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# Identifying the Reading Ability of Class Four Students of English in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh

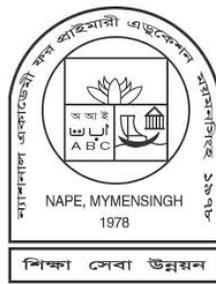
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## Executive Summary

Reading skill is crucial for a child's success. Most often, the barriers confronted by students with difficulty in reading decline their desire to read and, without proper support, they never overcome the problem. Reading is one of the main academic focus areas in the primary grades. It is essential for school subjects, as textbooks and other written supplementary materials convey the majority of information through written font.

Reading skills are critical for children's development, and consecutive studies have shown a link between competency in reading and overall attainment. This study tried to identify the students' reading ability in English in grade four in government primary schools in Bangladesh. It is mentioned that this is so far the first attempt to examine the reading ability in English whereas the contemporary research is focused on finding the readability of Bangla language.

Mainly this study follows the quantitative research design as nature. Here we used individual achievement test to identify the students' learning level in English reading segment. Following this achievement test, the numeric data was collected from students who are studying at government primary schools in class five in Bangladesh. In addition, some qualitative data are also collected to justify and triangulate the quantitative findings.

The study covered all the educational divisions considering the geographical locations in Bangladesh. The sample categories are as follows:

- A total number of 10 districts were selected conveniently and 28 schools were selected randomly from the national school list prepared by the directorate of primary education.
- A total number of 280 students selected randomly from grade five as students of grade four of last year. Specifically, a total number of 10 students selected from each schools. Although the proposed sample was 385 students considering 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error and 50% response distribution.

- A total number of 28 teachers were selected using purposive sampling techniques and 10 English classrooms were selected purposively to see the real classroom practice. In specifically, one classroom was selected from each district.

Through quantitative analysis it is found that more than 70% students could match words with their pictures. In case of matching words with pictures, the performance of rural and urban students was almost similar, maximum five words with their pictures. The performance of the students of Rangpur division was the best of all other division.

It was found that more than 50% students could match sentences with their picture and 60% students corrected exact meaning from multiple choice questions. In addition, the performance of boys in correcting multiple choice questions was a little better than girls. The students performed a little bit higher in correcting exact meaning of MCQ items than inferred meaning of MCQ items. A maximum of 50% students of Mymensingh division performed better in correcting MCQ items than the students of other divisions.

This study explores that maximum 67.5% students of class four could correctly identify the six days of the week. Less than 40% students of all divisions could read text book sentences with proper and understandable pronunciation. In addition, Maximum 45% students of all divisions could read a text from English for Today Book four with understandable pronunciation. Less than 50% students of all divisions could read beyond the English for Today Text Book sentences with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation. Furthermore, maximum 30% students could read text beyond the English for Today text Book four. Maximum 47% students could **do/show or carry out the instructions those** are mentioned in the English for Today Text Book four.

Finally, teachers had good preparation and they were good in subject knowledge. The teachers were good in using teaching aids, providing instructions, motivating students toward learning English and teachers were able to engage students actively and assessment of students learning was good.

This study recommended that:

- Students have to be supported for using varieties of techniques and joyful activities for reading aloud providing EFT texts and also beyond the EFT texts.

- Teachers should provide opportunity to read silently and practise inferred meaning questions and answers in the classroom.
- Teachers should provide ample opportunity to practise the instructions in life-like situation.
- English Subject-based training programme should be reformed and revised.
- Enough hands-on-practice have to be ensured in professional English training.

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## List of Acronyms

<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>EFT</b>	English for Today
<b>EGRA</b>	Early Grade Reading Assessment
<b>GRN</b>	Global Reading Network
<b>NAPE</b>	National Academy for Primary Education
<b>NCTB</b>	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
<b>NCTE</b>	National Council of Teachers of English
<b>NICHD</b>	National Institute of Child health and Human Development
<b>NRP</b>	National Reading Panel
<b>NSA</b>	National Students Assessment
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PECE</b>	Primary Education Completion Examination
<b>PISA</b>	Programme for International Student Assessment

# Chapter One: Perspective of the Study

## 1.1 Background of the study

After nine-month intense liberation war, Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation in 1971. It is a South Asian developing country with 16.17 core people whereas the literacy rate is 63.6%. The education system of Bangladesh has three major stages- primary, secondary and higher education. Primary education is a 5-year cycle of free and compulsory education. The entry age to primary level is 6 years. A total number of 17.25 million students are studying at primary level in Bangladesh and they are being taught English as a compulsory subject from grade one to grade five. The National Education Policy-2010 sets 30 aims and objectives for our education and in goal no 12 emphasized learning English. In addition, this policy also recommended considering English as a compulsory subject in the curriculum (Ministry of Education , 2012).

The national curriculum in Bangladesh was revised by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) in 2012 by following the outline of National Education Policy, 2010. The NCTB has defined a total number of 29 terminal competencies for primary education. Out of these terminal competencies, number 10 specifically asked learners to achieve basic skills of English as a foreign language and use it in daily life (National Curriculum and Textbook Board [NCTB], 2012). Based on the terminal competencies, a total number of 31 subject-based terminal competencies were also defined categorically to ensure the students' learning English whereas a total number of 7 subject-based terminal competencies also deal with reading skills.

The purpose of teaching English at primary level is to help students to develop competence in all four language skills in English through meaningful and enjoyable activities (National Curriculum and Textbook Board [NCTB], 2012). Out of four main objectives of learning English, number 3 objective stated that “to read and understand different types of text appropriate to the learners’ ability level” (National Curriculum and Textbook Board, 2012, p.3). The English for Today (EFT) books of primary level were developed following the subject-based terminal competencies. Reading aloud and silent reading activities have included in those textbooks. It is observed that, the National Education Policy, primary curriculum and textbooks emphasizes learning English for communicating locally and globally.

Reading skill is crucial for a child's success. Most often, the barriers confronted by students with difficulty in reading decline their desire to read and, without proper support, they never overcome the problem. Learning to read is a sequential process; and the new skill builds on the mastery of previously learned skills. Early on, for example, children learn to break down words into their most basic sounds. Later, they begin to comprehend the meaning of words, sentences and ultimately enter passages of text.

Reading is one of the main academic areas in the primary grades. It is essential for school subjects, as textbooks and other written supplementary materials convey the majority of information through written font. Reinforced reading skills at home and at school help children to develop a love of reading. According to National Institute of Child health and human development [NICHD] (2000), the big five skills identified for reading are phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Without achieving basic foundation in reading skill at an early age, it is not possible to read books of different difficulty level later and also be proficient in the understanding of text.

The ability of reading and comprehending a simple text is one of the important skills a student should have achieved. RTI International (2015) stated that “without basic literacy there is little chance that a child will escape the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Yet in many countries, students enrolled in school for as many as six years are unable to read and understand a simple text. Evidence indicate that learning to read book early and at a sufficient rate (with comprehension) is essential for learning to read well”(p.2).

Finally, reading skills are critical for children's development, and consecutive studies have shown a link between competency in reading and overall attainment. This study tried to identify the students' reading ability in English at grade four in government primary schools in Bangladesh. It is mentioned that this is so far first attempt to examine the reading ability in English whereas contemporary research is focused on finding the readability of Bangla language.

## **1.2 Rationale of the study**

Reading helps young learners to develop their minds. It needs exercise. Understanding the written word is one way the mind grows in its ability. Teaching young children to read helps them develop their language skills. It also helps them learn to listen. Besides, reading helps children focus on what someone else is communicating.

Ability of reading acts as a crucial factor in developing confidence and a good self-image among learners. Poor readers often have low opinions of themselves and their abilities. Many times they feel as if the world is against them. They perform poorly in other subjects because they cannot read and understand the material. Often the reader tends to give up.

Children need to adapt the skill of processing information about character, themes, contents and decode words, all of which will help develop their comprehension skills. Once children have mastered the ability to read they will be able to have access to a wider breadth of language that they can use in their oral and written communications.

The experts of RTI International, who have developed Early Grade Reading Assessment Tools (EGRA) tool kit, cited the importance of assessing reading as basic literacy is the foundation children need to be successful in all other areas of education. Children first need to learn to read so that they can read to learn. As children pass through the grade levels, more and more academic content is transmitted to them through text, and their ability to acquire new knowledge and skills depends largely on their ability to read and extract meaning from text.

Reading disability of children hinder them to acquire basic knowledge that they are expected to achieve according to their age level. Sometimes the severe reading disability demotivates the students to participate actively in the school activities; most often they drop out from schools. According to Global Reading Network (GRN), 250 million children around the world are not learning foundational reading skills, 130 million of whom have spent at least four years in school. So, it is a crying need to address this critical problem by connecting stakeholders, individuals, and organizations committed to ensuring that all children are able to read.

Moreover in National Education Policy-2010 and National Curriculum-2012, it has been clearly stated that children should achieve reading skill in English with a view to communicate locally and globally. In each grade learning outcomes are set on reading aloud and silent reading skills. At grade 4, students are expected to recognize words, read sentences and comprehend the texts; whereas basic reading skills are supposed to be achieved at early grades. So, it demands a study to know the present situation of students' readability in English.

It is observed that, when a child's reading disability is identified early, that child is more likely to learn strategies that will raise his or her reading eagerness later. So, it needs to

conduct a study to know what extent of the grade 4 students have achieved the expected learning outcomes. What are the teaching-learning strategies being followed in the classroom to enhance students' reading skills? What are the limitations to achieve desired goal? Besides, based on the findings the study recommended some steps for practitioners and policymakers, which will help the authority to mitigate the reading inability issue effectively.

### 1.3 Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to explore the reading ability of class four students of government primary schools in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are:

- to evaluate reading and matching words and sentences with pictures of class four students.
- to assess skills of reading simple sentences with proper pronunciation and stress by those students.
- to identify silent reading ability with understanding of simple sentences, paragraphs and other texts.
- to examine the skills of reading the names of the days of the week and of the months.
- to assess the reading instructions and carry them out.
- to put forward recommendations for policy and practice.
- to find out the constraints of reading ability.

### 1.4 Operational definition of the study

**Reading Ability:** A reading skill can be described as “a cognitive ability which a person is able to use when interacting with texts” (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). An individual's ability to comprehend text is influenced by their skills and their ability to process information. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read. (Wikipedia, 2018). In this study, if the students of class four can read the text book words, individual sentences and texts with understanding and also can read with understanding individual sentences and text composed with the words of English for Today Book Four, it will be considered that they have acquired reading ability.

**Primary Students:** In Education Policy-2010, it is recommended to include grade-1 to grade-8 in primary level (Ministry of Education, 2010). Still now in Bangladesh, most of the primary schools operate their primary level within grade-1 to grade-5 level. In our study, the

prime respondents were class four students. As the study was focused on achieving a few predetermined reading competencies of class four students and until completing the class four academic year by 2018, collected data wouldn't comply with the study. As per decision of the study team class five students were the prime respondents and also decided to collect data in the early quarter of 2018 from the class 5 students of government primary schools who had just passed grade-4 level, were expected to achieve the class four reading competencies.

**Primary Schools:** In Bangladesh, most of the students get their grade-1 to grade-5 education from primary schools. Most of the primary schools are government primary schools. In this study, the researchers collected data from two government primary schools from each of selected fourteen districts.

**Reading Comprehension:** Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and to integrate it with what the reader already knows. Fundamental skills required in efficient reading comprehension are familiarity with the meaning of words, ability to understand meaning of a word from discourse context, ability to draw inferences from a passage about its contents, ability to identify the main thought of a passage, ability to answer questions cited in a passage.

### 1.5 Limitation of the study

To accomplish any research work is a comprehensive effort that requires research skills, appropriate time and sufficient funds. Every research work has some limitations by nature, and there is no exception in this research too. The limitations that encounter the study are:

By following 95% confidence level, 5% of margin error and 50% response distribution, the recommended sample size of this study is 385, but the researchers could collect data from the number of 280 population.

The researchers used simple random sampling to select districts and schools for collecting data from each district. It was supposed to collect data from two schools. But the study team collected data from all districts except Barisal district where data were collected from only one school. In this situation there might be some sampling errors which can affect the result of the research.

Besides the researchers, some other faculty members of NAPE collected data for this research. However the researchers provided clear idea to them about the data collection

procedure, but personal skill and level of understanding might have an effect on data collection, which can affect the research result.

It needed sufficient time, full concentration and enough funds to conduct a research. But sometimes the research members were very busy performing other academic activities, which also affected the research.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of literature review is to convince the reader that the research area is significant and also tell the reader that the researchers are not satisfied with the existing literature on the topic and that the study will fill some important or interesting gaps. Besides it will also persuade reader that the research methods are sound and were well thought through. (Rowland, 2018). The study team reviewed different literatures and documents and sought relevant areas in the following description to clarify the purpose of the study.

### 2.2 Literacy in language learning

In modern days literacy covers more than the use of four language skills and adding also the purposeful uses of these skills in today's media- and information-rich environment. According to The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), literacy is increasingly a collaborative activity, where negotiation, analysis, and awareness of audience are as critical as understanding or creating a message. They also define six components of 21st century literacy (2013) and these are; 1) Manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of information 2) Design and share information for global communities 3) Build intentional cross-cultural connections and relationships with others 4) Develop proficiency and fluency with the tools of technology 5) Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multimedia texts 6) Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by complex environments. (Literacy in Language Learning, 2018).

The NCTE also mentioned that the literacy development in mother language supports literacy development in the second or subsequent languages learned. Knowledge and skills from a learner's first language are used and reinforced, deepened, and expanded upon when a learner is engaged in foreign language literacy tasks.

Literacy in a foreign language means much more than the separate abilities to read and write (Kern, 2000). Moreover, Richard Kern addressed the literacy is a complex concept of familiarity with language and its use in context; primarily in written ways but by the extension of spoken communication also.

## 2.3 Essential components of reading

Reading is a crucial but complex cognitive process. While we often think of reading as one singular act, our brains actually engage in a number of tasks simultaneously each time (The five essential components of reading, 2018). According to them, there are five aspects to the process of reading: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. These five aspects work together to create the reading experience. As children learn to read they must develop skills in all five of these areas in order to become successful readers.

Besides (Antunez, 2002) also reiterate the five components, Phonemic awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary development, Reading fluency, Reading comprehension are the key factors for developing reading skills.

Based on research findings the National Institute for Literacy clarifies the five component like-

### **Phonics**

Phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses learning how letters correspond to sounds and how to use this knowledge in reading and spelling. The goal is to help children understand that there is a systematic and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds. Readers use these relationships to recognize familiar words and to decode unfamiliar ones. (Bonnie B. Armbruster, Third Edition)

### ***Phonemic awareness***

Phonemes are the smallest units making up spoken language. English consists of about 44 phonemes. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to identify and manipulate these phonemes in spoken words. It is also the understanding that the sounds of spoken language work together to make words. (Summary of the National Reading Panel Report, "Teaching Children to Read.", 2001)

### ***Vocabulary Development***

Vocabulary development refers to the knowledge of stored information about the meanings and pronunciations of words necessary for communication. Vocabulary development is important for beginning reading in that when a student comes to a word and sounds it out, he or she is also determining if the word makes sense based on his or her understanding of the word. If a student does not know the meaning of the word, there is no way to check if the

word fits, or to make meaning from the sentence. Vocabulary development is also a primary determinant of reading comprehension. Readers cannot understand the content of what they are reading unless they understand the meaning of the majority of words in the text.

### ***Reading Fluency***

Fluency is the ability to read words accurately and quickly. Fluent readers recognize words and comprehend them simultaneously. Reading fluency is a critical factor necessary for reading comprehension. If children read out loudly with speed, accuracy, and proper expression, they are more likely to comprehend and remember the material than if they read with difficulty and in an inefficient way. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

### ***Reading Comprehension***

Reading comprehension is the culmination of all of the reading skills and the ultimate goal of learning to read. The purpose of mastery of each of the four previous skills is to enable comprehension. Likewise, reading comprehension facilitates mastery of the other four skills. For example, the NRP found that reading comprehension is clearly related to vocabulary knowledge and development. The NRP also found that comprehension is an active process that requires an intentional and thoughtful interaction between the reader and the text that can be explicitly taught through text comprehension instruction. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

## **2.4 Early Grade Reading**

The early grade reading means the ability of students of grade 1-3 who can read and understand according to their grade-level text. Children who do not learn to read in the early grades struggle to develop more advanced skills, which are often absorbed through reading. Unable to understand printed information, they follow written instructions and communicate well in writing, these children risk falling further and further behind those who can read effectively in later grades (Amber Gove, 2011).

Learning to read is a fundamental right of children in a changing world. To achieve at school and succeed in the world at large, children need to know how to read and write. Plenty of evidence shows the significant implications of literacy achievement not only for individuals over their lifetimes but also for societies (Heckman, 2002)

Besides, researchers have set some principles to implement early grade reading programme effectively. The principles are: a) Oral language is the foundation of learning to read and write b) Books and texts are varied in genre and form; they are plentiful c) The learning

environment contains abundant prints of many kinds d) An evidence-based curriculum guides reading instruction e) Teachers are prepared to teach the reading programme well. f) An assessment is in place g) Family involvement is an integral part of early grade readings. h). Evaluation is a tool for change. (Kathy Roskos, 2009)

According to (RTI international, n.d.) the ability to read is fundamental for overall academic success and positively affects life outcomes. Yet, literacy rates lag in much of the developing world. While efforts over the past two decades have resulted in substantially increased enrollment, education quality has not improved significantly, particularly in the early grades. Research has shown that students who do not learn to read in the first few grades are more likely to repeat and eventually drop out of school, and the education attainment gap between readers and nonreaders increases over time.

## **2.5 Early Grade Assessment**

The ability to read and comprehend a simple text is one of the most fundamental skills a child can learn. Without basic literacy there is little chance that a child will escape the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Yet in many countries, students enrolled in school for as many as six years are unable to read and understand a simple text. Evidence indicates that learning to read both early and at a sufficient rate (with comprehension) is essential for learning to read well (EGRA Toolkit, 2016)

Acquiring literacy becomes more difficult as students grow older; children who do not learn to read in the first few grades are more likely to repeat grades and to eventually drop out of school. That is, if strong foundational skills are not acquired early on, gaps in learning outcomes (between students who have mastered foundational reading skills and those who have not) grow larger over time

The more children struggle at school, the greater the risk they will become discouraged and drop out, forfeiting any potential benefits that education would afford them later in life. In contrast, the more and better children learn, the longer they tend to stay in school (Harry Patrinos, 1996). Whether for an individual child or for a whole educational system, it is more efficient to address a reading deficit in the early grades than later.

## **2.6 Reading fluency through oral assessment**

According to RTI International, 2016, traditional paper-based tests require that children already have acquired basic reading fluency and comprehension skills. If they have not (i.e.,

if they are unable to read the question or write the answer), the test will not be able to accurately measure what children know. In technical terms, the results will suffer from a floor effect, with a high number of students attaining zero scores. In those cases, the paper-based test tells us only what the children do not know, but not what they do know or where they are along the developmental path.

Reading fluency and comprehension are higher-order skills in the reading acquisition process, and they build upon several lower-order, foundational skills such as phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, decoding, vocabulary, etc., which can be detected through an oral assessment. An oral assessment therefore can give us more information about what students actually do know and where they are in the reading acquisition process early on. Oral assessments can also help detect early growth over time—that is, changes that are not yet detectable on a paper-based test but that nonetheless constitute progress toward reading acquisition (EGRA Toolkit, 2016).

## **2.7 Reading Comprehension**

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. It enables students to make meaning out of what they read and use that meaning not only for the pleasure of reading but also to learn new things, especially other academic content. Reading comprehension is also a highly complex task that requires both extracting and constructing meaning from text. Reading comprehension relies on a successful interplay of motivation, attention, strategies, memory, background topic knowledge, linguistic knowledge, vocabulary, decoding, fluency, and more, and is therefore a difficult construct for any assessment to measure directly (Catherine Snow, 2002).

To assess the students' reading comprehension skills, EGRA measures reading comprehension through the reading comprehension subtask, based on the passage that children read aloud for the oral reading fluency subtask. After children read the passage aloud, they are asked three to five comprehension questions, both explicit and inferential, that can be answered only by having read the passage (EGRA Toolkit, 2016).

Again (Bonnie B. Armbruster, Third Edition) considered comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading. As they read, good readers are both purposeful and active. The study also tells that students who are good at monitoring their comprehension know when they understand what they read and when they do not. They have strategies to address the

problems in their understanding as the problems arise. Research shows that instruction, even in the early grades, can help students become better at monitoring their comprehension.

According to Breiseth, n.d., comprehension is the goal of reading, but it can be the most difficult skill to master, especially for English language learners. Learners often have problems mastering science, math, or social studies concepts, for example, because they cannot comprehend the textbooks for these subjects. The researcher also informed that the literacy development will benefit from improved comprehension skills, which allow students to read more accurately, follow a text or story more closely, identify important events and concepts in a text, master new concepts in their content-area classes, complete assignments and assessments and feel motivated to read in school and for pleasure.

## **2.8 National Education Policy 2010**

Ministry of Education, Bangladesh developed a National Education Policy which is an outline for government to implement different levels of education throughout the country. In this education policy, reading comprehension skill is also highlighted for learners to achieve. In objectives no.10, it is clearly stated ‘to ensure the marginal competencies of learners at each level so that they are discouraged from rote learning, rather use their own thoughtfulness, imagination and urge for curiosity’ (National Education Policy, 2010)

## **2.9 Primary English Curriculum**

The purpose of teaching English at primary level is to help students develop competence in all four language skills in English through meaningful and enjoyable activities. The primary curriculum has been revised in the light of the National Education Policy, 2010, which emphasizes learning English for communicating locally and globally. Based on the aims and objectives of Primary Education, the curriculum has set Terminal Competencies, Class-wise Attainable Competencies and Learning Outcomes for the guidance of teachers, textbook writers and teacher trainers (Primary Curriculum, 2012).

In this curriculum objective no.3 is focused on reading skill and it is stated students will be able to read and understand different types of texts appropriate to the learners’ ability level (Primary Curriculum, 2012).

Out of 31 English terminal competencies, 7 terminal competencies are based on reading skill, and these are (Primary Curriculum, 2012):

1. to read aloud texts with proper pronunciation, stress and intonation.

2. to recognize and read both cardinal and ordinal numbers.
3. to read the names of the days of the week, the months and time.
4. to read aloud poems with proper stress and intonation.
5. to read silently with understanding paragraphs, stories and other text materials.
6. to read instructions and carry them out.
7. to recognize punctuation marks and read accordingly.

Based on these reading terminal competencies, different reading learning outcomes are also identified to help learners to achieve reading comprehension skills, which students are expected to achieve according their grade level.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology of the study in detail. Methodology includes the research context, research design, study area, population, sample and sampling design, sample selection strategy, data collection tools, development and description of tools, piloting, data gathering process and data analysis procedures. In addition, the study team also includes the ethical consideration issues of this study in brief.

### **3.2 Research context**

The primary education level is compulsory for 6+ children in Bangladesh since 1990 after the signing of EFA declaration. The government is trying to ensure world class education to shape the basic level of students through primary education. They took different initiatives for tracking its development in the last few decades. For example, the National Education Policy 2010 and National Curriculum 2012 set different bench mark for developing English language skills of primary students from curriculum to textbooks where reading is treated as an emphasized area in English. Developed countries like OECD countries are assessing their students' performance through PISA exam. Similarly in Bangladesh, students' performance on reading in Bangla is assessed through National Students Assessment (NSA) since 2006 while the ability of reading English was still not assessed in NSA. English is a compulsory subject at primary level and every exam including PECE assesses the students' two skills (reading and writing) out of four basic skills of English language through paper-pencil test. English being a foreign language, most of the students have panic about English and generally they got poor marks in English at all primary level exam. Regarding these aspects the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) decided to assess the students' reading skills in English, and this is so far the first attempt in this country.

### **3.3 Research design**

Mainly this study follows the quantitative research design. Here we used individual achievement test to identify the students' learning level on English reading segment. According to Reynolds, Livingston, & Willson (2011), "standardized achievement test are used in the identification, diagnosis and classification of students with special learning needs" (p.324). Following this achievement test, the numeric data were collected from students who

are studying at government primary schools in class five in Bangladesh. In addition, some qualitative data were also collected to justify and triangulate the quantitative findings.

### 3.4 Study area

This study was conducted in a total number of 10 districts in Bangladesh. These study areas were selected randomly from the total district list. From each of the division a total number of one or two district were selected.

### 3.5 Population

The main population of this study is

#### *Students of grade IV.*

All of the students of grade four (19, 54, 868) have been selected as population of this study. Although it is clearly mentioned that the study team had collected the data at the first quarter of 2018 from class five students. At that time, they conducted the achievement test by using the grade 4 level items on class five students, who had just passed the class four level.

#### *English Teacher*

Classroom English teachers were also considered as population of the study. Data were also collected from those teachers who had conducted the English class at class four on 2017 academic year (English class teacher of surveyed grade four students).

#### *English classroom*

To accomplish the study, teaching-learning activities of English classrooms were observed to gather data. The study team observed the English classes of grade 4; where the students of that class had just passed the class three level but the strategies of the class followed class four level.

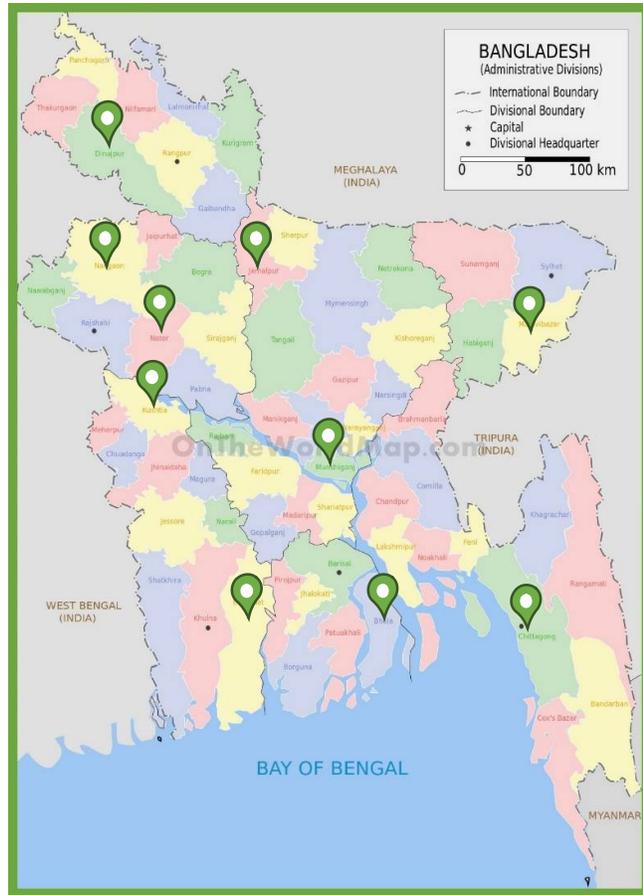


Figure 1: Study area considering district

### 3.6 Sample and sampling strategy

The study covered all the educational divisions considering the geographical locations in Bangladesh. The sample categories are as follows:

- **District:** A total number of 10 districts were selected conveniently. Specifically, two districts were selected from Rajshahi and Khulna division, whereas one district was selected from each of the other divisions.
- **Schools:** A total number of 28 schools were selected randomly from the national school list prepared by the directorate of primary education. In general, from each district a total number of four schools were selected except Jamalpur and Bhola. In addition, a total number of three schools were selected from Jamalpur district and only one school was selected from Bhola district.
- **Students:** A total number of 280 students were selected randomly from grade five as students of grade four of last year. Specifically, a total number of 10 students were selected from each school. Although the proposed sample was 385 students considering 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error and 50% response distribution.
- **Teachers:** A total number of 28 teachers were selected using purposive sampling techniques. Specifically, one English teacher was selected from each school who taught English at class four.
- **English classroom:** A total number of 10 English classrooms were selected purposively to see the real classroom practice. Specifically, one classroom was selected from each district.

*Table 1: Sample distribution at a glance*

Division	District	Total school	Schools		Total Teachers	Total Classroom	Total students
			Rural	Urban			
Dhaka	1	4	3	1	4	1	10×4=40
Chittagong	1	4	2	2	4	1	10 × 4=40
Rajshahi	2	4	2	2	4	2	10 × 4=40
Khulna	2	4	3	1	4	2	10 × 4=40
Barisal	1	1	1	0	1	1	10 × 1=10
Sylhet	1	4	3	1	4	1	10 × 4=40
Ranpur	1	4	3	1	4	1	10 × 4=40
Mymensingh	1	3	2	1	3	1	10 × 3=30
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>280</b>

### 3.7 Data collection tools

Different kinds of data collection tools were used to meet the research objectives of this study. Mainly, an achievement test was developed for grade four students to know their reading ability. In addition, an interview schedule for English teachers and classroom observation checklist were used for supporting data to meet the research objective. The instruments of this study are:

#### ***Achievement test:***

An achievement test tool was developed considering the attainable competencies for class four. The study team wanted to assess the attainable competency 1.4 (to read and match words and sentences with pictures) through matching word & sentences with picture. In addition, the study team also wanted to measure the attainable competency 5.1 (to read silently with understanding simple sentences, paragraphs and other texts) through reading silently with understanding. Moreover, recognizing and reading the names of days, weeks and months were used for measuring the attainable competency 3.1 (to recognize and read the names of the days of the weeks and the months). In addition, the attainable competency 3.1 also measured through recognize months for word square and ordering giving month.

This achievement test was also used for assessing silent and loud reading of class four students. The study team used both seen and unseen comprehension text to assess the reading ability of students. This achievement test also measured the attainable competency 1.5 (to read simple sentences with proper pronunciation and stress). In addition, the study team wanted to know the students' level of understanding of instruction through read do/show/carry out the task for assessing attainable competency 6.1 (to read instructions and carry them out).

#### ***Interview schedule***

An interview schedule was developed for English teachers to collect information about learning difficulties of primary students. This tool was also used to gather more information about how we develop fluent reader at primary level. It includes teaching technique, assessment strategy, classroom management policy and teaching English related questions for teachers to know their opinion on reading ability of primary students.

#### ***Classroom observation***

A classroom observation checklist was developed to perceive the real classroom situation about the practice of reading generally the four skills of English language teaching-learning. This tool was administrated in class four by the NAPE faculty members. It included some essential areas of teaching like teacher's preparation for conducting an English class in class four, subject knowledge, use of teaching aid, instruction, motivation, teaching technique and technique to teach words, students participation and assessment issues.

### **3.8 Piloting**

The study team first prepared the draft tool of this study for piloting. Team went to a government primary school at Fulbaria under the Mymensingh district for testing the reliability, validity and objectivity of this research tools. The researchers also measured its wording, sentence structure and content whether those were suitable for the targeted group of students or not. We also estimated the total time for answering the piloted questions.

### **3.9 Data gathering process**

It was not possible to collect all data from different regions within a short time. So, its needed to deploy some enumerators to collect data from different parts of the country within this stipulated time. To maintain the standard of the study, the key researcher trained some NAPE personnel to act as enumerators to collect data effectively. To meet the research objectives data were collected from grade 5 students through achievement test. Besides, the students were asked to read aloud different types of texts by following one to one approach to check their fluency and accuracy. Students also participated in focused group discussion to share their learning experiences that happened in the English classroom. Few English classroom activities were observed intensively to identify the teaching-learning strategies that influence improving students' reading skill. To complete the study, respected English teachers were interviewed to explore their ability in conducting class as well as to identify the limitations in enhancing students' reading skill.

### **3.10 Data analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The narrative data were analyzed in qualitative approach focusing the objectives of the study and the emerged themes and concepts from the field data. The raw data that were collected were processed under proper supervision of the study team and analyzed by applying computer software like SPSS. Descriptive statistics like mean, percentage distribution, correlations etc. were applied where found appropriate.

### 3.11 Ethical considerations

To conduct this study the researchers followed some ethical issues:

- The researchers first explained the purpose of this study to the head teachers of the government primary school to collect information from English teachers and students. They assured the respondents that the data would only be used for academic research purpose and their identity would be kept confidential.
- At the time of literature review, the researchers gave more attention to avoid plagiarism. The researcher used direct coding or paraphrasing or summarizing to use documents and also used in text and end text citations.
- During data collection, the researchers have taken consent from every institution for collecting data and also has taken consent from teachers and students.
- The researchers have taken proper action to ensure anonymity of respondents. They want to ensure that anonymity is maintained.

### 3.12 Coding

As the respondents of this research were assured not to disclose their identity, their code has been used in the case of citing their opinions, suggestions and learnt experience in this research report. The schools have been numbered numerically and denoted S for school along with its number. The urban and rural school has been symbolized using U and R respectively. The male and female teacher is denoted by M and F along with the number given for each school. The focus group is symbolized by FG along with school number.

## Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

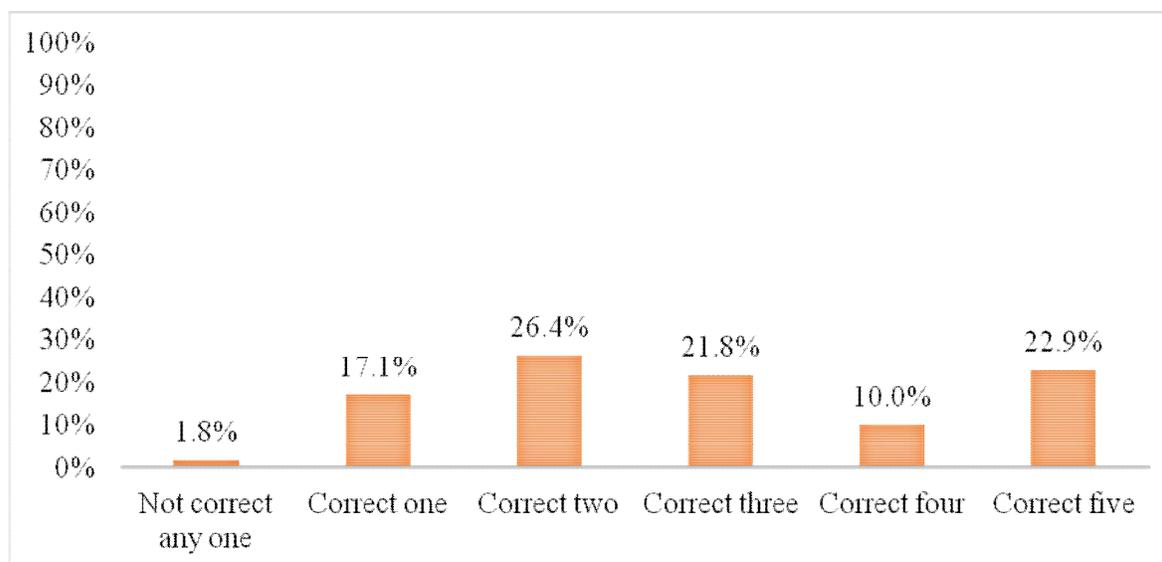
### 4.1 Introduction

A number of tools were used in this study for collecting pertinent information. All the tools were brought under coding for analyzing the data properly and showing the relationship of information provided by different respondents. The data were analyzed through SPSS in the light of three objectives of the study. For this reason data are presented here according to the objectives of the research. The validity of the information was ensured through triangulation with all the relevant information from different tools. Different types of table and diagram were used to make the information clear to the readers of the study. The information under different headlines are presented below according to the sequence.

### 4.2 Achievement Test:

#### 1.4 To Read and Match Words and Sentences with Pictures

##### 4.2.1 Achievement Test Result: Overall



*Figure 2: The overall performance of matching 5 words with their pictures*

The above figure shows that maximum 26.4% and 22.9 % students of class four could match two and five words with their pictures. 21.8% students matched three words with their pictures whereas only 17.1% and 10% students could match one and four words respectively. Around 2% students could not match any words correctly.

#### 4.2.2 Achievement Test Result: Gender-wise

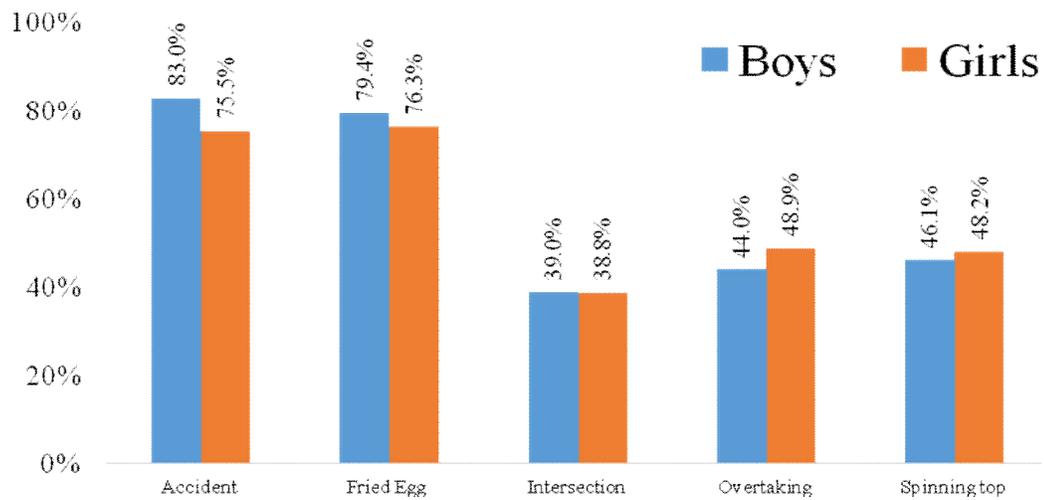


Figure 3: Gender wise performance of matching 5 words with their pictures

The above graph shows that 83% boys and 78% girls matched **accident** with its picture and around 39% boys and girls could match **intersection** with its word. In case of other three words (**fried eggs, overtaking and spinning top**), both boys and girls' performance was apparently similar that is 79.4%, 76.3%; 44.0%, 48.9% and 46.1%, 48.25 respectively.

#### 4.2.3 Achievement Test Result: Location-wise

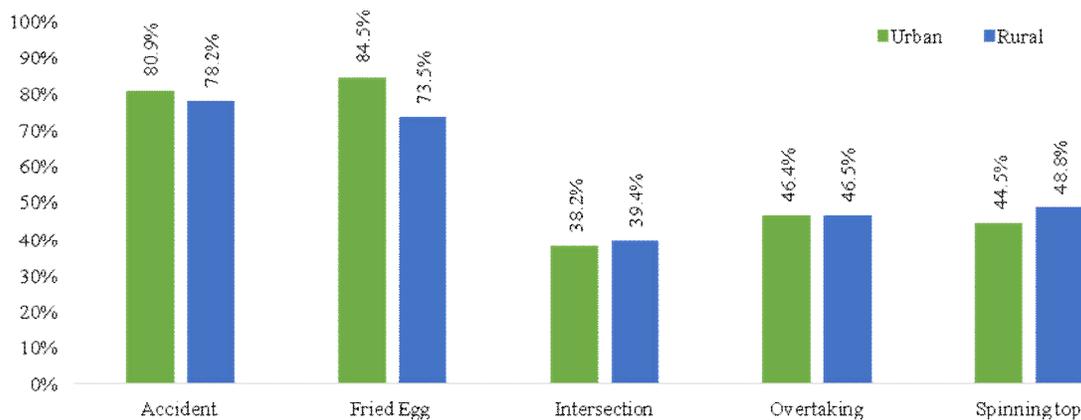


Figure 4: Location-wise performance of matching 5 words with their pictures

The above bar graph shows that the urban students performed 11% better than those of rural students. In the case of matching spinning top with its picture, the rural students performance is better (4%) than the urban students. In the case of matching the other three words with their pictures, the urban and rural students did almost the similar result.

#### 4.2.4 Achievement test Result: Division-wise

Table 2: Division-wise performance of matching 5 words with their pictures

	Dhaka	Chattagram	Khulna	Rajshahi	Barishal	Sylhet	Mymensingh	Rangpur
Not correct any one	7.5	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0
Correct one	12.5	7.5	32.5	7.5	40.0	17.5	33.3	7.5
Correct two	30.0	15.0	32.5	42.5	20.0	20.0	43.3	7.5
Correct three	15.0	25.0	5.0	25.0	20.0	25.0	10.0	45.0
Correct four	10.0	25.0	20.0	5.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	2.5
Correct five	25.0	25.0	10.0	20.0	10.0	32.5	10.0	37.5

The table shows that 45.0% & 37.5% students of Rangpur division could match maximum three and all the five words with their pictures. Maximum 43% and 42.5% students of Mymensingh and Rajshahi division could match two words with their pictures. Maximum 32.5% students of Sylhet and Khulna division matched maximum five and three words with their pictures respectively. Maximum 40% and 30% students of Barishal and Dhaka division could match one and two words with their pictures respectively. Maximum 25% students of Chattagram division matched maximum four and five words with their pictures.

In the case of matching maximum five words with their pictures, the students of Rangpur division are at the top line, students of Khulna, Barishal and Mymensingh division belong to the bottom line while the students of Dhaka, Chattagram and Rajshahi are in the middle line.

#### 4.2.5 Achievement test Result (matching sentences with picture): Overall

Read and match sentences with pictures. (1.4 To Read and Match Words and Sentences with Pictures)

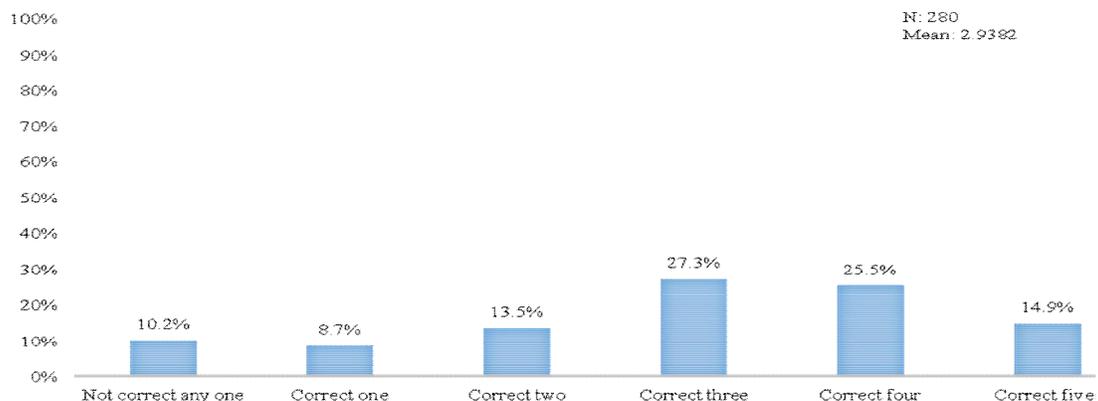


Figure 5: The overall performance of matching sentences with their pictures

The above figure shows that maximum 27.3% and 25.5% students of class four could match three and four sentences with their pictures. Only 14.9% students could match five sentences with their pictures, whereas only 13.5% and 8.7% students could match two and one sentence respectively. Around 10% students could not match any words correctly.

#### 4.2.6 Achievement test Result (matching sentences with picture): Gender-wise

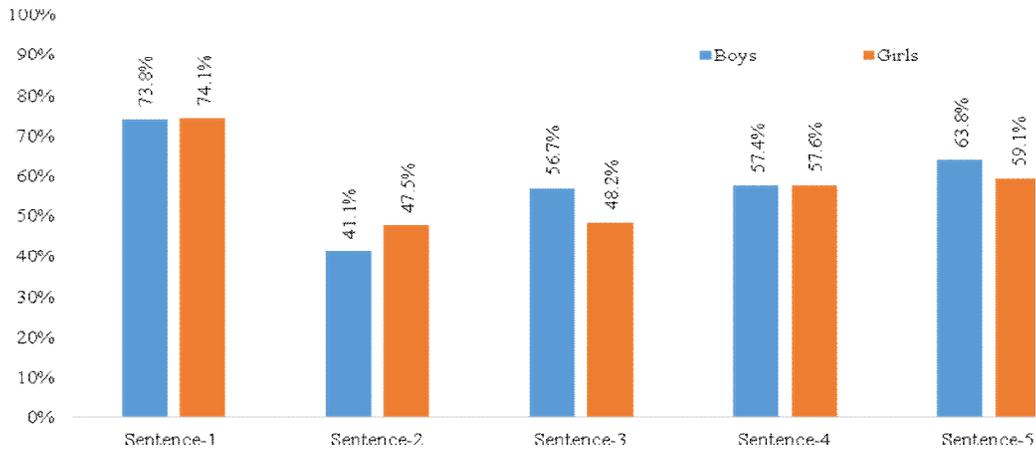


Figure 6: Gender-wise performance of matching sentences with their pictures

The above graphs show that almost similar percentage (73.8%, 74.1%; 57.4%, 57.6% and 63.8%, 59.1%) of boys and girls matched 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> sentences with their pictures which is their maximum achievement. In the case of matching the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence with its picture, girls performed better (47.5% > 41.8%) than boys while this performance is reverse (56.7% > 48.2%) in case the of matching 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence. It sounds as if, there is no significance difference between boys and girls in matching sentences with their pictures.

#### 4.2.7 Achievement test Result (matching sentences with picture): Location-wise

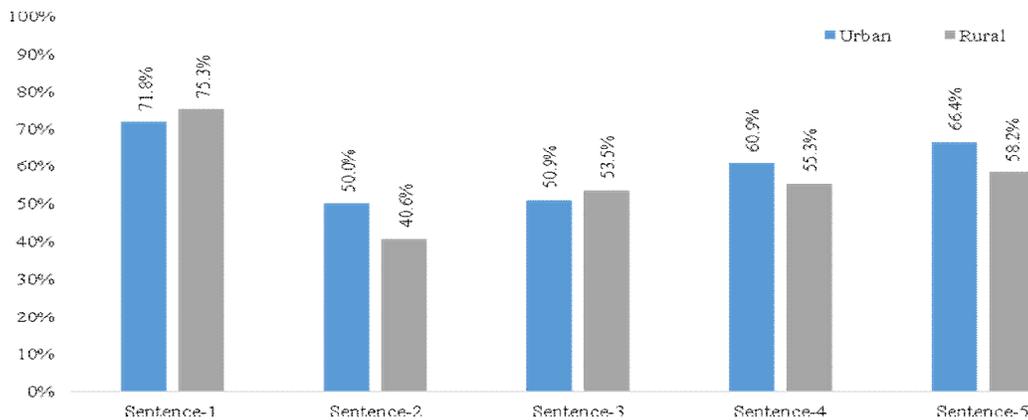
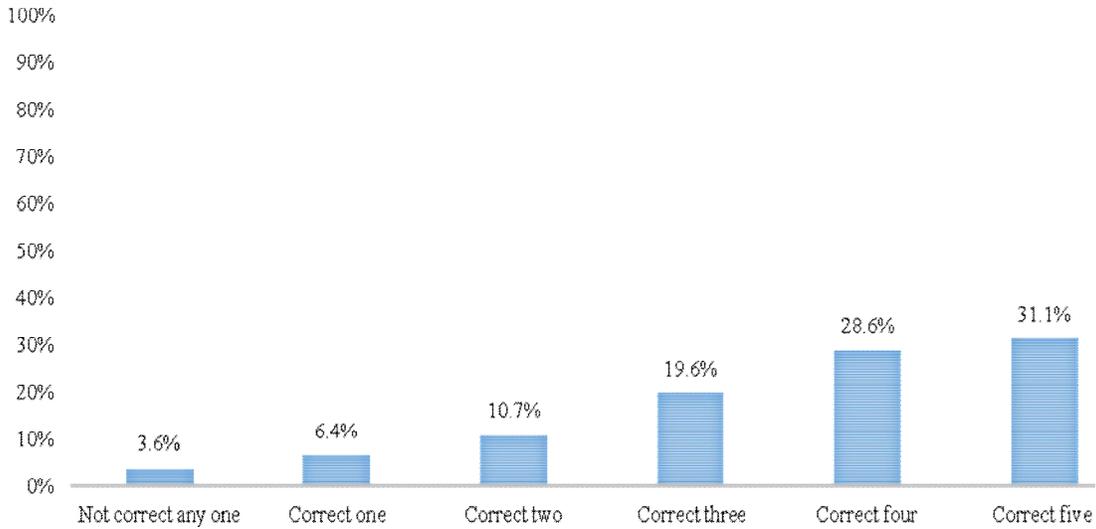


Figure 7: Location-wise performance of matching 5 sentences with their pictures

The above bar graph shows that matching 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> sentences with their picture the urban students performed better than rural students whereas rural students performed a little bit good from urban students in the case of matching 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences with their picture.

**Silent Reading (5.1 To read Silently with understanding simple sentences, paragraph and other texts).**

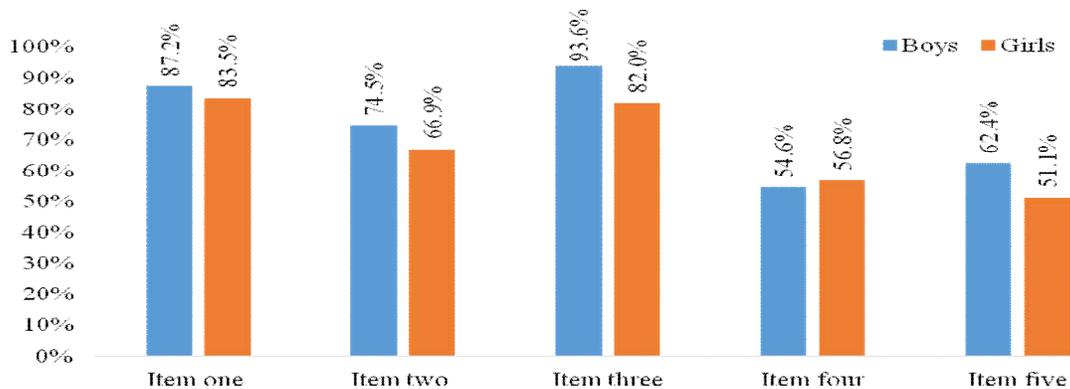
**4.2.8 Achievement test Result (silent reading): Overall Situation**



*Figure 8: The overall performance of silent reading*

The above bar graph shows that maximum 31.1% students of class four could correctly identify the five multiple choice questions after or while reading the given text. Around 4% students couldn't choose any correct item.

**4.2.9 Achievement test Result (silent reading): Gender-wise**



*Figure 9: Gender wise performance of silent reading*

The above graph shows that in identifying correct answer from five multiple choice questions, boys' performance is a little bit better than girls' (87.2%>83.5%; 74.5%>66.9%; 93.6%>82%; 62.4%>51.1%) except item 4( boys 54.6%, girls 56.8%). It is also revealed that performance in exact meaning questions (item number 1 to 3) is higher than that of inferred meaning questions (item number 4 and 5).

#### 4.2.10 Achievement test Result (silent reading): Locationwise

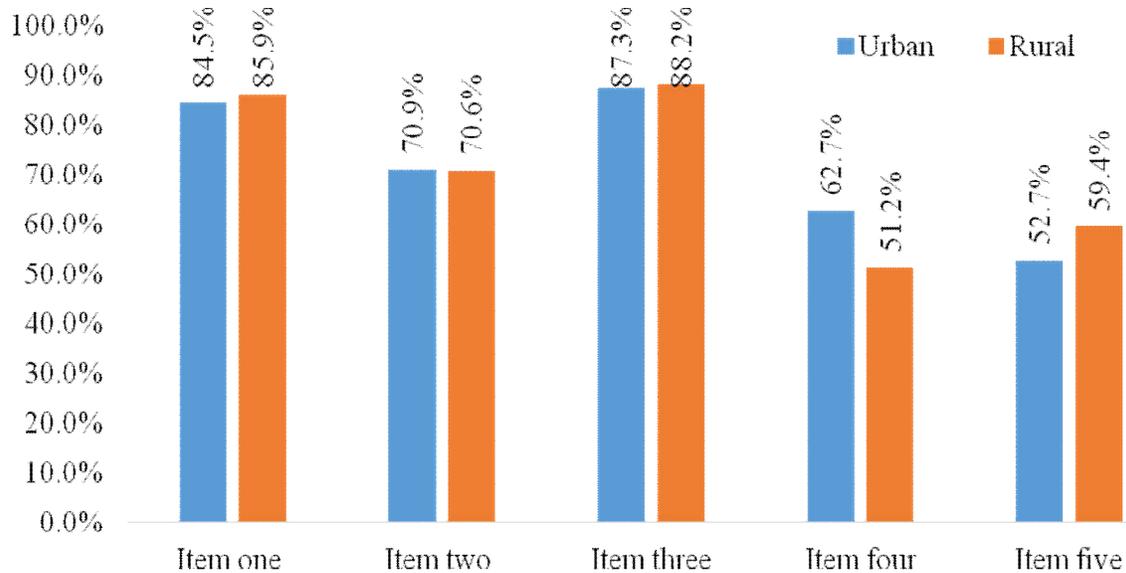


Figure 10: Location-wise performance of silent reading

The above bar graph shows that in the case of identifying multiple choice item for exact meaning questions of silent reading, the performance of urban and rural students is almost similar. In inferred meaning item four, urban students perform better whereas performance is reverse for inferred meaning item five.

#### 4.2.11 Achievement test Result (silent reading): Division-wise

Table 3: Division-wise performance of silent reading

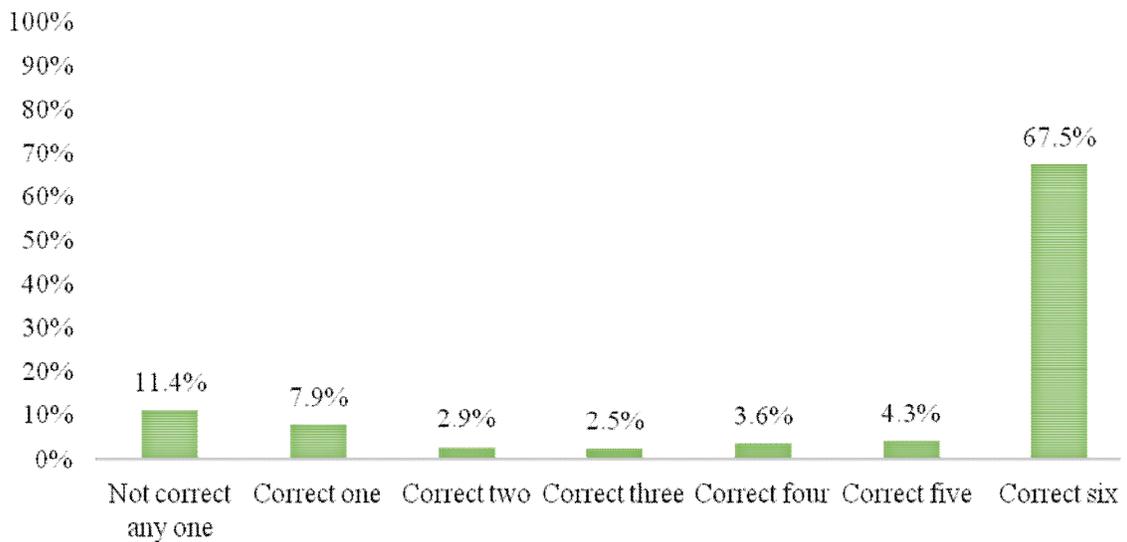
	Dhaka	Chattagram	Khulna	Rajshahi	Barishal	Sylhet	Mymensingh	Rangpur
Not correct any one	7.5%	0.0%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	3.3%	5.0%
Correct one	10.0%	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	7.5%	3.3%	2.5%
Correct two	7.5%	12.5%	22.5%	5.0%	30.0%	7.5%	10.0%	5.0%
Correct three	25.0%	20.0%	20.0%	22.5%	0.0%	17.5%	20.0%	17.5%
Correct four	22.5%	20.0%	15.0%	30.0%	40.0%	35.0%	50.0%	30.0%
Correct five	27.5%	37.5%	30.0%	37.5%	20.0%	30.0%	13.3%	40.0%

The table shows that maximum 50% students of Mymensingh division performed better than the students of other divisions. It is also revealed that 35% and 40% students of Sylhet and Barishal divisions corrected maximum four items and maximum 7.5% of Khulna and Dhaka division couldn't correct any items.

In the case of correcting five multiple choice questions, the students (40%) of Rangpur division are in the first position, students (37.5%) of Rajshahi and Chattagram divisions belong to 2<sup>nd</sup> position, students (30.0%) of Khulna and Sylhet divisions belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> position, the students (27.5%) of Dhaka division corrected five items and 20% and 13.3% of Barishal and Khulna divisions respectively corrected five items.

**Recognize names of the days (3.1 To recognize and read the names of the days of the week and months)**

**4.2.12 Achievement test Result (recognizing names & days of week): Overall Situation**



*Figure 11: The overall performance of recognizing the names of week days and month*

The above bar graph shows that maximum 67.5% students of class four could correctly identify the six days of weeks. Around 11.4 % students couldn't identify any days of week.

**4.2.13 Achievement test Result (recognizing names & days of week): Gender-wise**

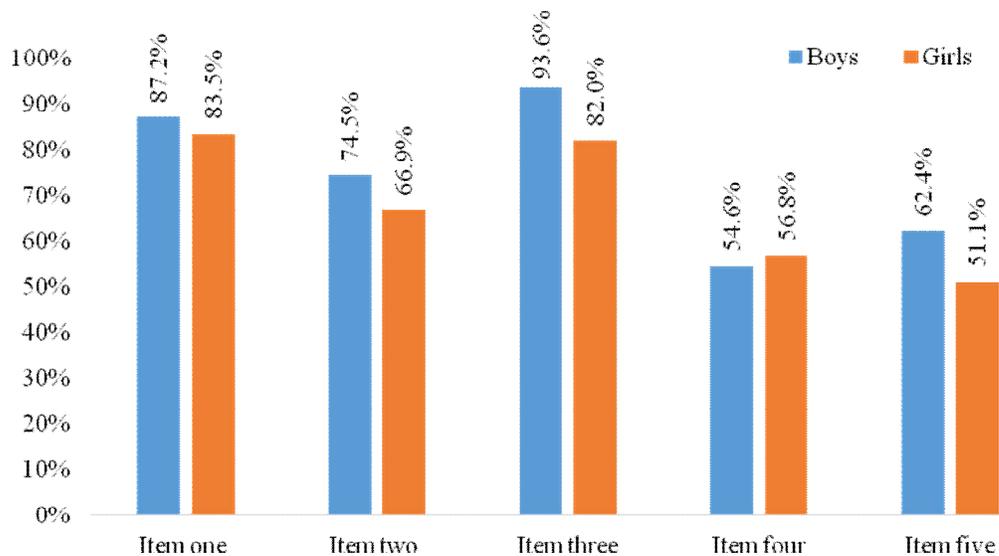


Figure 12: Gender-wise performance of recognizing days of month

The above graph shows that boys' performance in recognizing the days of month is better than the girls except one item. Maximum 93.69% boys and 82% girls recognized three days out of five days.

#### 4.2.14 Achievement test Result (recognizing names & days of week): Location-wise

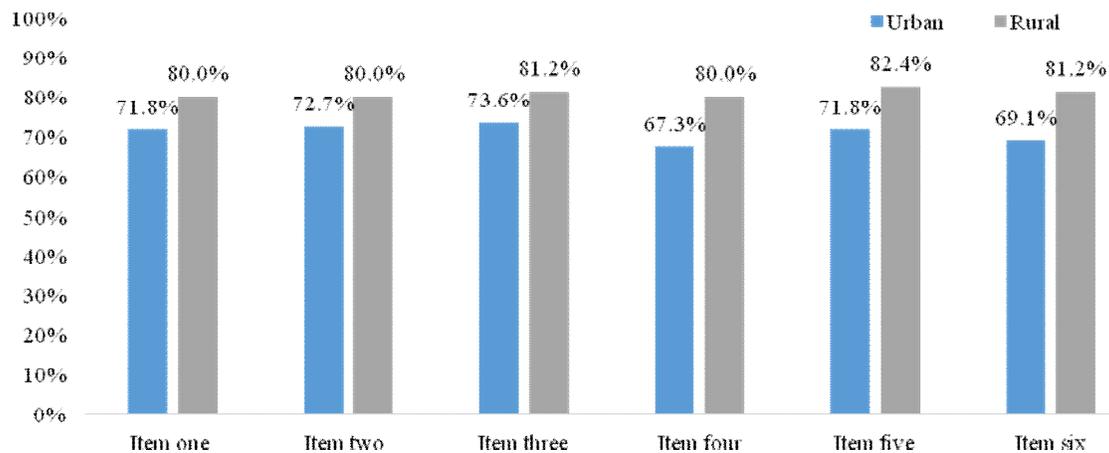


Figure 13: Location-wise performance of recognizing days of week and month

The above bar graphs show that the rural students' performance is better than the urban students in recognizing the days of the week and month. Maximum 82.4% rural students

recognized names of five days of week and 73.6% of urban students recognized three days of the week and month.

#### 4.2.15 Achievement test Result (recognizing names & days of week): Division-wise

Table 4: Division-wise performance of students for recognizing days of week and month

	Dhaka	Chattagram	Khulna	Rajshahi	Barishal	Sylhet	Mymensingh	Rangpur
Not correct any one	17.5%	5.0%	17.5%	7.5%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	12.5%
Correct one	2.5%	10.0%	20.0%	2.5%	10.0%	12.5%	3.3%	2.5%
Correct two	-	5.0%	-	5.0%	10.0%	2.5%	6.7%	-
Correct three	-	-	-	12.5%	-	2.5%	3.3%	-
Correct four	10.0%	-	-	-	10.0%	2.5%	3.3%	7.5%
Correct five	5.0%	5.0%	2.5%	2.5%	-	5.0%	6.7%	5.0%
Correct six	65.0%	75.0%	60.0%	70.0%	60.0%	65.0%	66.7%	72.5%

It is revealed from the table that not less than 60% students of all divisions could identify six days of the week and month. Maximum 17.5% students of Dhaka and Khulna division and minimum 5% students of Chattagram division couldn't identify any days of the week.

#### Read text Book Sentences, paragraph and beyond the text

(1.5 To read simple sentences with proper pronunciation and stress)

#### 4.2.16 Performance of Students on Reading Sentences from English for Today Book

Table 5: Performance of students in reading text book sentences with proper stress and intonation

	Can read with proper pronunciation (%) students	Can read with understandable pronunciation (%) students	Can read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation (%) students	Can't read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation (%) students	Mean	Medium
On Fridays, I help at home.	23.9	20.7	14.6	40.7	2.72	3.00
We need to go shopping.	16.5	15.4	13.3	54.8	3.06	4.00
Where else can you see a pocket?	9.7	15.8	14.3	60.2	3.25	4.00
We will do many things.	12.5	20.7	13.6	53.2	3.08	4.00
Jahanara Begum is Aziz Ahmed's mother.	16.1	15.1	13.3	55.6	3.08	4.00

The table shows that less than 40% students of all divisions could read text book sentences with proper and understandable pronunciation and less than 15% students of all divisions could read text book sentences with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation.

#### 4.2.17 Performance of Students on Reading text from English for Today Book

Table 6: Performance of students in reading a text book text with understandable pronunciation

	Read with understandable pronunciation (%) students	Cannot read with understandable pronunciation (%) students	Mean	Medium
Hello!	77.5	22.5	1.23	1.00
I'm Heba from Saudi Arabia.	26.1	73.9	1.74	2.00
It's very hot here, so our schools start at 7 a.m.	28.6	71.4	1.71	2.00
I get up at 55 in the morning.	45.4	54.6	1.55	2.00
I have my breakfast at 6 o'clock.	43.0	57.0	1.57	2.00
For breakfast I usually have some hot beans and bread.	25.0	75.0	1.75	2.00

It is revealed from the above table that maximum **45%** students of all divisions could read a text of English for Today Book four with understandable pronunciation.

#### 4.2.18 Performance of Students on Reading Sentences beyond English for Today Book

Table 7: Performance of students in reading beyond English for Today Text Book sentences

	Can read with proper pronunciation (%) students	Can read with understandable pronunciation (%) students	Can read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation (%) students	Can't read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation (%) students
My father gets up early.	12.1	22.9	11.1	53.9
The girls are playing football!	18.6	18.6	10.4	52.5
Do you like to play in the afternoon?	16.7	17.5	10.1	55.7
My mother married my father 5 years ago.	10.7	18.2	11.8	59.3
Why should a driver follow the traffic signal.	11.1	13.9	10.0	65.0

It is found from the table that less than 50% students of all divisions could read beyond the English for Today Text Book sentences with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation.

#### 4.2.19 Performance of Students on Reading Text beyond the English for Today Text Book four

Table 8: Performance of students in reading text beyond the English for Today Text Book

	Read with understandable pronunciation	Cannot read with understandable pronunciation
Doctor Bilkis Begum is Nazib's mother.	20.0	80.0
She is a government officer.	30.0	70.0
Usually she leaves home at 8 a.m.	16.4	83.6
She works very hard in a hospital on weekdays.	12.5	87.5
She often cooks food for Nazib.	18.6	81.4
She knows Nazib's favourite foods.	17.9	82.1

It is showed from the above table that maximum 30% students could read text beyond the English for Today text Book four.

#### 4.2.20 Performance of Students on Reading instructions and doing, showing or carrying them out (6.1 To read instructions and carry them out.)

Table 9: Performance of students in doing/showing/carrying out instructions

	Can do/show	Partially do/show	Can't do/show
<b>Touch your head</b>	33.6	10.0	56.4
<b>Raise your hand</b>	37.1	10.4	52.5
<b>Draw a circle</b>	14.3	15.7	70.0
<b>Be quiet</b>	30.7	16.1	53.2
<b>Throw the ball in the box</b>	25.4	15.4	59.2

It is revealed from the table that maximum 47% students could do/show or carry out the instructions.

### 4.3 Teachers' Interview

#### 4.3.1 English Teachers' Educational Qualifications

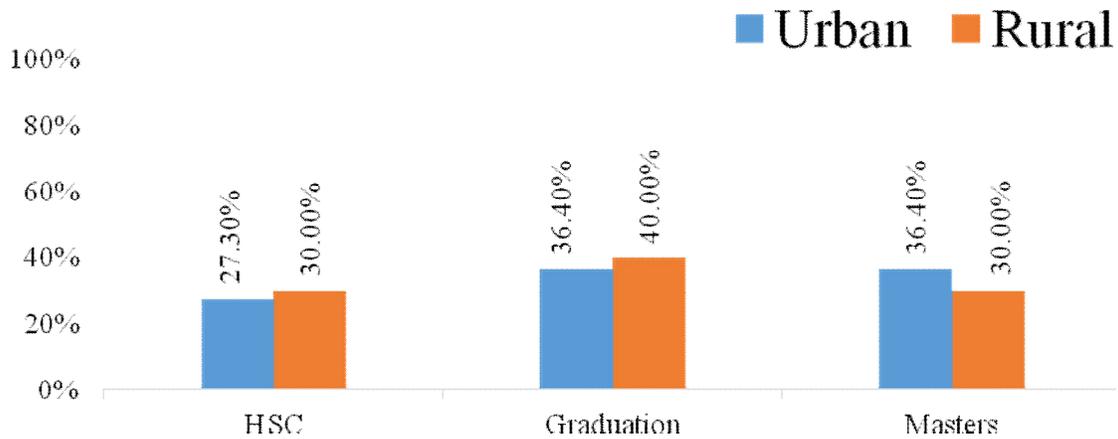


Figure 14 English Teachers Educational qualification:

It is found from the above graph that only 27.3% and 30% urban and rural English teachers respectively had Higher Secondary Certificate. It is also found that 36.4% urban teachers had graduation and masters degree. On the other hand 40% and 30% rural teachers had graduation and masters' degrees respectively.

#### 4.3.2 Teachers' Teaching Experience In English

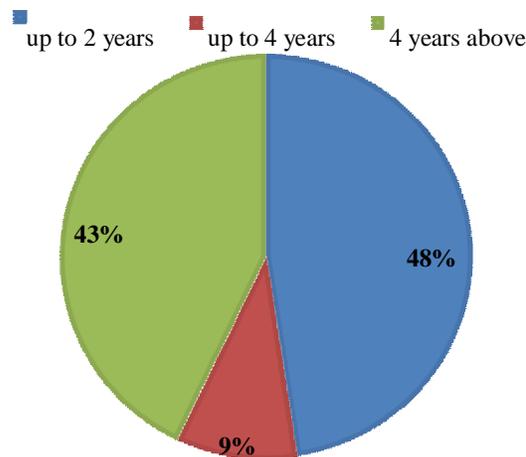


Figure 15: English Teachers' Teaching Experiences

It is revealed from the above pie-graph that 48% teachers had up to 2 years teaching experience while 43% teachers had more than four years experience. Only 9% teachers had more than 2 years but less than 4 years teaching experiences.

### 4.3.3 Teaching Experiences in English in Class four

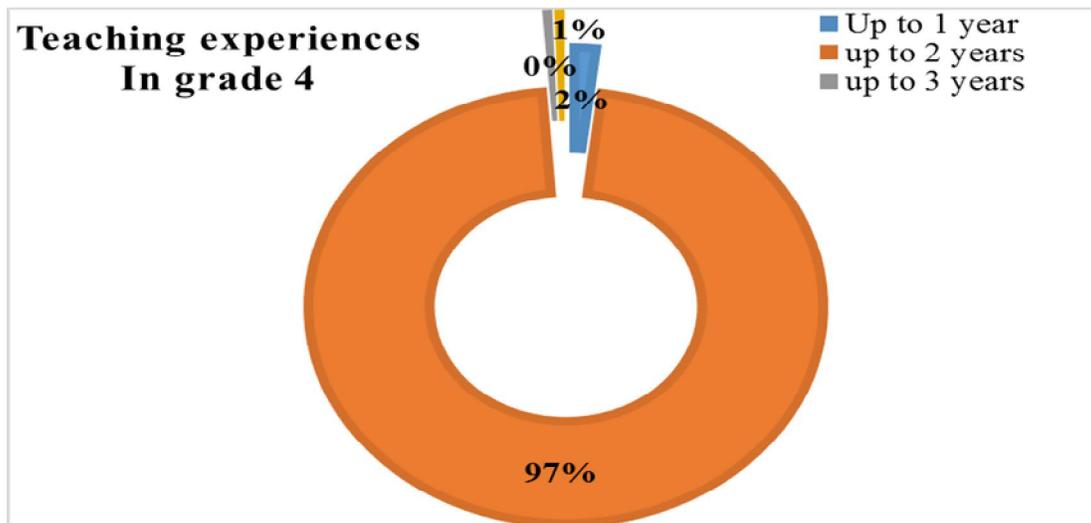


Figure 16: Teachers' Experience in teaching English in class four

It is revealed from the above pie-graph that 97% teachers had 2 years English teaching experience in class four. It also found that 2% and 1% teachers had respectively 1 year and 5 years English teaching experience in class four.

### 4.3.4 Teachers' long term professional training

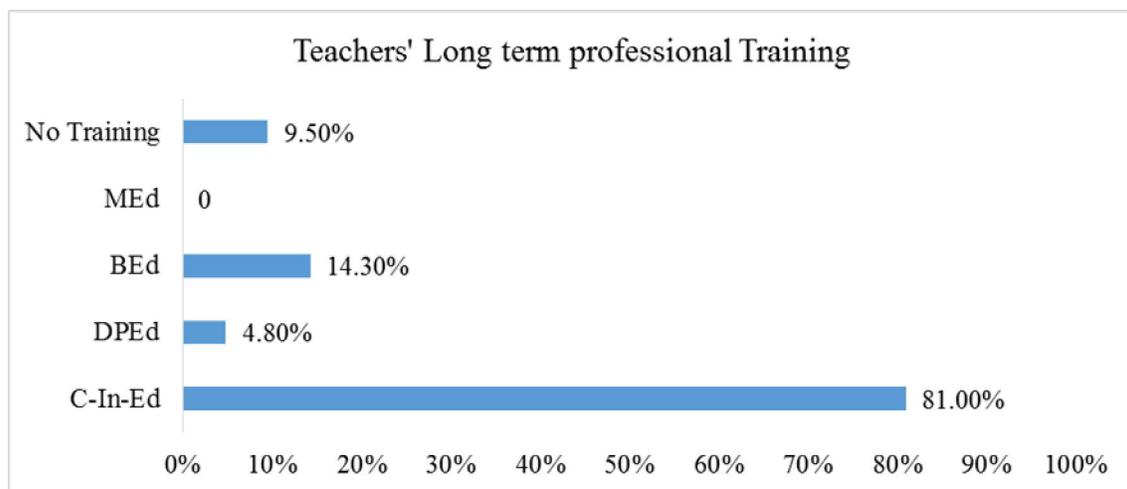


Figure 17: English Teachers' long term professional Training

It is found from the above table that 81% teachers had 1 year long term Certificate in Education Training(C-in-Ed). Only 14.30% and 4.80% teachers had B.Ed (bachelor of Education) and DPEd (Diploma in Primary education) training respectively. It is also revealed that 9.5% teachers didn't have any long term professional training.

#### 4.3.5 Effectiveness of Subject-based training

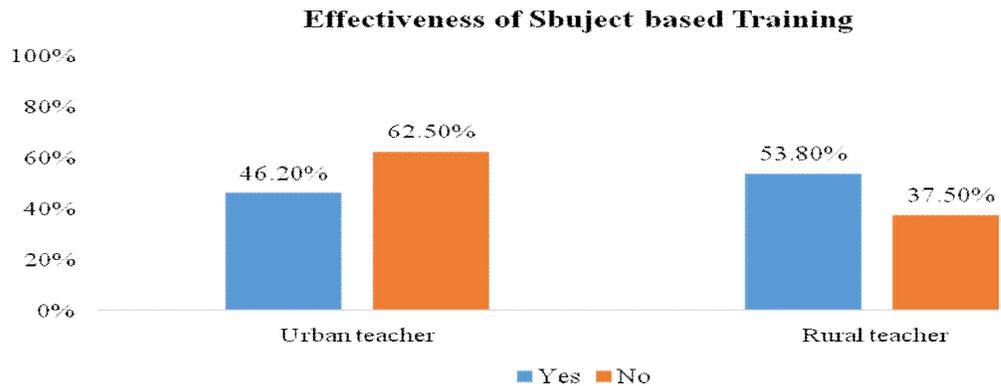


Figure 18: Effectiveness of Subject-based Training

46.20% urban and 53.8% rural teachers opined that Subject-based training has played a great role in Teaching English in class four whereas 62.5% urban and 37.50% rural teachers opined negatively.

#### 4.3.6. Teachers' satisfaction level toward Subject-based Training on English

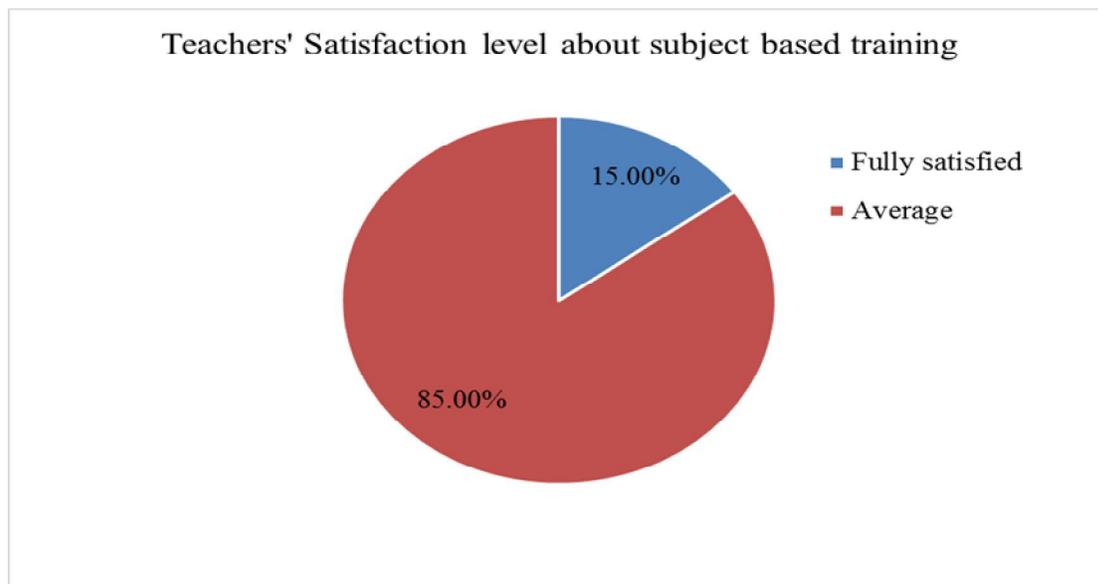


Figure 19: Teachers' satisfaction level towards Subject-based Training on English

85% teachers opined that they were satisfied on an average on subject based Training on English, whereas only 15.0% were fully satisfied.

#### **4.3.7 Teachers' opinions to address students' reading difficulties**

Teachers were found to tell the meaning of new words with pronunciation drilling and using some games as such Bingo and Kim's game during class observation. This is also evident from some teachers' opinions. Though some teachers cited that they encouraged students to keep record of the learnt words, it was not found during observation. Some respondent teachers opined that they arranged group work for describing the text book pictures but it was not found during observation. The teachers were found to arrange pair and group works for identifying new words, writing the answers of questions and asking and answering questions orally during observation. The following quotations have been cited in favour of above description.

*"I provide ample opportunity to practice new and difficult words of a lesson repeatedly and recap learnt words every month in an interesting way like Bingo, Kim's and team game. It helps students to read sentences and text with understandable pronunciation"* (S13T10F)

*"I get good result involving advanced students to help weaker students in reading and also supporting them with correct pronunciation while reading the similar type of reading text"* said S17T7F

*"I do believe telling the meaning of new words of a lesson and pronunciation drilling let the students to read in pairs and group"* cited S5T27M

**S4T10F** said, *"I support the students to learn spelling, meaning, pronunciation drilling first. Then I ask them how to record learnt vocabulary in their diary. I let them converse with the learnt words. I provide text book picture to describe within the group and then in the whole class. I check students' reading following one to one approach and support as required."*

#### **4.3.8 Teachers' suggestions to be a fluent reader**

The respondent teachers had given a lot of suggestions how our students could be a fluent readers in English while interviewing them. They cited that students should be encouraged to read the text book more and more as well as supplementary reading materials. During observation it was found that the students were not supplied any supplementary reading materials. Some teachers also mentioned that some texts of English for Today books are very difficult to understand and should be written according to considering the rural students' ability. Some teachers opined that telling stories in English and encouraging students to watch English TV cartoons is essential but students are very much interested in watching

Bangla and Hindi TV cartoon as those are available. Most teachers strongly opined that trained teachers in English are essential for conducting an English class in an interesting way and refresher training is required for updating new methods, techniques and activities. The following quotations reflect the above interpretation of a part of teachers' interview.

S14IT2F suggested, *“To encourage students to read text book and Supplementary Reading material of English.”*

*“ The English for Today Books should be written using easy and simple English”* cited **S30IT20M** .

**S3IT11F** pointed out, *“ Teachers have to use more easy, simple English with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation and also provide more activities to read more and more.”*

**S2IT18F** said *“Students have to read more and more and make as many sentences as they can with the learnt words and also provide opportunity to watch TV cartoons (English).”*

**S12IT8F** opined, *“ Easy pronunciation, joyful learning, telling short story and rhymes, conduct lesson cordially and give importance to English like other subjects.”*

*“ Trained teachers on English have to conduct English class using varieties of interesting techniques and activities.”* told **S27IT6F**

#### 4.4 Classroom Observation

Table 10: Result of classroom observation

0-1: Moderate; 1-2: Good; 2-3: Very Good		
	Mean	SD
<b>Preparation</b>	1.7273	0.78625
<b>Subjective Knowledge of teachers</b>	1.4545	0.82020
<b>Use of teaching aid</b>	1.2727	0.64667
<b>Instruction</b>	1.2727	0.78625
<b>Motivation</b>	1.1818	0.60302
<b>Teaching technique</b>	0.9010	0.53388
<b>Lesson</b>	1.7273	0.69931
<b>Technique to teach words</b>	0.9684	0.52109
<b>Students participation</b>	1.1439	0.71695
<b>Assessment</b>	1.1333	0.79317

The above table shows that the teachers had good preparation and they were good in subject knowledge. The teachers were good in using teaching aids, providing instructions, motivating

students toward learning English. It is also shown that the teachers were able to engage students actively and assessment of students learning was good.

#### 4.5 Students' Opinions

The focus group discussion was made in each school. The students were very shy and timid in saying but after a couple of minutes they were very spontaneous in speaking. The group was asked about the different aspects of teaching-learning such as teaching techniques, presentation procedure, using teaching aids, conducting reading classes etc. The most groups said that teachers almost always used EfT picture and seldom used other than text pictures, and teaching aids related to topic. They opined that they like rhymes, stories, action, miming and role playing but rarely these happen in classes. They also cited that the EfT book four was revised one time in the most cases but the reading performance test didn't verify their statements. It is evident from the focus group discussion that teacher provides Bangla meaning of the words and text and answers of the questions given in exercise for understanding the reading text and also asked them to repeat after him/her several times which hinder the students' thinking and understanding the text and pushed the students in rote learning. Moreover, teacher didn't encourage them to provide any supplementary book for reading. The following statements comply with the focus group discussion in brief.

“Last week, the teacher started teaching showing EfT pictures. After teacher's reading, he told us in Bangla about the lesson. He asked to read individually or either in pairs or groups. And he also asked questions orally and then he wrote the answers on the board and asked to copy them”.

“I love action rhymes, songs and stories but the teacher seldom begins English class using those.”

“Teacher makes the text understandable by translating into Bangla. Moreover, the teacher asks to repeat after her.”

“Teacher writes words and their meaning on the board and tell us to copy them in our exercise book.”

## Chapter 5: Findings and Recommendations

### 5.1 Findings:

The findings of the study which have been identified through analyzing the data are presented below:

1. More than 70% students could match words with their pictures.
2. In the case of matching words with pictures, the performance of rural and urban students was almost similar.
3. In the case of matching maximum five words with their pictures, the performance of the students of Rangpur division was the best of all other division students.
4. More than 50% students could match sentences with their pictures.
5. More than 60% students corrected exact meaning of multiple choice questions.
6. Boys' performance in correcting multiple choice questions is a little better than girls'.
7. The students performed a little bit better in correcting exact meaning of MCQ items than inferred meaning of MCQ items.
8. Maximum 50% students of Mymensingh division performed better in correcting MCQ items than the students of other divisions.
9. Maximum 67.5% students of class four could correctly identify the six days of the week.
10. Less than 40% students of all divisions could **read text book sentences with proper and understandable pronunciation.**
11. Maximum **45%** students of all divisions could **read a text from English for Today Book four** with understandable pronunciation.
12. Less than 50% students of all divisions could **read beyond the English for Today Text Book sentences** with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation.
13. Maximum 30% students could **read text beyond the English for Today text Book four.**
14. Maximum 47% students could **do/show or carry out the instructions** cited in the English for Today Text Book four.
15. Only 27.3% and 30% urban and rural English teachers respectively have Higher Secondary Certificate.

16. 36.4% urban teachers have graduation and master's degree. On the other hand 40% and 30% rural teachers have graduation and master's degree respectively.
17. 48% teachers had upto 2 years teaching experience while 43% teachers had more than four years experience. Only 9% teachers had more than 2 years but less than 4 years teaching experience.
18. 97% teachers had 2 years English teaching experience in class four.
19. 81% teachers had 1 year long Certificate in Education Training(C-in-Ed). Only 14.30% and 4.80% teachers had B.Ed and DPED training respectively.
20. 46.20% urban and 53.8% rural teachers opined that Subject-based training had played a good role in Teaching English in class four whereas 62.5% urban and 37.50% rural teachers opined negatively.
21. 85% teachers opined that they were satisfied on an average on subject-based Training on English whereas only 15.0% were fully satisfied.
22. The teachers had good preparation and they were good in subject knowledge. The teachers were good in using teaching aids, providing instructions, motivating students toward learning English and teachers were able to engage students actively and assessment of students learning was good.

## 5.2 Recommendations

1. Students have to be supported in using varieties of techniques and joyful activities for reading aloud providing EFT texts and also beyond the EFT texts.
2. Teachers should provide opportunity to read silently and practise inferred meaning questions and answers in the classroom.
3. Teachers should provide ample opportunity to practise the instructions in life-like situation.
4. English Subject-based Training programme should be reformed and revised.
5. Enough hands-on-practice have to be ensured in professional English Training.

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## ANNEXURE-A

### Annexure-1: Students' Achievement Test Questionnaire

#### Part-1

Student's Name:.....Roll:.....School code:...

(Assessing students' understanding of reading)

1. Read the words and match with the picture and write only NUMBER. 1×5=5

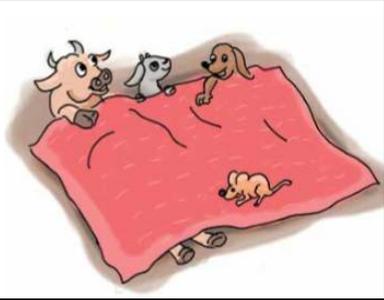
a)	Accident	1	
b)	Fried egg	2	
c)	Intersection	3	 <small>Image tweeted by @ANI_news</small>
d)	Overtaking	4	

e)	Spinning top	5	
----	--------------	---	--

Answer: a) +....., b)+....., c)+..... d)+....., e)+.....

2. Put tick mark (✓) on the right sentence for each picture given in the same row. 1×5=5

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All are apples in the picture.</li> <li>There are vegetables in the picture.</li> <li>All things in the picture are same colours.</li> </ol>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People are dancing.</li> <li>The women are standing in a line</li> <li>The man and women are standing in a line.</li> </ol>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The doctor is looking after the patient.</li> <li>The doctor is giving food to her.</li> <li>The patient is sitting on the bed.</li> </ol>	

<p><b>1. Two people are walking.</b></p> <p><b>2. Don't use zebra crossing to cross the street.</b></p> <p><b>3. Three people are using zebra crossing to cross the street.</b></p>	
<p><b>1. The animals are fighting.</b></p> <p><b>2. Three animals are under the quilt.</b></p> <p><b>3. There are 2 animals in the picture.</b></p>	

3. Read the text and put tick (✓) mark on the answer of the following questions: 1×5=5

On weekdays, Sagar gets up at 6 in the morning. He and his grandfather read some stories in Bangla and English. Then he and his sister have breakfast at 8 o'clock. Sagar gets dressed after breakfast and leaves for school at 9 o'clock.

1. Sagar gets up at -----
  - a) 9 a.m.
  - b) 8 a.m.
  - c) 6 a.m .
  - d) 5 a.m.
  
2. Who reads stories with Sagar?
  - a) his sister
  - b) his brother
  - c) his grandfather
  - d) his grandparents
  
3. What does he and his sister do at 8 o'clock?
  - a) have lunch
  - b) have dinner
  - c) have snacks
  - d) have breakfast
  
4. What does Sagar do just after breakfast? He.....
  - a) gets school
  - b) gets dressed
  - c) makes friend
  - d) reads stories
  
5. Sagar's grandfather can read.....
  - a) only Bangla
  - b) only English

- c) both Bangla and English
- d) Bangla, English and Hindi

**4. Read the calendar and answer the following questions**

**1×6=6**

**January 2016**

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

The first one is done for you.

1. What day is the 1<sup>st</sup> of January? Answer: Friday
2. What day is the 10<sup>th</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
3. What day is the 7<sup>th</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
4. What day is the 5<sup>th</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
5. What day is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
6. What day is the 6<sup>th</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
7. What day is the 4<sup>th</sup> of January? Answer: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

1. Write the number of each month that comes in a year calendar serially.

Months	Write number
May	5
September	
January	
October	
April	

**Part-2 (Student's Copy)**

**Student's name:** .....**Roll:**.....**school code:**.....

**1. Read the following sentences aloud.**

- a) On Fridays, I help at home.
- b) We will do many things!
- c) We need to go shopping.
- d) Where else can you see a pocket?
- e) Jahanara Begum is Aziz Ahmed's mother.

**2. Read the text aloud.**

Hello! I'm Heba from Saudi Arabia. It's very hot here, so our schools start at 7 a.m. I get up at 5 in the morning. I have my breakfast at 6 o'clock. For breakfast I usually have some hot beans and bread.

**3. Read the following sentences aloud.**

- a) My father gets up early.
- b) The girls are playing football!
- c) Do you like to play in the afternoon?
- d) My mother married my father 5 years ago.
- e) Why should a driver follow the traffic signal?

**4. Read the text aloud.**

Doctor Bilkis Begum is Nazib's mother. She is a government officer. Usually she leaves home at 8 a.m. She works very hard in a hospital on weekdays. She often cooks food for Nazib. She knows Nazib's favourite foods. Sometimes they visit relatives on weekend.

**5. Read and do or show sign.**

- a) Touch your head.
- b) Raise your hand
- c) Draw a circle
- d) Be quiet.
- e) Throw the ball in the box.

## Part-2 (Researcher's Copy)

(Assessing pronunciation, stress and intonation and understanding the read instructions. The researcher has to administer to individual respondent the following 5 items according to instructions. **Also record required time to read each item, please.**)

**Student's name:** ..... **Roll:**.....

**School:**.....

1. Ask the student to read the following sentences aloud. (1.5 to read words, phrases and sentences in the text with proper pronunciation, stress and intonation). (**Seen sentences**)

**1= Can read with proper pronunciation, 2= Can read with understandable pronunciation, 3= can read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation, 4= can't read with understandable pronunciation, stress and intonation.**

SL	Sentences	1	2	3	4	Req. Time
a	On Fridays, I help at home.					
b	We will do many things!					
c	We need to go shopping.					
d	Where else can you see a pocket?					
e	Jahanara Begum is Aziz Ahmed's mother.					

2. Ask the student to read the text aloud. (Here reading has to be recorded to find out the reading speed with accuracy) (1.5 to read words, phrases and sentences in the text with proper pronunciation, stress and intonation). (**Seen text**)

SL	Sentences	Read with understandable pronunciation.	Mispronunciation words	Req. Time
1	Hello!			
2	I'm Heba from Saudi Arabia.			
3	It's very hot here, so our schools start at 7 a.m.			
4	I get up at 5 in the morning.			
5	I have my breakfast at 6 o'clock.			
6	For breakfast I usually have some hot beans and bread.			

**3. Ask the student to read the following sentences aloud. Here reading has to be recorded to identify proper pronunciation; stress and intonation** Ask the student to read the following sentences aloud. (1.5 to read words, phrases and sentences in the text with proper pronunciation, stress and intonation). (Unseen sentences)

SL	Sentences	1	2	3	4	Req. Time
1	My father gets up early.					
2	The girls are playing football!					
3	Do you like to play in the afternoon?					
4	My mother married my father 5 years ago.					
5	Why should a driver follow the traffic signal?					

**4. Ask the students to read the text aloud. (Reading has to be recorded to find out the reading speed with accuracy) (5.1 to read silently with understanding simple sentences, paragraphs and other texts). (Unseen text)**

SL	Sentences	Read with understandable pronunciation.	Mispronunciation words	Req. Time
1	Doctor Bilkis Begum is Nazib's mother.			
2	She is a government officer.			
3	Usually she leaves home at 8 a.m. She works very hard in a hospital on weekdays.			
4	She often cooks food for Nazib.			
5	She knows Nazib's favourite foods.			
6	Sometimes they visit relatives on weekend.			

**5. Read and do or show sign (Students' performance will be videoed). (6.1 to read instructions and carry them out). (Seen instructions)**

SL	Sentences	Can do/show	partly do/show	Can't do/show	Req. Time
1	Touch your head.				
2	Raise your hand.				
3	Draw a circle.				
4	Be quiet.				
5	Throw the ball in the box.				

## Annexure-B

### Class observation Checklist

**Subject: English**

Name of the class conducting teacher:

Name of the School:

Upazila: District:

Total number of students in class four:..... Boys:..... Girls:.....

The number of present students in class four:..... Boys:.....Girls:.....

The name of the teacher :.....( male/female)

1. Do you have written lesson plan? Yes/No
2. Have written the lesson plan by yourself? Yes/No
3. Do you use teacher's edition if you don't have your own lesson plan? Yes/No
4. Title of the lesson:.....
5. Lesson unit:.....
6. Learning outcomes of the lesson/unit of lesson:.....
  - a)
  - b)
  - c)
  - d)
7. Starting time of the teaching-learning activities:...Ending time:...Total spent time:...

#### Teacher's teaching-learning activities

(Please observe the teacher's teaching learning activities in the class and put a tick on appropriate box or write 0, 1, 2 or 3 marking the degree of implementation)

Sl No.	Aspect of Observation	Not at all	Moderately	Good	Very good
8.	Starting activities for conducting teaching learning activities	0	1	2	3
	• 1. Creating safe environment				
	• 2. Creating emotion for learning				
9.	Teacher's Subject Knowledge	0	1	2	3
	• Explanation of presenting content				
	• Citing examples related to the content				
	• Answering any kind questions of students				
10.	Use of teaching aids in teaching learning activities	0	1	2	3
	• Using lesson related picture				
	• Using word cards				
	• Using letter cards				
	• Using real object				

•	Using model				
•	Appropriateness of teaching aids				
•	Attractiveness of teaching aids				
•	Teaching aids visible from the back of the classroom				
11.	Teacher's instructions to learners	0	1	2	3
•	Giving clear instruction				
•	Checking the instructions if they are understood or not				
•	Ask student(s) to tell the instructions				
•	Displaying the written instructions				
•	Demonstrate what to do and how to do				
12	Motivation the learners	0	1	2	3
•	Praising students' progress of work				
•	Encourage students to work				
•	Behaved friendly with students				
•	Calling the students by name				
•	Praising students for correct answer				
•	Inspiring students even for their incorrect answers so they feel happy to answer next time				
•	Behave friendly with the students				
13.	Using techniques for ensuring students reading	0	1	2	3
13.1	Asking students to guess the content/topic showing lesson related picture or title	0	1	2	3
13.2	Checking students existing knowledge about the topic showing lesson related picture	0	1	2	3
13.3	Tell the theme of summary to raise students' curiosity	0	1	2	3
13.4	Cite an interesting or joyful part of the text to raise students' interest	0	1	2	3
13.5	Ask 1 or 2 questions from the last part of today's text	0	1	2	3
13.6	Allow to read with proper stress, intonation and pronunciation individually, in pairs or groups	0	1	2	3
13.7	Ask to find specific information from the text	0	1	2	3
13.8	Ask to identify main character or fact from the text	0	1	2	3
13.9	Ask inferred meaning questions	0	1	2	3
13.10	Ask to tell or identify the life-oriented sentence of the text	0	1	2	3
13.11	Ask the students to read in groups under the supervision of group leader or advanced learners	0	1	2	3
13.12	Discourage students to read through spelling	0	1	2	3
14.	Teacher's reading	0	1	2	3
14.1	Teacher reads the text with proper stress,	0	1	2	3

	intonation and pronunciation				
14.2	Teacher notices whether the students read putting their fingers on words following the teacher' reading	0	1	2	3
14.3	Give emphasis not to read silently or very loudly	0	1	2	3
15	Technique to teach vocabulary	0	1	2	3
15.1	Show picture first and then picture in teaching material words	0	1	2	3
15.2	Teach action verbs using proper total physical response or action, miming	0	1	2	3
15.3	In the case of teaching attributive words, use analogy and similarity	0	1	2	3
15.4	Teach pronunciation of new words before students' loud reading.	0	1	2	3
15.5	Teaching spelling of new words	0	1	2	3
15.6	Teaching the meaning of new words	0	1	2	3
15.7	Asking to use the new words other than text sentences	0	1	2	3
15.8	Explain using easy language	0	1	2	3
15.9	Teaching the use of learnt new words	0	1	2	3
16. Student's Participation					
16.1	Provide individual reading activity	0	1	2	3
16.2	Provide pair reading activity	0	1	2	3
16.3	Provide group reading activity	0	1	2	3
16.4	Asking questions to students	0	1	2	3
17. Reading Assessment					
17. 1	Asking to read/do/read board writing/ read in front of the class/ recognize picture individually.	0	1	2	3
17. 1	Asking to read/do/read board writing/ read in front of the class/ recognize picture in pairs.	0	1	2	3
17. 2	Asking to read/do/read board writing/ read in front of the class/ recognize picture in groups.	0	1	2	3
17. 3	Asking to tell or write questions after reading individually	0	1	2	3
17. 4	Asking to tell or write questions after reading in pairs	0	1	2	3
17. 5	Asking to tell or write questions after reading groups	0	1	2	3

. Overall comments of the observer

Date and Signature of the observer

## Annexure-C

### Questionnaire

(For English subject teacher)

[The provided information will be used for research work only. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be identified by name.]

School Name:

Name of the Teacher:

Highest Educational Qualification: SSC/ HSC/ BA/BSS/BBA/BSC/ MA/MSC/MSS/MBA/  
Others

#### 1. Experiences of the Teacher:

1. Experience in teaching English: .....months;

Experience in teaching English in Class 4: .....months

#### 2. Long term training:

2.1 C-in-Ed

2.2 DPEd

2.3 B.Ed

2.4 M.Ed

2.5 No training

3. Have you received English subject-based training? a) Yes  b) No

3.1 If the answer is 'Yes' : duration of the training: .....days.

4. Is the training appropriate to conduct English teaching-learning activities effectively?

a) Yes  b) No

4.1.1 If the answer is 'Yes', why is it effective? .....

4.1.2 If the answer is 'No', why is it not effective? .....

4.1.3 What is your suggestions to make the subject-based training of English more effective?

5. To what extent do you prepare lesson plans before conducting English class?

5.1 Every day

5.2 Weekly 2/3/4/5 days

5.3 Never

6. To what extent do you use teachers' edition of English subject?

6.1 Every day

6.2 Weekly 2/3/4/5 days

6.3 Never

7. When do you use teachers' edition?

- a) In lesson presentation  b) In classroom assessment  c) In planning lesson plan

8. To what extent you are satisfied with your teaching-learning activities of English?

- a) Fully   
b) Highly   
c) Average   
d) Little   
e) Not satisfied

9. Write in sequence what you have done from beginning to end to conduct English classes?

10. How do you assess your students' reading skill of English subject?

11. What measures do you take to address the students' weakness in reading English?

12. What are your suggestions for making students fluent in reading English subject?

13. Please mention if you need any support to conduct the teaching-learning activities of English effectively.

Thank you for giving your correct information.

Signature of Interviewee

Signature of Interviewer

## Annuxre-D

### Focus Group Discussion: Guiding Questions (English)

#### Students' name who were in FGD

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

#### Name of the School:

#### Upazila:

#### District:

1. Energizing and then asking which subjects do they like and why?
2. How do you feel to read English? Why?
3. Who taught you English in class four?
4. How was his/her teaching? Why?
5. Did the teacher teach all lessons of class four?
6. Did the teacher revise all lessons of class four?
7. How many times were the lessons revised?
8. What did the teacher do from beginning to end of an English class?
9. Can you read well the English book of class four? Why can't?
10. Which lesson(s) was/were most interesting to you? Why?
11. Which presented lesson(s) was/were most attractive and interesting to you? Why?
12. How did the teacher teach pronunciation, spelling and meaning of English words?
13. How far did you understand English teaching of your teacher?
14. Who teaches you English now?
15. Which lessons were taught last week?
16. What sorts of activities did the teacher do from beginning to end of the last English class?