

Secondary English Language Teacher Capacity: Insights From Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Like other developing, non-English speaking countries in Asia, Bangladesh has shown a phenomenal attention towards English education through the school curriculum. The attention is demonstrated by revisiting and revising pertinent curriculum, personnel, materials, methods, and assessment policies of English education. This paper, within an exploratory, qualitative case study paradigm offers a modest, interpretive inquiry into secondary English teacher capacity, in terms of their recruitment, training and class performance. The data were collected from semi-structured interviews with secondary English teachers, school principals and teacher trainers, and classroom observations of secondary English teachers. The findings identified a set of generic issues around secondary English teacher capacity. These included inadequate provision of teachers, stigmatised practice of teacher recruitment, limited attention to teacher training and their impacts on the overall quality of English education. Reflecting upon the findings, the paper concludes with a set of recommendations for secondary English personnel policy and practice, which could be a point of reference for Bangladesh and beyond.

Key words: Bangladesh; English Language Education; English Language Teachers; ELT-INSET; Language-In-Education Planning; Secondary Education

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of English education in Bangladesh as a global language is informed by a myriad of socio-political-economic sine qua non. Precisely speaking, the country showed a clear manifestation of ‘postcolonial puzzle’ regarding English language and education, the puzzle created by two opposite notions of decolonisation and globalisation (Canagarajah, 2005; pp.195-196; Nur, 2018). Bangladesh, having seeded its origin in the glorious 1952 language movement and later accomplishing its being through the 1971 liberation war, marginalised English education because of its strong Bangla favouritism coupled with the zeal of a newly decolonised, post-war nation. Gradually, discourses of *globalisation* and *development* with its interconnected and transformative effects on both individuals and systems (Singh, Kenway & Apple, 2005) attempted to legitimize the scope of ‘linguistic commodification’ (Heller, 2010, p. 103) in the name of accentuating the role and spread of English. Consequently, following the other Asian and African decolonised countries, Bangladesh, alongside its national language (Bangla) adopted English as a main foreign language, as an unassailable instrument for “increased employability and productivity, nation-building, technological advancement, fulfilling personal needs” (Kirkpatrick & Bui, 2016, pp.3-6) both nationally and internationally.

Theoretically, in every polity where any sort of standard second or foreign language (apart from the native one)

teaching and learning occurs, it is the formal education sector that is substantially regarded as “the transmitter and perpetuator” (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. 123) of devising *deliberate*, *overt* and *future oriented* planning (Rubin & Jernudd, 1971) as well as translating those into classrooms. Kaplan and Baldauf (2005) argued that the successful implementation of any polity’s LEPP “depend[s] largely on policy decisions related to the teachers, the course of study, and the materials and the resources to be made available” (p. 1014). In the same vein, quality of students’ performance predominantly depends on the quality of teachers (Park & Hannum, 2001). This study, by bringing together the related literature, attempted to explore the realities of secondary English language teacher capacity (in terms of recruitment, training and performance) in Bangladesh, which Kaplan & Baldauf, (1997, 2003, 2005) also termed as personnel policy.

The 1992 curriculum policy directives made English as a compulsory subject in school education from Grade One. Since then, various measures have been taken to promote and develop a sustainable English education system with special focus on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) through the school curriculum. In line with the revised curriculum policy, secondary English assessment policy has also been redeveloped in 2012 (Nur & Islam, 2018). However, like other neighbouring countries (Nunan, 2003; Qi, 2009; Wedell, 2008; Zein, 2016), the policy decision to reintroduce and reaccommodate English education at the very onset of school education in Ban-

gladesh by the local policy makers has also been seen to be incognisant and incompatible in terms of national capacities required for policy implementation (Hamid, 2010). Considering the scope of journal article writing, this paper focuses on English teacher capacity, in terms of their recruitment, scope of professional development and classroom performance.

PERSONNEL POLICY IN ENGLISH EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW

Language in education policy and planning (LEPP), also termed as *acquisition planning* is a complex and context-dependence phenomenon in any polity (see for example, Baldauf, 2006; Cooper, 1989; Li, 2008; McLachlan, 2009). Cooper (1989) asserted that the discussion on LEPP must consider at least two distinct aspects of ‘the overt language planning goal’ and ‘the method employed to attain the goal’ (p. 159). While the overt goal is to ascertain the second/foreign language education in the form of school curriculum, the methods in this regard are those peripheral yet interrelated policies to be employed to make the goal attainable by creating or improving the teaching-learning opportunity (Cooper, 1989; Corson, 1999). Kaplan (1990) in the same vein pointed out that ‘in both theory and practice, education is an important variable’ in developing any polity’s LEPP and so the educational body of that polity’s government realises this policy planning (p.22). Teaching and learning English through school education in Bangladesh is such an example.

A comprehensive framework of LEPP (Table 1) consisting of seven policy components was outlined by Kaplan and Baldauf (2003, 2005). Since the current study is investigating into personnel policy, (English teacher capacity in terms of their recruitment and training), therefore, pertinent literature has been reviewed to address and so to provide the basis for examining the secondary English personnel policy in Bangladesh.

Personnel policy, one of the critical issues in English language education worldwide (Cooper, 1989, Hamid, 2010; Ingram, 1990; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Zein, 2011, 2016) has been illustrated by Kaplan and Baldauf (2003) as the notion of teacher recruitment, and their professional development. Once policy makers decide who learns the foreign language at what age (access policy), the concern of establishing a teaching force in terms of teacher selection, employment, and their training comes consecutively. Teach-

er recruitment refers to the criteria set by the educational system of a polity for selecting teachers based on their academic qualification as well as linguistic competency (of that foreign language) in order to employ them for teaching. Relatedly, teacher training deals with providing training so that teachers develop themselves professionally with more effectiveness and competencies for the assigned level of teaching.

The core of personnel policy lies in teachers’ capabilities (earned and continuously developed) in contributing to the successful classroom performance and students’ learning. Failure in complementing each end (recruitment and training) of personnel policy effectively and evenly might lead to failure in achieving English education policy goals (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003, p. 218). This concern carries a heavy weight as research on new educational innovations demonstrates teachers’ capacity to impact significantly on the extent of success of implementing educational reforms and new policies (Edwards, 2012; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008; Wedell, 2009). Fullan (1993) furthermore explained that, “[i]t is the teachers who are responsible for passing on the changes through their teaching to their students” (p. 4). Therefore, the proper attention towards personnel policy (both in teacher selection and teacher training) is an obligatory in order to realize the other sects of LEPP (access, curriculum, materials, and methods policy). Otherwise, the overall policy goals will receive an unavoidable failure.

Reviewed literature of pertinent studies (Moon, 2009; Nguyen, 2011; Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000; Yan, 2012, Zein, 2011) identified that many non-English speaking countries did not recognise their personnel (teacher) capacity and so the issue was unconsidered while importing and introducing ELT curriculum (e.g. communicative language teaching). As a result, implementation of new or revised ELT curriculum was found to be a mere lip-service and superficial. While analysing the studies, it was evident that there was resistance towards enacting the expected curriculum changes due to the constrained personnel policy conditioned by individual teacher factor (lack of academic expertise) and system factor (lack of professional development capacity). Therefore, in reality, the status quo of both the chalkface of ELT and the macro context of English language education in those polities experienced a minimum meaningful change.

THE STUDY CONTEXT

Before investigating the personnel policy discourses and practices, this section provides a brief sketch of education

Table 1. Language-in-education policy planning goals (adapted from Kaplan & Baldauf, 2005, p. 1014)

Language-in-education policy planning goals	Explanation
Access policy	Who learns what when?
Personnel policy	Where do teachers come from and how are they trained?
Curriculum policy	What is the objective in language teaching and learning?
Methods and materials policy	What teaching approaches with what materials are to be employed?
Resourcing policy	How and what resources will be allocated?
Evaluation policy	What is the connection between objectives, methods, materials and assessment?
Community policy	Who is consulted or involved in policy making?

system in Bangladesh with particular attention to secondary education. Bangladesh exhibits a colonial structure of education system which was brought and introduced in 1854 by the British in the Indian subcontinent. The whole education system is divided into three parts: primary, secondary and tertiary or higher education.

The secondary education system in Bangladesh commences after primary education and continues up to the beginning of higher education. Starting from grades 6 through 12, the secondary education is further divided into junior secondary level (grade 6-8), secondary level (grade 9-10) and higher secondary or college level (grade 11-12). Students of 11-13, 14-15 and 16-17 years age groups fall under each stage respectively. However, in Bangladesh, secondary school education system basically stands for education provided in schools from grade 6-10, and so is also the context of this current study.

Types of Secondary Schools

In terms of ownership and management, secondary education system takes place in government secondary schools and non-government secondary schools. There are total 19,847 secondary education institutions across the country among which only 1.71% (339 schools) are government secondary schools and the rest are owned and managed by private sector (BANBEIS, 2016). However, 90% of these institutions are private only in name because their salaries and wages, and the costs of their physical infrastructural development, durable educational supplies and equipment are provided by the government (BANBEIS, 2016). These schools are operating as the mainstream secondary education institutions and also the main locus of this current research. There are also three more sets of schools (which are outside the focus of my study) operating from grade 6-10. These are religious schools (known as Dakhil madrasa), then cadet colleges (under the administrative control of the Defence

forces) and finally privately administered English medium schools in metropolitan cities.

Students

The gradual influence of the Compulsory Primary Education Campaign, 1990 and Education for All (EFA) led to the growth of access, retention and survival of students' enrolment at the secondary education level (Table 2). Around 2.85 million students, according to the BANBEIS (2016) report attended the Primary Terminal Examination in the year 2016 and the pass rate was nearly 99%. Among them around 2.5 million were enrolled in grade 6 and the total enrolment at the secondary level (from grade 6-10) was 10.18 million, with 37.39% drop out rate (BANBEIS, 2016). These students generally belong to the age group of 11-15 years and about three quarters of them come from a rural background. The last but not the least fact is that this large number of students (10.18 million) is learning English at the secondary institutions as one of their compulsory subjects.

Teachers

Currently, there are 243,553 teachers working at the secondary schools (BANBEIS, 2016). The average number of teachers per school is only 12. Among them, 78415 are teaching English to 10,184,364 students from grade 6-10. Therefore, statistically, the ratio of English teacher-students is 1:130 at the secondary level. While only 1,909 English teachers (2.4%) are employed at the government secondary schools, the rest 76,506 English teachers (97.6%) are teaching English at the non-government secondary schools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted within a qualitative, exploratory case study (Yin, 2014) research paradigm. Focusing on the phenomenological aspect of a qualitative case study, this re-

Table 2. Statistics of mainstream secondary schools by management type, students and teachers, in the year 2010 and 2016 (BANBEIS, 2016)

Year	No. of secondary schools	No. of students (Grades 6-10)	No. of teachers (Grades 6-10)	No. of English teachers (Grades 6-10)
2010	19040 Public: 317 Private: 18723	7465747	218011	---
2016	19847 Public: 339 Private: 19508	10184364	243553	78415

Table 3. Research instruments and participants

Context	Instrument	Research samples	No. of sample
Teacher recruitment and teacher training	Semi-structured interviews	Teacher trainers (TT)	4
		School Principals (SP)	3
		Trained English teachers (ET)	16
	Classroom observations	English teachers (ET)	4 (trained teachers)

search aimed at capturing the meaning people have defined, described and so constructed (Merriam, 1998) in order to produce rich and thick illustration of the phenomenon under examination.

Research Instruments

The current paper employed the data collected for the author's PhD research (Nur, in preparation). The data were collected from multiple sources to ensure triangulation (Denzin, 1978) as well as to 'view policy holistically and comprehensively, to study it in its complexity and to study it in its context' (Punch, 2000, p. 18). The sources included semi-structured interviews and classroom observations (Table 3). It was envisaged that the 'in situ' interviews with the curriculum policy implementation stakeholders (Teacher trainers, English teachers and school principals) and classroom observations of English teachers would reveal and understand the realities of secondary English teacher capacity in the actual context.

Findings elicited from such purposive, multi-samplings made the overall study robust and compelling by developing a comprehensive yet critical understanding of the personnel policy of secondary English education sector (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008; Patton, 2015; Yin, 2014).

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure followed two major steps. Firstly, the X (name has been removed), one of the government training institutions was contacted to secure consent of TTs as interview participants. Finally, 4 TTs offered their consents. A list of potential schools was also collected from the same institution. 8 schools were purposively selected based on practical concerns in terms of access, cost and time. The schools were located in three districts: Dhaka, Gazipur and Cumilla. Among those, Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh and also where the author's present address exists. The next one, Gazipur is located near Dhaka city. Then Cumilla is the author's home district. Since, the realities of gaining access, cost and time, along with the challenges of an unknown site exist for all researchers (Maxwell, 2012), therefore, the selection of research sites from these districts enabled me "to dismiss these [realities] as 'unrigorous' is to ignore the real conditions that will influence how data can be collected ..." (p. 95).

Secondly, the selected schools were contacted to secure approval from the concerned authority, the school principal to grant or deny permission to conduct research in the vicinity of his/her institution. The school principals were also requested to take part in interview as well as to direct to English teachers for arranging their interviews and class observations. Upon their (school principals and English teachers) verbal consents, finally, in both cases, participants' signed consent forms were obtained prior to commencing the interview sessions and class observations. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 19 individual stakeholders (3 SPs and 16 ETs) and classroom observations of 4 ETs were conducted on the agreed date and time. Table 4 provides the demographic description of the study participants.

The TTs and 3 ETs used English while the rest 13 ETs and 3 SPs preferred to be interviewed in Bangla (the L1 of Bangladesh). Each of these interviews was digitally recorded, transcribed and translated into English, where necessary. Relevant notes were taken during the classroom observations.

Data Analysis

The nature of the study's qualitative research paradigm located the author "in a more fluid and more humanistic position" to conduct "a continuous, iterative enterprise" of data analysis (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014, p. 13-14). The data were transcribed from the beginning to the end to avoid the dangers that any alteration of the data might have on the quality of the research (Poland, 1995).

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013; Simons, 2009) was employed to analyse the interview data of ETs, TTs, and SPs. The main reason for conducting thematic analysis at this stage was to gain more intuitive and holistic understandings and insights emerging from the diverse, complex and nuanced set of data (Holloway & Todres, 2003). First, multiple readings of the interview transcripts facilitated the author to attach descriptive codes to extracts of data which were interesting as well as relevant in relation to the research question. These codes were reviewed and refined for collapsing those into categories. There was a conscious attention and effort to let themes emerge naturally from the data.

The classroom observation data, for providing the secondary data to this study was transformed into narratives describing what and how the teacher was conducting in the class. These narratives were then analysed keeping in mind the impact of English teachers on quality secondary English education.

While presenting the data, codes were used in place of participants' names. For example, ET.01 referred to interview with English teacher 1. For the case of any translated interview data, the code was italicized and underlined, as *ET.05*.

FINDINGS

The findings in terms of themes are arranged below according to the data sources, that is, curriculum policy implementation stakeholders' perceptions and experiences of personnel policy (interviews) and quality of secondary English teachers (class observations).

Provision of English Teachers (Profile and Recruitment)

This section reports curriculum policy implementation stakeholders' (TTs, SPs and ETs) perception and experience regarding the existing secondary education teacher community. The interview data also reported their concern about the present recruitment policy and the extent and impacts of its practice in Bangladesh.

The data analysis showed an evidence of acute shortage of subject-based English teachers in secondary schools. The participants, particularly ETs and SPs reported that their schools

Table 4. Demographic information of study participants

Stakeholder (Teacher trainer) code	Age	Academic qualification	Professional qualification	Experience	
TT.01	44 (M)	BA (Hons), MA in English	---	16 years	
TT.02	36	BA (Hons), MA in English	M.Ed.	11 years	
TT.03	42 (M)	BA (Hons), MA in English	M.Ed.	13 years	
TT.04	41(F)	BA (Hons), MA in English	---	13 years	
Stakeholder (school principal) code	Age	Academic qualification	Professional qualification	Experience	Affiliation
SP. 01	46 (M)	BSc., MSc.	M.Ed.	22 years	Govt. school
SP. 02	48 (M)	BSS, M.A in English	B.Ed.	18 years	Non-govt. school
SP. 03	52(M)	BSc., MSc.	B.Ed.	26 years	Non-govt. school
Stakeholder (English teacher) code	Age	Academic qualification	Subjects taught by the teacher	Experience	Affiliation
ET.01	33 (F)	B.A (Hons) and M.A in English	English	5 years	Govt. school
ET.02	40 (M)	BSS, B.Ed., MA in English (enrolled)	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies, and Bangla	13 years	Non-govt. school
ET.03	29	B.A (Hons) and M.A in English	English, Bangla Grammar	6 months	Non-govt. school
ET.04	39	M.Com, M.Ed.	English, Bangla and Accounting	6.5 years	Non-govt. school
ET.05	46	BA (Pass course), B.Ed.	BA (Pass course), B.Ed.	18 years	Non-govt. school
ET.06	47	BA (Pass course), MA in Islamic History	English, Bangla Grammar, Religion	21 years	Govt. school
ET.07	48	BA (Pass course), B.Ed.	English, Bangla, Bangladesh and Global Studies	18 years	Non-govt. school
ET.08	39	BA (Pass course), B.Ed.	English, Bangla, Bangladesh and Global Studies	8 years	Non-govt. school
ET.09	39	BA (Pass course), B.Ed.	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies	9 years	Non-govt. school
ET.10	51	B.A (Pass course), B.Ed., M.A in Islamic History	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies	23 years	Non-govt. school
ET.11	27	B.A (Hons) and M.A in English	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies	1 year	Non-govt. school
ET.12	52	BA (Pass course), M.A in Political Science, B.Ed.	English (occasionally), ICT, Hindu Religion	23 years	Non-govt. school
ET.13	53	B.A (Hons), B.Ed.	English, Hindu Religion and ICT	26 years	Non-govt. school
ET.14	38	BA (Pass course), B.Ed., MSS in Sociology	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies	11 years	Non-govt. school
ET.15	41	B.Com., B.Ed.	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies, Bangla	13 years	Non-govt. school

(Contd...)

Table 4. (Continued...)

Stakeholder (English teacher) code	Age	Academic qualification	Subjects taught by the teacher	Experience	Affiliation
ET.16	56	B.A (Pass course), B.Ed.	English, Bangladesh and Global Studies, Bangla	28 years	Non-govt. school

Table 5. Major features observed in both trained and non-trained secondary English teachers

Major features	Trained secondary English teachers
Language of instruction	Classes were largely taught in Bangla with little use of English. Teachers were not proficient in speaking English.
Method of teaching	Rigorous teacher-led, text-book oriented, traditional teaching methods with lack of in-depth pedagogic knowledge was predominant. Teachers seemed to be transmitters of input, practitioners of limited activities, repeated error correctors. Teachers used to translate the reading text from English to Bangla (L1). Explicit attention to vocabulary, reading comprehension questions. Grammar was taught deductively.
Teaching-learning activities	Very little communicative activities with almost no opportunities for the students to engage and practice in real-life communication. Though the lesson contents included listening, speaking, reading and writing activities, however, teachers mainly conducted activities on the latter two skills. One teacher employed listening activities not by using the tape recorder, but by teacher's own reading of the passage. Very few pair work activities, no group work.
Teaching and learning materials	English for Today (EFT) for conducting English 1 st paper class. Commercial guide books for taking English grammar.
Students' participation	Most of the students were passive in class participation. Teachers used to point out a very few particular students for communication.
Classroom environment and organisation	The average ratio of teacher-students was 1:78. Traditional classroom structure with inadequate infrastructure and logistic support. Only one teacher used multimedia.
Lesson preparation	The observed teachers' performance and activities suggested inadequate time spent in preparing the lessons before the class.

Table 6. Distribution of English teachers according to their academic qualification (BANBEIS, 2016)

Education type	Management	B.A with compulsory 100 marks	B.A with 300 marks in English	B.A Honours in English	Masters in English	Bachelor without English	H.S.C pass
Junior secondary school	Private	3355	232	176	238	580	330
	Total	3355	232	176	238	580	330
Secondary school	Private	35441	8510	2266	3512	14445	1703
	Public	468	267	268	463	362	30
	Total	35909	8777	2534	3975	14807	1733
School and college (School section)	Private	2141	780	733	1176	706	182
	Public	11	11	9	9	11	---
	Total	2152	791	742	1185	717	182
Total	Private	40937	9522	3175	4926	15731	2215
	Public	479	278	277	472	373	30
	Total	41416	9800	3452	5398	16104	2245
	%	52.82	12.50	4.40	6.88	20.54	2.86

were operating with less number of teachers than the actual requirements. In majority cases, there was no recruitment of subject-based English teacher. The demographic features

of the study participants (ETs) in Table 4 also represented a glimpse of the whole scenario of secondary English teacher provision in Bangladesh. It demonstrated that the majority

of teachers teaching secondary English in Bangladesh belong to the group without an English academic background. More elaborately, these teachers were graduated with an undergraduate Pass course degree and some of them were found having completed B.Ed. and/or M.Ed. degree later in their career. A point to be noted here is that, B.Ed. and M.Ed. are one year training programs for general education and so are considered and recognised as more of a 'training degree' rather than an 'academic degree'. Another observation was that, some teachers completed Master degree in History, Political science, Islamic History etc. long after starting their teaching profession. Therefore, the NEP 2010's yardstick was seen to be fulfilled in such possible, alternative way.

Connectedly, the issue of teacher recruitment process also emerged in relation to the norm of directions of personnel policy and its practice on the ground. The question 'Why and how you have become an English teacher' posed by the researcher generated a critical insight on English teacher provision in secondary schools. While only three teachers (ET.01, ET.03 and ET.11) were found being recruited under the subject-based recruitment procedure, suggesting that their academic background was in line with their teaching, the profile of the rest of the ETs showed the opposite. During the interview, four ETs (ET.04, ET.07, ET.10 and ET.12) shared the happenstance of coming into the profession. ET.07 informed that after completing B.A degree (without 300 marks in English), one of her relatives (uncle) offered her the job in a newly established school in her locality. Since the relatives were in the school management committee (SMC), she was asked to take English class and so became an English teacher. Her several attempts to speak in English during interview also showed her inadequate linguistic capabilities.

When I was offered the position in school by my uncle, I just had completed my B.A examination at that time. I was waiting for the result. But my uncle suggested me not to waste time in waiting, rather join the school and start teaching. So did I and I was assigned for teaching English. (ET.07)

ET.14 shared a different story. Coming from a farther district (Mymensingh), he joined the school (in Cumilla district) simply to get rid of his unemployment problem. With the academic qualification in Accounting, now he is also teaching English and also doing private tuitions. ET.10 shared that, as inspired by her husband, though she started her teaching career in 1993 with B.A (pass course without 300 marks in English), she completed an M.A degree in Islamic History in 2006. Along with Bangladesh and Global studies, she also takes English classes.

An alarming note was perceived and reflected in the selection procedure of ET.03.DH. It was the SP of that school who informed that ET.03, a daughter of an influential family in the locality, was an ex-student of this school. After completing her MA in English from X (name has been removed) College, Dhaka, she was appointed as an English teacher. The SP also mentioned that ET.03 neither had the teacher registration certificate, nor had any teaching experience. Such practice of teacher recruitment was a clear indication of nepotism, a violation of the NEP 2010 directions for recruiting subject-based teachers.

We appointed Ms X (name omitted) as she is the daughter of Mr Y (name omitted), a well-known person in the area. She completed her school education from this institution. We know her very well. She is the youngest teacher in our school. (SP of the school)

However, there was also contradictory picture to the above-mentioned findings regarding the practice of personnel policy. For example, teachers in government schools are selected through nation-wide announcement, subject-based qualifying tests which include written and viva test. Prior to attending the test, the potential candidates also require a registration number once qualify the teacher registration examination conducted under the NTRCA. Some renowned metropolitan schools also conduct demo classes before confirming the appointment of the teacher. ET.01 shared such story in her case.

Two teachers were found, one (ET.02) recently has enrolled into MA in English and the other one (SP.02) has completed his MA in English in 2005 from a private university which has not accredited and was also alleged of corruption regarding certificate business. Yet, the later one shared that:

I have been teaching English, Accounting, Social Studies, Bangla 2nd paper (Bangla Grammar). From the very beginning I have been teaching English, so in that sense you can call me an English teacher. Now I have also been working as the head examiner of English for the board exams (nation-wide public exams) since 2005 till date. (SP.02)

The information of ET.12 appeared more alarming when he admitted that:

I do not take English on a regular basis except when the actual teacher is absent. Hindu Religion, Accounting and ICT classes are my main subjects to teach in the school. Apart from teaching, I also work for a publisher as a question writer/setter of secondary English for the schools under this sub-district. (ET.12)

These two extracts demonstrated that not only the classroom teaching, but also high stake assessment and evaluation context of secondary English education in Bangladesh is still operated by academically less qualified teachers.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS

When asked about the preparation or training scope to teach secondary English, all the participants agreed that they do not have any subject-based, pre-service teacher education or training scope. The participants also reported that their B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees were related to general subjects of education with very little of English teaching. Though some participants appreciated the government's initiatives to offer subject-based English language teaching in-service education and training (ELT-INSET) for ETs, yet the majority of them raised issues around the ELT-INSET.

Analysis of participants' responses revealed the sporadic, contextually disconnected nature of INSETs for secondary English teachers in Bangladesh. The participants, including TTs and ETs, expressed discontent regarding the ambiguous, patchwork of trainee selection and criticised for

making the mechanism bureaucratically more complex and invalid by involving non-academic officers like DEO, TEO rather than the TTs. The TTs stated that the sporadic nature of providing INSET was the result of the 'whimsical invitation' from (TT.01) 'disorganised trainee selection' (TT.03) by the District Education Office (DEO). This view was also supported by some trained ETs. While one participant (ET.07) was found to opine she had received the training at the very end of her teaching career, another one (ET.12) was unsure of sending him to the training as he informed that *I take Hindu Religion and ICT classes at the school, but I don't know why I was sent to the ELT training (ET.12).*

The TTs, during the interview, unleashed the fact of using the old version of needs analysis report and so admitted that the absence of regular needs analysis system was degrading the training quality and its relevance. They shared their tradition of having a rough look on the decades old needs analysis report as well as training materials basically prepared by ELTIP in 1997-1998 (TT.01, TT.04). Therefore, the present training sessions were mostly following the pre-designed training modules.

Referring to the issue of needs analysis, the participants stated that there was little opportunity to fulfil the actual needs of English teachers. This suggested the inconsistency between what teachers needed and what they were provided with in the training. During the training, TTs simply assumed or predicted the needs of trainees using their mere professional experiences (TT.04). This incoherence was of concern to English teachers, because, to them, they needed crucial support in developing their required pedagogical skills according to the revised English curriculum, rather than a focus on procedural knowledge which these ad-hoc ELT-INSETs were been reported to concentrate on. Some of the representative comments, in this regards, were as follows:

During the sessions, sometimes TTs suggest us what to do. But you know teaching someone by telling and teaching someone by practicing is totally different. I wanted to have more demonstration classes (ET.09).

I felt the necessity of more discussion on how to conduct CLT in a large class like we do have and how to incorporate and integrate listening and speaking activities in a larger class. (ET.03)

There was nothing particular and special session focusing on improving our English skill (ET.13)

Based on further discussion, the participants critically delineated the quality issue of trainers. The participants argued that the quality trainer served as a bridge to meet the quality of training by bringing changes in terms of attitudes, profession, pedagogy, practice of an ET. The TTs and ETs, in this regard, reported the lack of willingness and exercise of rigorous improvisation of training materials and methods due to the TTs' own academic and professional competency:

If you look at the profile of our TTs of English here, you will be surprised to know that some of us, we do not have proper academic ELT background or adequate training to be a TT. (TT.01)

Trainers should be more expert, professional and efficient in giving training. We had two trainers who seemed not to be fully prepared, seemed nervous and showed

lack of confidence while conducting the sessions. So specialized and efficient trainers should be appointed to conduct and manage this very important ELT training. (ET.08)

The dearth in resourcing (funding and logistic) support was also identified by the participants as a point of obstruction while conducting ELT-INSETs. The TTs claimed that they are asked to provide *the maximum quality training within the minimum resource support* (TT.04). This view was also supported by the trained ETs.

Finally, the TTs also unfolded the existence of *conflicting interest and inactive role* (TT.03) of the training management channel. The TTs also shared their experience of being professionally humiliated by the other senior committee members. This works as a legacy to demotivate their working spirit and enthusiasm. All these issues, according to the TTs, ultimately made them *either unable or unwilling to realize our mission, planning, potential* (TT.03).

IMPACTS OF ENGLISH TEACHER PROVISION ON SECONDARY ENGLISH EDUCATION

Employing interviews and classroom observations data, this section presents the impact of provision of secondary English personnel policy and its extent of practice into their actual classroom. In so doing, the analysis also contributed to understand the quality of English teachers as well as the reality of secondary English education in Bangladesh.

The lack of required English teachers exerted excessive pressure on the existing teachers. All the ETs, except ET.01 reported that they had to teach English along with other subjects including History, Religion, Bangladesh and Global Studies, Bangla Grammar, Accounting, plus do administrative tasks. Such multi-tasking, according to ETs, was reported to be *'significantly difficult to maintain and ensure quality of teaching and the teacher'* (ET.09). The investigation also found some schools operating double shifting due to infrastructural incapability of accommodating all students together. Participants namely ET.04, ET.08, ET.11 shared their experiences indicating that teaching in a double shift from 9 am to 5 pm made them physically completely exhausted. ET.11.KM also complained that his workload in double shift did not get pay off.

The existing discrepancies in terms of qualifications and recruitment procedure of English teachers in secondary schools across the country implied a serious repercussion in the practice of curriculum, methods, materials, evaluation policy of English education. Participants stated that lack of proper academic and pedagogical skills undercut the quality of English teachers as well as English education. The following comments exemplified this reflection:

Honestly speaking, though I teach secondary English, but I do not have proper academic background required for a proper English teaching. My background is BA (Pass course) and I did MA in Islamic History while I was already in the teaching. So the way I am supposed to teach English in the classroom as a subject-based teacher, I fail to do so. Because my own academic deficiency creates difficulties for me. (ET.06)

See, for example, my academic background is English. So, if someone asks me to take mathematics class, how can I perform the best in that class? (ET.02).

The TTs expressed the same concern regarding the existing teaching force and labelled them as *jack of all trades, but master of none* (TT.05). They claimed that lack of proper academic knowledge not only minimized the level of teacher quality, but sometimes would turn out the teacher community as a burden for the whole education system (TT.01). Some of them also pointed out that *lack of proper academic knowledge impacts on ETs' pedagogic knowledge and consequently retarded their professional efficacy* (TT.03).

Stakeholders, including the ETs and SPs also discussed a pertinent issue of professional clash emerging between the newly appointed subject-based teachers (with English background) and the senior teachers (with no English background, but have been teaching English for a long period). Participants pointed out that the majority of the senior teachers lack the attitude of and spirit to learn from the newly appointed ETs. They further explained that senior teachers seem to be unwelcoming towards the new ELT methods and such rigidity provokes unfriendly, relationship as well as hostile working environment as a consequence. Participants, the subject-based ETs in particular, also reported that sometimes the senior teachers along with the SPs manipulate the school culture while distributing English classes and therefore, their class assignment does not match with and value their academic background. The following extracts displayed these findings:

We don't have the culture of learning from each other. Mentality is the main problem here. See, we have recently appointed a new, young, trained ET. I had proposed her to conduct a professional development session for all my English teachers. But two senior teachers did not like the idea arguing that she is junior to them by age, and experience. So what is there to learn from her? (SP.03)

.....Another internal administrative issue I want to share with you. I have observed that our school principal assigns most of the English classes among our three senior teachers. I have completed my B.A and M.A degree in English, received ELT training. Yet, I have been given only one class which is again Grammar for Grade 6. And what I am teaching mostly is Bangladesh and Global Studies, Bangla grammar. So whom should I tell this? Who will justify the case? (ET.11)

The issue of collegial support or supportive school culture in using training knowledge in classroom was also pointed out by the junior ETs (in terms of age and experience). They (ET1, ET3, and ET11) extended their reason by explaining that the dearth of collegial support demotivated them in materializing their enthusiasm and training experience in the classroom when they hear from the senior colleagues saying that:

What revolution he (the junior ET) will make in the class by using training knowledge? (ET.01)

In general, curriculum policy implementation stakeholders' interview data were rigorously reflected in ETs' classroom practices, with a very few differences. ETs' class

observation revealed that majority of them still follow teacher-centred, traditional, lecture based, deductive method of ELT with very little room for authentic communication situation (the core of Communicative language teaching). The below Table 5 epitomises more scenario of trained secondary ETs' class practices.

DISCUSSION

In this study context, personnel policy (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, 2003, 2005) has been identified as a stigmatised sector of secondary English education in Bangladesh. English teachers' professionalism, with reference to their content knowledge, pedagogical skills and linguistic proficiency is an important factor in enhancing the success and quality of English education policy. However, the data analysis revealed a shortage in this regard. Many teachers who have been an English teacher for a significant period of time, were identified as *Jack of all trades* trying to fit in all sizes. They tended to come from a range of backgrounds, not all of which included an English specialisation. The Table 6 below shows a glimpse of the conditions of English teachers working in secondary schools. A large percentage, 76.22% of the existing teachers teaching English do not have the optimal academic qualification to teach English, while teachers with the proper academic background (BA and MA in English) make up only 11% of the cohort. 12.50 % have a BA with 300 marks in English, a very minimum qualification in English.

Despite the supervision of secondary school teacher recruitment by the NTRCA, there are still ill-practice of teacher recruitment in secondary schools. The quality of English teachers, as a result, remains relatively unchanged. The latest baseline survey report of EiA (2009) conducted by the British Council (BC) concluded that the majority of English teachers' English competency was identified to be slightly above than their students' most basic ability level. Again, every teacher recruited for this current study was found to be overburdened with 6 to 7 classes per day where s/he has to teach English along with Bangla, Maths, Science, Religion, Accounting, Bangladesh Studies plus do some administrative tasks. This extra load undercuts a teacher's productivity, quality and efficacy.

The participants, particularly the ETs also reported the notion of 'egg-carton' structure (Lortie, 1975) experienced by them in their working context. That is, the culture of working in isolation, with little or no collaboration with, and appreciation from the senior colleagues, thus limiting the extent of quality implementation of the revised English curriculum in classrooms. For example, while attempting to employ new ELT methods and techniques with enthusiasm, some ETs shared experiences of facing conflicts with other ETs. As a result, the first group felt alone in their working spaces and so became less likely to be influential in replacing the prevailing traditional teaching method as well as conventional attitude towards ELT.

Moreover, the study participants' pedagogical practice reflected the prevailing ethos of traditional, grammar based, teacher-centred, exam-oriented approach of English teaching given their academic, pedagogical and linguistic knowledge

as well as their under-resourced working context where following the EFT books teaching English using CLT approach was nearly impossible. In order to manage these conditions, the teachers simply followed the short-cut, mechanical and exam-oriented teaching strategy aiming at ensuring the high pass rate in the examinations. Thus, ETs' constant struggle mostly resulted in rejecting curriculum, methods, materials and evaluation policy planning of English education. The classroom observation report also echoed the interview data.

Teacher training, the other annex of personnel policy, is equally a core concern of English education in order to ensure, achieve and sustain a quality education. However, in Bangladesh, the provision and quality of pre-service teacher education or training for teaching English is still an issue because of its insignificant quantity as well as theory-laden curriculum pattern. Taking the ELT-INSETs as an alternative, the country, like the other developing countries in Asia and Africa, has been heavily dependent on the international funds and agencies, namely BC, World Bank, Asian Development Bank etc. for their financial as well as scholastic support in providing INSETs to the Bangladeshi teachers (Hamid, 2010). To lessen heavy dependency on short-term international projects, Bangladesh government has started to initiate, develop its own permanent resources and institutional capacity to provide ELT-INSETs. Nonetheless, the current study identified the reality of ELT-INSETs extremely inadequate in number, a mere lip-service of the government and so mostly unrelated for the real classroom practices due to the quality issues including the absence of needs analysis mechanism, ambiguous trainee selection procedure, lack of appropriate while- and post- INSET monitoring system, inadequacy in trainers' quality, substantial use of old decade materials and methods, less attention towards developing teachers' linguistic capability, under-resourcing as well as top-down, power-coercive ELT-INSET management (Nur, in press). In addition, the school culture does not provide any school-based training arrangement for teachers' professional development. Therefore, the envisioned changes in quality of English teacher by the ELT-INSETs is still far away from what Devlin (2007) asserted that professional development must strengthen and empower teachers' pedagogic knowledge, skills, attitudes towards teaching. The classroom observation also unfolded the same.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The global spread of English due to its pragmatic attachment with globalisation and national development has brought immense opportunities as well as challenges for developing and non-English speaking countries. This elevated approach towards English language necessities a thoughtful and pragmatic English education policy response from these countries so that the maximum outcomes of English education could be attained. This paper essentially argued that the personnel policy (teachers' recruitment and their professional development), the policy for the teachers, the 'street level bureaucrats' (Lipsky, 1980) has not been attended thoughtfully. The careful examination of data in relation to teacher recruitment and teacher training in this paper has evidenced

this lacking of prudence. As a result, quality English teaching and learning and its outcome is still a matter of concern.

Though the situation is more crucial in Bangladesh, however, the above-mentioned issues concerning personnel policy has also been reported as a major factor impacting English education in many other neighbouring countries (Baldauf, Kaplan, Kamwangamalu & Bryant, 2011; Kaplan, Baldauf & Kamwangamalu, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2015; Shahab, 2013; Yan & He, 2012; Zein, 2011, 2015). The extent to which this study represents the personnel policy issue, a summary can be drawn up by saying that the overall quality of English education in line with its access policy in Bangladesh would be jeopardized unless adequate number of qualified, prepared, well-trained, supported, efficient English teaching cadre is developed immediately. Compromise in this regard will simply lead to continuing the emergence of multifaceted issues (the clogs) in the overall goal of English education, as it is doing right now. The insights derived from the critically examined personnel policy issues in this paper, thus concludes with setting forth a number of recommendations applicable for Bangladesh and other developing countries.

A first and foremost emphasis should be given to recruit a large scale of subject-wise English teachers. The need to recruit proper academically qualified English teachers will be able to contribute to a maximum extent to the quality English education, since a quality and effective English teaching requires a combination of academic, linguistic and pedagogical skills. Moreover, teacher appointed under the policy of subject-wise teacher recruitment should be given the fullest opportunity to exercise their potentials and skills. That is, instead of shouldering with other subjects, it would be wise to allot only English classes for them.

Second, although donor-funded English education projects are serving Bangladesh in terms of providing training to its English teachers, however, the government should sanction adequate amount of funding, chalk out long term planning with the help of the local ELT specialists to develop the national capacity to train English teachers as a continuous basis. Moreover, the quality issues of ELT-INSETs identified in this study should also be considered and attended thoughtfully. It is believed that local expertise, as they are better aware of the local context, would be able to make the trainings more sustainable and so beneficial for the English teachers both at primary and secondary levels.

Third, much work is needed to improve and ensure the proper monitoring system both from outside (government level) and in-house (schools). If the monitoring system is a mere paper work, as it was revealed by one of the study participants, the expected outcomes would not be viable. Every party should be made accountable. For example, the training sessions should rigorously be monitored by the local ELT experts for its further advancement. At the same time, classes of trained English teachers should also be monitored by the trainers so that implementation of their training knowledge could be maximised.

Finally, considering the government's capability to provide adequate quantity of trainings, school-based professional development culture should be encouraged and arranged in a regular basis where along with the master trainers, the lo-

cal English teachers could also play the necessary roles. This will serve two purposes: on one hand, the government will be supported in terms of institutional, financial and trainer, on the other hand, a positive and supportive culture and environment would emerge within institutions (schools) and colleagues (teachers). We should always keep in mind that, it is the teachers who are at the heart of bringing quality changes in teaching and learning within the overall curriculum context.

The paper intends to conclude with implications for further research in personnel policy of English education. The study mentioned in this paper was based on qualitative case study (particularistic and small-case) aiming at what Yin (2011) asserted that “understanding the nuances and patterns of social behaviour...[by] studying specific situations and people...” (p. 98). However, future research could usefully include a more representative group or stakeholders of English education (policy/curriculum writers, students, parents) as well as study tools (policy documents, focused group discussion, questionnaire survey), a large-scale study ensuring a more substantial amount of data could be conducted in obtaining more generalizable findings regarding personnel policy English education. And this could be conducted both in both primary and secondary English education.

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