 students. c. No modern equipment –Projector, Audio video system found. d. Three/four-seat benches and blackboards are available.
2	Students' enthusiasm in learning English	in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students are found enthusiastic and motivated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Students are found less motivated
3	Students' participation and activities	and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.20-30% of students actively took part in classroom activities – discussion, the reply to questions, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. only 10-20% of students actively took part in classroom activities – discussion, the reply to the questions, etc.
4	Teachers' role		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teachers gave feedback on the homework of a few students. b. Followed the textbook chapter and sometimes he uses whiteboard and marker to write a few words. c. Teachers read and explains the text and instructs the students regarding their classwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teachers only asks the students whether they have done their homework. b. Teachers use the blackboards and write the meanings of words in Bangla. c. Teachers read from the text and retranslates it in Bangla.
5	The rate of using the target language by the students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The rate of using the target language is 20-25%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The rate of using the target language is 10-15%.
6	The rate of using the target language by the teachers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The rate of using the target language is 40-50%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The rate of using the target language is 35-40%.

3.2. Gap Analysis to Assess Quantitative Impact:

Mean scores for the impact of the sociocultural contexts on learning English language at primary level education in Bangladesh .

facilitating. Likewise, the findings of the study of Ahmed

Table 2: Gap Analysis

S/L No.	Items	Perceptions (P) Mean	Expectations (E) Mean	Quality Gap Q = P - E
1	Students want to learn English as it is a compulsory subject	3.1525	3.9068	-0.7543
2	Students learn English as it will help them to go abroad for higher incomes or better jobs	3.0678	3.9407	-0.8729
3	Students learn English as they are self-motivated	2.1271	4.839	-2.7119
4	Most of the students remain active in classes	2.0678	4.8898	-2.822
5	Teachers and peer group encourage students to be active in class	3.1017	4.9322	-1.8305
6	Syllabus and classroom activities compel students to be involved	2.1695	4.8305	-2.661
7	Students feel encouraged to take part in interaction in the language classroom	3.178	4.8051	-1.6271
8	In class the teacher includes various activities for students' interaction	3.0847	4.7797	-1.695
9	The classroom is not a place for teachers' one-way communication only	2.1356	4.6186	-2.483
10	Teacher talking time rate is about 20- 39% in the classroom	2.1271	4.6525	-2.5254
11	Teacher talking time rate is about 40- 59% in the classroom	2.0424	4.1695	-2.1271
12	Teacher talking time is 60 – 79% in the classroom	1.2288	3.2458	-2.017
13	Teachers use English in the classroom teaching most of the time	3.0593	4.8559	-1.7966
14	Students use English in the classroom interaction most of the time	3.1271	4.8305	-1.7034
15	In some cases, teachers use mixed language (L1 and English together)	2.3305	3.1695	-0.839
16	Students generally use English outside the classroom	1.1441	4.0593	-2.9152
17	Other people generally use English in regular interaction	1.9407	4.0932	-2.1525
18	When learners use English outside the classroom people cooperate	3.0763	4.822	-1.7457

4. Findings of the Study

4.1. Findings of the Observational Study

For the benefit of the analysis of classroom observation, a comparative study has been conducted between the city and rural schools. The results exhibit (Table 1) that the difference lies in the disturbance by outside noise and the number of participations in the classroom when it comes to classroom settings & configuration. However, in terms of enthusiasm, students' participation and activities, and using the target language, urban students are comparatively ahead of rural students. It is worth mentioning here that the learners with a strong desire to learn a language can obtain a high level of competence in the target language which is similar to the findings of Al-Hazemi (2000). Accordingly, Harmer's (2001) opinion seems to be applicable as students' increased volume of conversation facilitates language learning. In terms of teachers' role and rate of using the target language, there is a significant difference. In both cases, it is observed that teachers' role needs to be more participatory and

(2015) seems to be quite relevant as a teacher or instructor has a very big role to play in language teaching.

4.2. Findings of the Gap Analysis

To examine whether there is any impact of sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level in Bangladesh the mean scores of the perceptions and expectations of the sample have separately been exhibited in the first and second columns of Table 2. In the third column for each statement, the mean scores of Expectations (E) were deducted from the mean scores of Perception (P) using the formula $Q = P - E$. Thus, the third column provides a summary of results for the impact of sociocultural context on learning English, to compare if there (is any) gap (P-E) in negative value to check whether the negative value refers to perceptions of the respondents falling short against their initial expectations, and the presence of some gaps or not. The expectancy and perception objects are measured by a five (5) point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, to 5=strongly agree, along with 3 mid-point/neutral opinions on that scale. Here, if the mean score is found greater than 3, then it is marked as a tendency to agree with a particular statement for respondents, whereas having a mean score of less than 3 direct disagreements.

4.2.1. Expectations (E): All the 18 Expectations (E) values or statements (1 to 18) among the respondents from the above (Table 2) were higher or greater than mean scores of 3 from 3.1695 to 4.9322. This implies that the respondents have higher expectations in relation to each of the 18 statements.

4.2.2. Perceptions (P): Out of 18 perceptions (P) values or statements (1 to 18) in the above table, the respondents have mixed perceptions. For example, we have i) higher or greater perceptions than mean scores of 3 from 3.0593 to 3.178 for 8 statements, ii) higher or greater perceptions than mean scores of 2 and less than 3 from 2.0424 to 2.3305 for 7 statements and iii) higher or greater perceptions than mean scores of 1 and less than 2 from 1.1441 to 1.9407 for 2 statements.

4.2.3. Gaps (P-E): The gaps in the impact of sociocultural context on learning English at the primary level are demonstrated in the third column of the above, Table 2. All the 18 statements have a negative value(s), which indicate respondents' perceptions are falling short of their expectations. That means there is a gap.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In light of the above analysis of the study, it is observed that there is a qualitative impact of the local contexts and settings on the classroom tools and configuration, learners' motivation and participation in interactive activities, use of target language, etc., and the quantitative impact of the expectations are higher than those of students' perceptions regarding the motivation of learning the target language, remaining silent in the classroom, and amount of classroom interaction between teachers and students and using target language i.e. English outside the classroom, etc. Though some consistency is found in the case of students' expectations, it is highly variable because of mixed reactions, which ultimately brought about an alarming gap, and seems to be detrimental for the positive influence of the sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level education in Bangladesh. Thus, the findings of both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the current study accept both hypothesizes - H.1.: Sociocultural contexts have an impact on English language classrooms at primary level and H.2.: There are quantitative impacts of sociocultural contexts on learning English at primary level.

However, the current study could not go beyond limitations because the data have been collected only from one district of Bangladesh and respondents have been chosen from the Government primary schools only. The study might be more authentic and realistic if all levels of stakeholders including more variables like students from private schools (Bangla and English medium), students' parents and teachers, etc., could be included in the sample.

By emphasizing the mixed perceptions of the students', the relevant primary educational entities and authorities need to take immediate measures to mitigate the identified gaps. The initiatives may be improving students' motivation, ensuring active participation and interaction

inside and outside of the classroom, and instruct the teachers in using proactive and participative approaches in teaching English in a way that will increase students' confidence reducing their fear in learning the same. In this regard, necessary logistic support such as modern equipment, physical facilities, teachers' training, etc. also must be ensured. Accordingly, the study will help academia to develop further new models in the local contexts.

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7. Appendices

Appendix 7.1. Classroom Teaching Observation

Observer:	Date:
Course : English for Today	Number of Students :
Name of the School:	

No.	Features/ Characteristics/ behaviours	Observation Report
1	Classroom settings & Classroom configuration:	
2	Students' enthusiasm in learning English	
3	Students' participation and activities	
4	Teachers' role	
5	The rate of using the target language by the students	
6	The rate of using the target language by the teachers	

Table 1

Appendix 7.2

Survey

The Impact of Sociocultural Contexts on English Language Learning: A Study of Primary Level Education in Bangladesh

Name (optional):	Name of School:
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[The following is a list of sociocultural issues that may influence learning English Language]

Please give (✓) in the most appropriate number on the right side of each criterion in the table on a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate how closely each of these criteria is related to sociocultural issues that may influence learning English language where you are currently studying. The meaning of the numbers is also specified in the short form at the top of each column.

[Key words: L1 – Mother tongue, Target Language –English]

[1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A) and 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)]

No.	Criterion	1	2	3	4	5
1	Students want to learn English as it is a compulsory subject					
2	Students learn English as it will help them to go abroad for higher incomes or better jobs					
3	Students learn English as they are self-motivated					
4	Most of the students remain active in classes					
5	Teachers and peer groups encourage students to be active in class					
6	Syllabus and classroom activities compel students to be involved					
7	Students feel encouraged to take part in interaction in the language classroom					
8	In class, the teacher includes various activities for students' interaction					
9	The classroom is not a place for teachers' one-way communication only					
10	Teacher talking time rate is about 20- 39% in the classroom					
11	Teacher talking time rate is about 40- 59% in the classroom					
12	Teacher talking time is 60 – 79% in the classroom					
13	Teachers use English in the classroom teaching most of the time					
14	Students use English in the classroom interaction most of the time					
15	In some cases teachers use mixed language (L1 and English together)					
16	Students generally use English outside the classroom					
17	Other people generally use English in regular interaction					
18	When learners use English outside the classroom people cooperate					