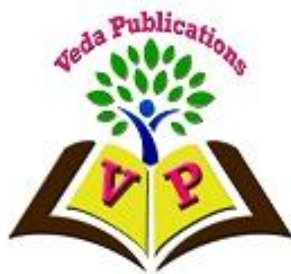# MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR MAINSTREAMING SLOW-PACED BANGLADESHI EFL LEARNERS: A STUDY FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study is to explore the context of motivational strategies which can be a logical discussion for the environment of Bangladeshi slow-paced EFL learners. Here the context is mainly the English classroom of the secondary level where a majority of slow-paced learners hold very poor competency in English. In order to explore such challenges, qualitative data have been collected through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires among eight teachers on mentioned issues. Focused group discussions have also been conducted, comprising forty slow- paced EFL learners from four selected schools, and using observation schedules after providing some oral discussions or training to the selected school teachers about motivational strategies. The findings of the study reveal that slow-paced learners are academically poor and they consistently fail to obtain good grades in English. On the other hand, some motivational strategies may reflect the slow-paced learners' active contribution for enhancing the effectiveness of learning. Moreover, the results of the study have implications for teachers, learners, educators, parents and the policy makers in the government. Besides, the mentioned issue needs to be addressed from psycholinguistic social view-points and cognitive aspects, and has been viewed from a pedagogic context.

**Keywords**: *Bangladesh, EFL learners. Psycholinguistic, Cognitive, Pedagogic.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This study aims at exploring a logical discussion of why many normal learners (not psychologically impaired) are identified as slow-paced in their learning and, this research scheme has tried to determine some techniques (motivational strategies) for placing them on track with the mainstream learners in English Classroom. How the slow-paced learners get aspiration in learning English language in a foreign language context has been addressed in this study and, whether the general motivational strategies of educational psychology is effective in developing learner's merit has also been described in the light of classroom observation and from the collected data. Finally, some recommendations have also been put forward so that there might be some positive changes in English language classroom practices for developing cognitive processing ability of the slow-paced learners and thus they can be turned into better asset of our country.

To identify the term slow-paced learner, many psychologists, teachers and educational researchers use a range of terms to refer to learners whose achievement is low. In this study researcher has used the term slow-paced learners, who are defined as "children who are doing poorly in school, yet are not eligible for special education" (Shaw, Grimes & Bulman, 2005: 11). As Lescano (1995) explains-

> "It is important to distinguish between slow learners and those who are learning-disabled: The first one is the student who does not learn successfully due to general socio-cultural problems, frustrating past language classroom experiences, inadequate use of strategies, or lack of interest. The second type of slow learner is the student formally diagnosed as "learning-disabled" by specialists in child psychology".

However, the research topic has been designed to conduct this study; it has been performed to observe the effectiveness of motivation (Shaw, 2005) on English language developmental skills on the basis of adaptive, communicative and cognitive aptitudes of Bangladeshi slow-paced EFL learners those are studying at the secondary school level and having borderline intelligence particularly in English. Mainstreaming the slow-paced learners in classroom is an important issue as it approaches the issues of brainstorming and cognitive processing for developing learners' ability to acquire knowledge on a foreign language through different types of motivational strategies as well as the application of some theories of educational psychology into real life classroom practices so that motivational strategies for mainstreaming the slow-paced learners have been sought through this study.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- **Motivation:** A special kind of encouragement using mental satisfactory words or concrete objects with a note of thanks.
- **Strategies:** Techniques used in the classroom for English Language Teaching (ELT).
- **Slow Paced Learners:** Language learners who take unusually long time with below the average level ability to learn English as a second language.
- **EFL**: (English as a foreign language), a context where English does not enjoy the privilege of second language.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this research, two particular issues have been addressed for in-depth investigation and inquisition. The first one is to explore the situation of Bangladeshi slow-paced EFL learners by investigating both their previous and current academic record statistics and their class teacher's opinion. The second one is to determine the importance of motivational strategies by observing a single group of learners from selected schools of outer Dhaka city of Bangladesh after providing some oral discussions or training about the concept on motivational strategic approaches to the selected school teachers. As these two issues have been handled properly, the research has been able to sort out why many English language learners in Bangladesh are still slow-paced and what particular strategies might help them to learn English smoothly and at a normal pace like the general learners.

## RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

It was the primary assumption that proper motivation can make a slow-paced learner efficient in his or her language learning process and s/he can prove herself/ himself as a true asset of a country. This is also applicable for Bangladesh according to our research findings. Thus, they can help the nation to progress faster because it is believed that if they can be brought under proper process of mainstream then the learners may to a great extent be successful in learning English language and also in their individual and social life. Thus, EFL learners can contribute a lot to the development of their selves, society, and country. Therefore, it is very crucial to understand that the relationship between motivation and foreign language learning of the slow-paced learners and, in regards of mainstreaming the slow-paced learners is a detailed study which has certainly been beneficial for the learners and the education sector as well. Besides, a few studies with some lack have been conducted in this area in the context of Bangladesh and these studies do not correlate any specific issue like researcher has chosen for this study. Besides the issue needs to be addressed from psycholinguistic and social view points and cognitive aspects, and has been viewed from a pedagogic context.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the context of EFL slow-paced learners
2. To determine the motivational strategies for slow-paced learners
3. To describe the effectiveness of these motivational strategies for mainstreaming the slow- paced learners

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Mainstreaming the slow-paced EFL learners at any level is comparatively a new area of study in the context of Bangladesh and therefore, there have been a lot of scopes to explore many important areas and issues in this field. With motivation being one of the key factors that determine success in L2 learning, strategies in motivating language learners should be seen as an important aspect of the theoretical analysis of L2 motivation.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Identifying slow-paced learners is a challenging task and a burning issue for the researchers of this field (Shaw, 2003; Sing, 2004). Academically slow learners are usually identified based on their attained scores on intelligence tests, with IQs in between 75 and 89 (Shaw, 2008:292). But a slow-paced learner is to some extent different from normal children in learning capacity and fails to fulfill the average standard academic requirements year to year. The intelligence test scores of such type of slow learners are prone to be low from the average. However, these scores are not too low to meet the huge discrepancy set as an inclusion criterion for special educational services (Mercer, 1996). Although slow learner may have special educational needs, yet they do not fit neatly into the special education system and generally study at normal schools (MacMillan, Gresham, Bocian, & Lambros, 1998). Academic slow-paced learners are also identified as dull or below the average children. Slow-paced learners usually get confused to solve tasks involving abstract, symbolic, and conceptual skills (Lowenstein, 2003).

Motivation is taken as a vital individual difference variable in determining long term second language (L2) learning success. Theories of L2 learning motivation and approaches to research have evolved over time, influenced by work in psychology and education (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 1985; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995), as well as criticisms from L2 researchers (e.g. Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). The early major socio-psychological model of Gardner and Lambert (1959) put emphasis on integrative versus instrumental orientations as the driving forces of motivation. Integrative orientation can be defined 'a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community' (Gardner, 2001, p. 5). An instrumental orientation is recognized as learning the L2 in order to achieve external rewards, such as better career prospects or financial gains. One of the latest theory of L2 motivation is Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self-System. The central idea in this theory is the notion of the L2 self, distinguishing between an *idea* land an *ought-to* L2 self. The first one contains the credits one wishes to possess.

Accordingly, if the individual we might want to end up speaks an L2, this is an effective motivation to acquire the L2. The second one envelops the characteristics one believes one should have to meet expectations (of noteworthy others) and to stay away from conceivable negative results.

According to Dornyei (1994); Ryan and Deci (2000), there are such types of motivation from the socio-psychological point of view:

1.  Instrumental: (Pragmatic gain)- getting a better job (refers to students goal of learning a target language such as- getting good marks, winning a prize or getting a good job)
2.  Integrative: positive attitude and feeling towards a L2 group(relates to learner's positive attitude towards target language)

The other most well-known concept: Self-determination theory divided motivation into 2 (two) categories based on reasons or goals that leads to action. This are-

1.  Intrinsic: satisfying one's curiosity  (refers to the excitement or enjoyment of doing an activity) while,
2.  Extrinsic: getting rewards (refers to the outcome or reward of doing the action such as good grades)

Moreover, motivational strategies for mainstreaming the slow-paced EFL learners, collaborative learning is a significant issue. Collaborating learning theory, scaffolding theory of Vygotsky (Slavin, 2006), social learning theory of Bandura and Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device which is commonly known as LAD (Chomsky, 1957) will be consulted along with different motivational theories of education including Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943). Collaborative learning emphasizes on the importance and effectiveness of learning in group and scaffolding emphasizes the importance of peers in learning. According to this theory learners learn better from their more competent peers and sometimes from adults. Although it is fair to say that learner's differences, such as aptitude, style, and strategies, as a sub-area of second language acquisition, and applied linguistics more generally, have not been integrated into other areas of investigation, and have not excited much theoretical or practical interest in

recent years. Other sub-areas, principally those associated with universal processes, have generated a much higher level of empirical research (Dörnyei and Skehan). According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), and Wenden (1991), sometimes it might be the concept of "language learning strategy" – which reflects the learner's active contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of his or her own learning , which would had reached mainstream recognition in the L2 field (cited in Dörnyei and Skehan). As stated by (Ames, 1992a in Morgan *et al.*, 1992) when teachers emphasize self-referenced improvement and when improving one's best achievement which is defined as success and, then mastery motivational environment and that is present in and in such motivation only task not ego which is involved. On the other hand, when normative comparisons are inspired by the teachers then performance motivation that involves 'ego' prevails as it compares the success of one student to that of the others. It is better, that is why, to practice the first one in a foreign language classroom like the English language classroom because it may make the learners relaxed and, the slow-paced learners do not involve them with full interest and effort if their performance is compared to that of others.

Different researches demonstrate that academically slow-paced EFL learners face critical educational and behavioral challenges in the schools due to their inadequacies in intellect and psychosocial abilities (Anastasia, Elein, & Effi, 2006; Shaw, 2008). They vary from average students in the rate of learning and need much outer incitement do the basic of work (Krishnakumar, Geeta, & Palat, 2006; Stenhouse, 2005). This is likewise all around documented that slow-paced learners do work at their capacity level yet underneath their evaluation level, which thus prompts their adjustment issues in mainstream classrooms (Krishnakumar et al., 2006). Their shortage in abilities make them vulnerable or at risk of a few psychosocial issues. These issues could just be tended to by incorporating interventional teaching methodologies in the inclusive classrooms for their accommodation and to improve the rate of their sufficient psychosocial advancement i.e., better adult and peer interactions, improved open and expressive communication, and modesty of self-

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concept, and social role by communicating logical reasoning and understanding of environmental demands (Anastasia et al., 2006).

Turning to research conducted in Bangladesh, Rahman (2005) examined the motivation to learn English on a sample of 94 private university students. This study was based on the aspects of Socio-Educational Model (Gardner, 1985). Through frequency distribution and mean score analysis, the researcher found that instrumental motivation is the major motivational orientation for the university students to learn English as a foreign language in Bangladesh. Quadir (2005) in a comparative study on speaking strategy use between Japanese and Bangladeshi university students revealed that learners' use of mental processing, compensating and learning sharing strategies had strongest correlations with their self-estimated speaking skill. However, the situation of slow-paced EFL learners have not been vividly addressed in those above mentioned research studies. But, after all, this research title has been chosen to explore the motivational strategies for

mainstreaming the slow-paced Bangladeshi EFL learners at secondary level.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study has been carried out an exploratory approach of research design to triangulate better findings from using relevant tools of our study, since the detailed qualitative part of this study hasbeen explored the attributes and the importance of such motivation. The present study has designed to explore the effectiveness of academic motivational teaching plan (present context) for English language developmental skills of EFL slow-paced learners. Researcher has already visited schools for several times, after completion of piloting data, final data have been collected purposively from the selected schools whereas to observe such motivational strategies for slow-paced EFL learners. These data have collectedfrom the secondary school teachers and students (especially those are slow-paced in English).However, following the methodological approach of this study includes:
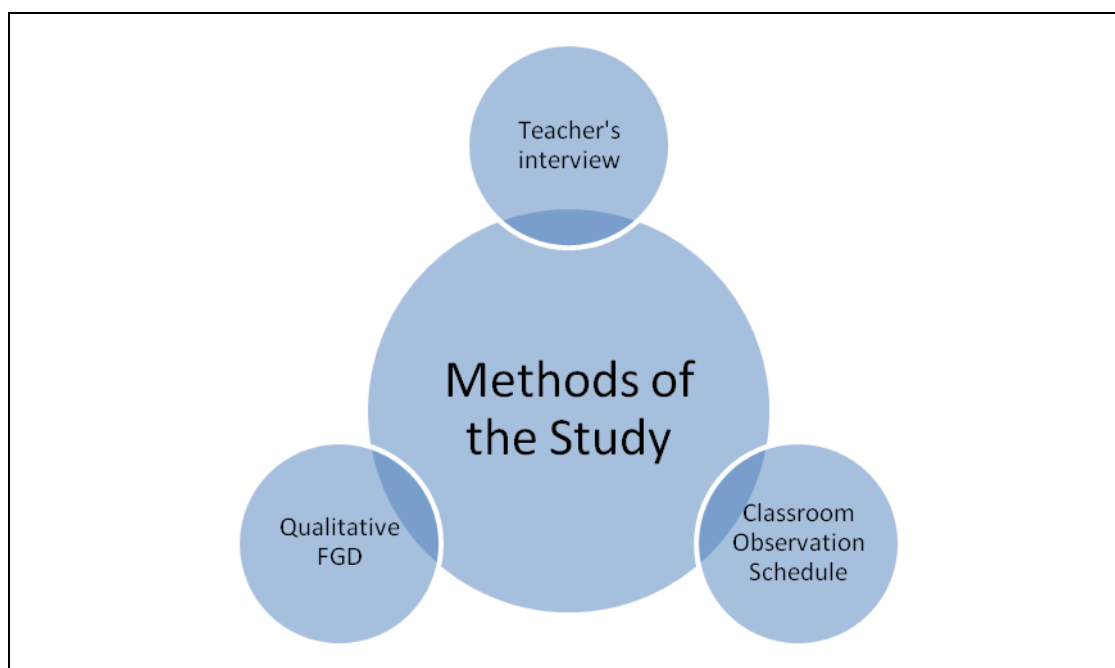


*Figure 2: Methodological Approach*

**SAMPLING**

   o   **Selection of Schools and Teachers**

04 (Four) schools have been selected from remote the side of Dhaka district, Bangladesh. During the

selection of those schools, focus has been given more including boys and girls, their family background, rural area, trained and subjective teacher and so

on.To collect data from the English teachers, researcher hasselected two (02) English teachersin each school so that from 04 schools, I have got 08 English teachers.

o **Selection of Students**

10 students have been selected in each school for focus group discussion (FGD), where students have been selected purposively (those academic records are very poor, under or around 40, including learners of low merit level and various backgrounds like-those are reluctant to learn English and so on) from 04 selected schools of class 10. Moreover, 3 (three) classroom observations have been done in a same class of all students in each school where teachers followed some motivational strategies.

o **Level of Students**

The learners of ages ranging from 15 years to 17 years have been purposefully selected from 04 public and private sector schools of outer Dhaka district. The given numbers of English teachers have been selected from the same schools.

In addition, motivational strategies of slow-paced EFL learners have been identified from their previous academic record and teacher's opinion to conduct of this study. Purposive sampling technique has been applied to collect data from ten learners for FGD and eight (08) teacher's interview of the 04 selected schools. The same teachers are informed previously to involve themselves in motivating the selected slow paced learners for classroom observation.

*Table 1: Research tools, participants, sample size, sampling and data analysis technique at a glance:*

| Research Tools | Participants | Sample Size | Sampling | Modes of Data Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Semi-structured Interview for Teacher | Teachers | 4x2=08 (T) | Purposive | |
| Class Observation | English Class room | 4x3=12 classroom (grade-x) | Purposive | Thematic Analysis |
| FGD Guideline | Learners Selected Classroom | 4x10=40 (L) 4x1=4 | Purposive | |

o **Tools used for Data Collection**

Data have been collected through interview guideline for Focus Group Discussion, individual English teacher's interviews, as well as classroom observation schedules in the above mentioned selected institutions. The proposed data collection tools and their attributes are given bellow:

One(01) research interview questionnaires for teachers, one (01) FGD guidelines for slow-paced EFL learners and one (01) observation schedule have been used to conduct this study. These are-

1. Classroom Observation Schedule (According to objective- 01& 03)
2. Semi-structured interview questions for Teachers (According to objective -02)
3. Focus group discussion for Slow-paced learners (According to objective- 02& 03)

**DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

All the interview questions for teachers, FGD clues and guidelines as well as observation schedules were set to obtain information about how motivational strategies are followed and to explore such attributes of motivational strategies. However, data have been collected through developed questionnaire from teacher's interviews and focus group discussion from slow-paced EFL learners' opinion and a real classroom-setting observation schedule which have been designed for the study. Classroom observation schedule is used to extract the real class room scenario of motivational strategies for the slow-paced EFL learners where the role of the teachers and the involvement of the students are revealed. Actually researcher has got the genuine result or researcher's perception through the observation where before entering the class researcher has explained about some

motivational strategies to provide some strategies to the slow-paced learners. Then researcher has got the genuine result whether slow-paced learners can keep pace with the mainstream learners. Moreover semi-structured interview questionnaire for the teachers and FGD guidelines have been used for students to obtain the real scenario of motivational strategies for slow-paced EFL learners in their English classrooms. Actually from focus group discussion the researcher has got the chance to check the validity whereas from teacher's interviews researcher has got the formal data. Simultaneously, from observation schedule the researcher can check the reality what is happening actually. After gathering data from all tools, thematic analysis have been followed where a general interpretation has been drawn. Thus, these are the process of collecting data of this study.

## RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The strength of a research depends on its reliability and validity. In this study, researcher has tried to validate the data according to the demand of the study and the presentation or interpretation participants' thought and perception. Researcher has collected data from reliable sources where researcher has taken consent from the English teachers and school headmasters. To assure reliability and validity, data triangulation is important to confirm the findings or outcomes. To conduct this exploratory design researcherhas triangulate teacher's interview, classroom observation and focus group discussion to enhance the exact findings.

## SCAFFOLDING OF THE STUDY

**Table 2:**

| Research Objectives | Tools | Data Source |
|---|---|---|
| 1. To explore the context of EFL slow-paced learners | Classroom Observation schedule | Slow-paced learners & teachers |
| 2. To determine the motivational strategies for slow-paced learners | Interview questions for Teachers & Focus Group Discussion | Teachers & slow-paced learners |
| 3. To describe the effectiveness of these motivational strategies for mainstreaming the slow-paced learners | Focus Group Discussion | Slow-paced learners |

## FINDINGS AND DATA INTERPRETATIONS

This study explicated all the information and evidence congregated for the study. The main themes based on the objective are exploring the context, some motivational strategies and effectiveness for mainstreaming. These findings are convenient to generalize overall in Bangladeshi context but it is basically presented according to the exact purposive sampling area for this study. The detail findings are described below according to the triangulation of tools with themes and following three objectives.

### FINDINGS FROM CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

During the classroom practice observation, the main focus was upon teachers providing motivation to the slow-paced learners. Researcher has selected four schools and four English classrooms where both normal and slow-paced learners were presented. In each school three English classrooms have been observed. Before doing observation, researcher informally asked the teachers who are the slow-placed learners (as mentioned before: not psychologically impaired but academically weak especially in English). Therefore all the activities are specially related to the slow-paced learners that have been taken into account. Finally the classroom activities have been divided into two separate segments. One is to observe the role of teachers (where the teachers are using motivational strategies to the slow-paced learners) and the other one is the

role of the students (active participation as well as their improvements). In this report both segment's role have described coherently. In that particular classrooms, the main focusing area was the role of teachers (how the teachers were taking care to the slow-paced learners and providing motivation to them; as we told the teacher to follow some strategic approaches of motivations) as well as the role of the both the normal and the slow-paced learners(as the researcher know before who are the slow-paced EFL learners). The key terms are identified according to the teacher's classroom behavior, supportive classroom atmosphere, classroom management and sitting arrangement, the way feedback is given as well as the participation and the improvements of slow-paced EFL learners.

## TEACHERS' ROLE

After entering the class, researcher has found that the teacher has designed his or her class according to the lesson. From most of the observations (12 Classrooms observation) researcher has found that the teacher has started the class with a nice and warm introduction. Then there have some significant differences among their practices. Some teachers have motivated only the normal learners but some teachers were taking extra care both the normal and slow-paced learners as the researcher informed the teachers about some motivational strategies. Then most of the teacher's classroom behaviors were so positive, actually they were trying to show off their class with a good performance but some were not. Then the teacher asked some of the back bench students to read out the text aloud. Simultaneously the students were trying to identify the English new words from the text and the teacher had written those new words on the blackboard with its meaning and asked the students (both normal and slow-paced learners).Then the slow- paced learners have read out the new words from the textbook as well as matched the new words with the meaning from the blackboard and finally the teacher had instructed them to write down the given word on their note book. Then the teacher dictated the students to cross check with each other.

After twelve (12) English classrooms observations, researcher has found that most of the class started with a warm introduction. According to

observation schedule,one of the key point was "Teachers' classroom behavior" for motivating the slow-paced learners. Classroom behavior was quite positive in some class but some other teachers were just focusing only the normal learners those are attentive and promptly responded. The other key term -'supportive classroom atmosphere' was positive but not for all the slow-paced learners as researcher mentioned the teacher to follow some motivational strategies. Some peer work and group work were done by both normal and slow-paced learners but most of the slow-paced learners were so absent minded and worked slowly. Moreover,"restated questions, giving clues, expressing different ideas with examples"were happened in that classrooms but normal students were focused primarily because they were so active in class performances. Sometimes slow-paced learners were also involved as their teacher dictated to solve the task. The other key term of observation schedule was the "selection of learning resources and class activities using motivation". However most of the teachers were using textbook,involving the students' with group work and peer work which are done by all the students during involving them in classroom activities. Besides it has also been observed by the researcher that normally slow-paced learners were sat down in the back. They did not respond frankly and promptly while teacher restated the questions. Thus "the way feedback was given" sometimes positive or sometimes negative to the students. But they are still slow as they are not well aware of improving their English skills because they responded reluctantly. It was the first day of classroom observation on most of the schools. But the scenario has been changed day by day. Whenever, researcher has visited 2nd and 3rd day of same classroom observation, observed that teachers were trying to motivate the slow-paced learners as well they are much spontaneous rather 1st day's observation. According to our observation the oral incentive training has positive effect to developing the competency of slow-paced learners.

## STUDENTS' ROLE

It is considered that students are the central part in a classroom. Basically students are trying to do everything according to the instruction of their

teacher. Various activities of the students have been noticed from the classroom observation. Students participated with their co-partner after getting the instruction from the teacher. At first, the teacher dictated them to read silently a text. Then at a certain time later teacher asked them to find out the difficult words or new words. Even they also practised peer work, group work and individual work. It has been observed that the role of the normal students were very prompt than the slow-paced conventional students. In that particular group work, some of the slow-paced learners were inactive and there had no special attempt for them from the group. They simply sat with opening the text-book and when the teacher moved around to their group, at then they tried to show off that they were engaging with their given tasks but actually did not ask any question or shared their problems about that particular task to their teacher. At that time, when the teacher asked question to any of an individual slow-paced learner; then they opened their mouth reluctantly. But a few of slow-paced learners asked question eagerly to their teacher. Even, it has also been found that from the each group of the students who can pronounce or speak well they always try to become the leader of that respective group.

After solving the task, the teacher dictated them to cross-check their understanding to each other. But after finishing their task, teacher could not check all the students' tasks (specially the slow- paced learners; as researcher instructed the teacher to provide some motivational strategies to them). When the teacher had written answer on the black-board then they matched these words with their own answers. In that particular class the researcher observed that there was no scope to check the spelling mistakes of individuals. But after their reading text and answering the questions they read out their answers that they have also got motivation to learn English. Such kinds of motivational strategies were used that could help to promote their English language competencies.

**FINDINGS FROM THE TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS**

To explore the context of motivational strategies for slow-paced learners a semi-structured interview questionnaire has been used for the teachers. The content of the interview questions have been related to their current practices including motivational strategies and how much effective those strategies for the slow-paced learners. In total eight (08) numbers of English teachers have been interviewed for our study. Teachers' have expressed their similar opinion about some questions (like who are the slow-paced learners, what are the motivational strategies which teachers are using in classroom, in which way they provide feedback to the slow-paced learners, what are the difficulties teachers face and so on). The findings from the teacher's interview are mentioning below:

**CONSIDERING SLOW-PACED LEARNERS**

According to the teacher's interview slow-paced learners are considered as the students who consistently fail to obtain good grade they are treated as slow-paced learners. Although such types of slow-paced EFL learners have lack of attention in learning English, but some students try to pay attention to learn English. Moreover, some motivational strategies are followed in the classroom to enrich their concentration and enthusiasm for learning English. Though they are now in grade 10 but still they are facing some challenges for basic language skills of English.

**DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE TEACHERS WHILE TEACHING ENGLISH**

Most of the respondents have expressed that they face difficulties while teaching English because there are some slow-paced learners who do not have the knowledge of basic language skills. But some others cannot get family support, or social support. During the class period teachers cannot motivate all the students because of time consumption. In each class, there are more than hundred students so that teachers cannot facilitate all the students equally. Even teachers cannot solve all the students' problem within the short period of time.

One of the teachers said,

"I get bored while teaching English to the slow-paced learners. They are always absent-minded. They do not want to participate spontaneously in the given task. Even they do their class-work very slowly and most of the time they do not understand what their

teacher has actually dictated. They feel shy to express their trouble to the teachers."

One of the other teachers said,

"When I deliver my speech in English but a few students can understand my words because their listening competency is very low. Most of our students are weak in speaking and listening. Above all, they are unwilling to study English. However, the context of our education system needs to reshape."

## MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

To fill out the second objective of this study, researcher has found that most of the teachers use motivational strategies for slow-paced learners like showing picture, word-game, audio-visual materials, group-work, peer-work, role-playing, translation for make them understandable, clapping or positive feedback and monitoring the slow learners. Sometimes teachers teach English by repeating concepts, inspire the students to memorize, sometimes use easy words.

## EFFECTIVENESS FOR MAINSTREAMING

The third objective of this study is to describe the effectiveness of motivational strategies. From teachers' interviews researcher has tried to meet up this goal by asking question to the English teachers. According to the teachers' interviews, during the class motivational strategies are used in the class but these are not so much effective as slow-paced learners are not conscious about learning English effectively so that they can compete with the mainstream learners. Although some slow-paced learners are trying to achieve their target but their inner capacity does not support them. But they can improve themselves day by day.

One of the teachers said,

"If slow learners get inner motivational support of course; it is not impossible to keep pace with the mainstream learners through working."

The other teacher said,

"I think if they are motivated properly, then they will improve gradually but not keep pace with the mainstream learners."

Another opinion from the four teachers; they said that-

"If slow-paced learners get enough motivational supports, then they can keep pace with the mainstream learners but the reliability should be taken by the teachers. Because teachers need to motivate them".

## TEACHERS' EXPECTATION

Most of the teacher said that they need proper teachers' training to improve slow-paced learners' English developmental skills, need-based curriculum, to get smart salary structure, to need parental influence as only within 30 to 40 minutes, a teacher cannot improve the quality of a slow-paced learner or cannot facilitate the slow-paced learner. However, proper allocation of time is needed especially for the slow-paced learners. Also taking extra steps for rural students from the policy makes of government, by going to their house to discuss with their guardian and motivate students; also they have to practice a lot. Moreover, exam system should be changed to improve slow-paced EFL learners.

## FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

A range of focus group discussions have been carried out with the students. Some important information have found from the FGD with the students. Researcher has selected 40 (forty) slow-paced learners from 04 (four) selected schools based on some parameters. Such as their age group, spontaneous reply, family background, opportunities (e.g. private tutor, teacher's cooperation, family support, self-esteemor motivation etc.), gender, academic result and so on. Those are mentioned below:

## EXPLORING THE CONTEXT

- o Most of the slow-paced learners do not enjoy English because it is considered as very much complicated subject to them. As English is not our mother tongue.
- o Some contents depend on their age or mentality but most of the slow-paced learners like cartoons, picture illustrations, movies, stories related to their text and so on.
- o Some difficulties they face such as- using correct grammar, making translations and word meaning;as English is a complex and boring subject to them, getting tough

situation for accurate pronunciation and most of the time they feel difficult to remember new words.

## MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

According to the second objective of 'determination of motivational strategies', researcher has followed the theme of 'motivational strategies'where has found two aspects of motivational strategies such as a) strength and b) weakness. In this study slow-paced EFL learners discussed about both positive and negative sides. These are mentioned below:

## STRENGTHS

- o Teacher's motivation, family and social supports: Most of the slow-paced learners said that they need some motivations from their teacher, private tutor or family members.

- o Positive feedback: Sometimes teacher's good comment, praising or clapping, getting good marks, group works, teacher's positive behavior and frankness, cooperation etc. make them happy and so much motivated. That is why teachers sometimes show caring but sometimes show ignoring or negative attitude to improve the competency level of slow-paced learners.
- o Giving activities: Sometimes teacher motivates them by doing cross checking among themselves, clapping for weak learners when they can respond the correct answers.But some teachers provide feedback by rechecking their activities and giving directions, sometimes provoking them.

**Table 3:** Group responses about 'what are the motivation that you get from classroom activities' from slow-paced learner's focus group discussion.

| FGD | Responses about 'motivation that students get from classroom activities' |
|---|---|
| FGD$_1$ | "Teacher's good comments, positive feedback, support, group works motivate us". |
| FGD$_2$ | "our English teacher is so cooperative that we try to follow his instruction for doing activities to learn English and that make us motivated" |
| FGD$_3$ | "teacher's caring, extra attention for us and positive attitude motivate us" |
| FGD$_4$ | "sometimes teacher's style of teaching motivates us but sometimes we feel scare when teacher provides us negative feedback like rebuking, giving extra tasks, or getting poor marks in the exam" |

## WEAKNESSES

- o Do not pay attention to the slow-paced learners: Most of the teachers do not monitor slow-paced learners' progress, it seems that teacher is always giving priority to the good-skill students as slow-paced learners cannot understand or respond promptly.
- o Some of the teachers do not provide feedback to the slow-paced learners because they think this student is always weak in English at my class so no need to support him/her.

- o Slow-paced learners do not show their interest about learning English. For that reason teachers do not enjoy to teach them patiently.

## EFFECTIVENESS FOR MAINSTREAMING

- o Motivational strategies have positive effects according to the opinion of slow-paced learners.
- o If they get much love, care and cooperation from the teachers, then they can keep pace with the mainstream learners but some other think that they may improve themselves but cannot like the mainstream.

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o Slow-paced learners have to keep faith or be confident on their own capacity that one

day they could achieve success.

**Table 4:**Another group responses about "how could you overcome such challenges" from slow- paced learner's FGD (focus group discussion).

| FGD | Responses about 'overcome such challenges' |
|---|---|
| $FGD_1$ | "if we practice more then we can overcome our barriers" |
| $FGD_2$ | "we need much love, care and cooperation from the teachers as well as family support" |
| $FGD_3$ | "creating scope for English speaking habit and our phobia should be removed" |
| $FGD_4$ | "Following teacher's instructions time to time" |

**Table 5:** Another group responses about "their opinion if they get enough motivational supports" from slow-paced learner's FGD (focus group discussion).

| FGD | Responses about 'if get enough motivational supports' |
|---|---|
| $FGD_1$ | "if we get enough motivational supports then we can keep pace with the mainstream learners because we are ignored now" |
| $FGD_2$ | "we need support from friends, classmates and teachers so that we can improve learning English" |
| $FGD_3$ | "we also need to be conscious about keeping pace with the good-skill learners" |
| $FGD_4$ | "motivational supports, teacher's cooperation and our dedication can make us as mainstream learners" |

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERCOMING CHALLENGES FROM FGD

This study explores that motivational strategies for mainstreaming slow-paced EFL learners are related to some important factors. From focus group discussion most of students said that they need to-

o Practice more; because everyday practice can make them capable with mainstream learners

o Dedicate properly; slow-paced EFL learners said that they do not dedicate themselves to learn English as normal students because their teacher sometimes motivates only the front bench learners.So proper dedication can make them as normal learners.

o Scope for English speaking habit; School authority should provide the opportunity of necessary supplementary speaking opportunity such as debating, English spoken practice club, English quizmaster for the students. Then slow-paced learners get the motivation from these.

o Provide extra care and motivation; Teacher should emphasize also the slow-paced learners. They do not have to feel boring or hopeless. If teachers' pay attention, provide extra care and motivation to the slow-paced learners, then they can naturally improve themselves as normal learners.

o Read English newspaper regularly; slow-paced learners should build the habit of reading English newspaper regularly. By thoroughly reading they can get rid of from the scarcity of English.

o Follow teacher's suggestions; for overcoming such challenges and phobias they need to concentrate on teacher's comment. Because teachers know how to motivate such kind of slow-paced EFL learners.

o Give more times; for practicing more they have manage extra time and thus slow-paced learners can keep pace with the

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mainstream learners. Without practice a lot, no one can improve.

- o Stop teacher's partial biasing. Most of slow-paced learner's said that teacher's partial importance is highly noticeable. Even the mainstream learners are so spontaneous for that particular teacher's class. However, it should be stopped.

From the focus group discussion the students expect that systematic and appropriate support from school level to family level help them to achieve their goal overcoming their barriers. From teachers' interviews, teachers believe that those who are weak in English they are also academically weak in other subjects. According to the findings of the study most of the slow-paced EFL learners are dependent on their teacher for developing English and they feel the crisis of supporting learning materials. Even most of them have no chance to practice English outside the classroom where they think the self-directed English practicing is very important to develop their English competency. Even they need enough motivational support from the teachers, private tutor, guardians as well as friends those are generally good at English. Family environment and friends can play a dynamic role in developing English. From these sources the students can get support instantly. But these sources do not encourage our learners for their self-directed English learning.

This study has also found from focus group discussion that teachers think that parents should play a vital role to develop their English of their children at the early stage with offering the chance of using other English materials beyond the textbook. They will encourage them to learn new words and make new sentences.

## DISCUSSION

Researcher has summarized the findings related to the research objectives, reviewed literature and conceptual framework. Finally all data have been presented and interpreted according to research objectives and themes. The interpreted data show many underlying facts which are related to motivational strategies for slow paced learners. With a few previous literatures, our study identifies similarities from findings. According to the objective two (02), the major findings from the study were based on teacher's opinions. Most of the teachers opined that slow-paced learners are academically slow; especially English and all subjects but they can fit neatly at normal schools. The findings of the study similar to those studies by (MacMillan, Gresham, Bocian & Lamberts,1998). Teachers are also believe that slow-paced learners are academically poor in their performance and their cognitive level does not work properly that is why they are identified as dull or below the average children. The similar finding has also found in the previous literature conducted by (Lowenstein, 2003).

Moreover, according to the objective 02& 03; from focus group discussion, slow-paced learners opined that if they are confident and dedicated enough then they can keep pace with the mainstream learners. However, this finding has also merged with the related research discussed by O'Malley and Chabot (1990), Oxford (1990), and Wenden (1991).

According to objective 01 and 02; from FGD and classroom observation the finding reveals that, sometimes teacher's behavior is not well accepted. Because teachers are giving priority only the front bench learners. The weakness from FGD, researcher has found that teachers do not provide positive feedback or behavior as teachers think that they are always slow, that is why they do not need any normal behavior. This finding has also relevancy with the reviewed literature by (Anastasia, Elein, & Effie, 2006; Shaw, 2008).

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has been conducted in a small group which represents the overall scenario of Bangladesh. For getting the actual information researcher could cover some other divisions. But the time duration was not in hand. Even researcher had taken huge time to identify who are the slow-paced learners before piloting. Another limitation of the study is that researcher had observed eight classrooms without informing to the teachers about such kind of motivational strategies for the first time. But after not getting sufficient data, researcher revisited the classroom again and provided some tactics about motivational strategies. Then researcher has observed twelve classrooms and most of the school teachers have cooperated where have

found the scenario whether slow-paced learners can keep pace with the mainstream learners or not. But during the period of oral incentive training, some teachers felt boring and it seems unnecessary to them to get the incentive training from researchers. But the limitation is only 3 classrooms observationsin each school are not sufficient to identify the effectiveness of motivational strategies for mainstreaming the slow-paced learners. However the limitation is within the third objective of this study which is to describe the effectiveness of these motivational strategies for mainstreaming slow-paced learners; researcher has drawn a generalized view because if researchers could arrange a task-based assessment or small group tasks with evaluation then could reveal the concrete result. Besides due to time constraints, lack of institutional supports hinder to continue such kinds of assessments.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on research findings and discussion on emerging factors resulting from the evidence of gathered data, researcher has formulated recommendations for future actions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

o   Proper teacher's training is needed to improve slow paced learners' competency. Such kind of incentive training should provide to the English teachers. Even necessary training should be arranged for the teachers. According to the demand of slow-paced learners' competency and level, need based and effective curriculum is needed.

o   Teachers should be active and updated. Necessary teaching learning materials should be available in the school to motivate the slow-paced learners and teacher-student's ratio should not be exceeded from the logical limit.

o   As slow-paced learners are academically slow so that teachers should take extra care for them. Teacher also provide motivation in each class so that they can improve. Even teacher should not feel hopeless. Teacher has to play the vital role to motivate them.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY

o   Parental influence is mandatorily needed. As only within 40 mins class duration; a teacher cannot improve the quality of slow-paced EFL learners. Hence slow-paced learners can get support from their family.

o   Sometimes in family those are senior members and comparatively having better knowledge in English, they can assist the slow paced learners. After school, family members can corporate and fulfill their queries.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SLOW-PACED LEARNERS

o   Slow-paced learners should practice more as their academic performance in not in a satisfactory level. However they need to practice more to improve themselves.

o   Dedication is another important aspect to improve their English competency. If anyone can emphasize more, definitely s/he can do better performance. However, heart and soul dedication is also important which is related to extrinsic motivation.

o   Following teacher's suggestions is a commentary task for all the slow-paced learners to overcome such challenges. As their performance is weak than normal students so they have to follow teacher's comment accurately, then they can go to a better position.

## CONCLUSION

It was our hope that this exploratory study can create greater extent awareness and present a logical discussion in Bangladeshi context of slow-paced learners. Thus the findings of the study reveal that according to Bangladeshi context, slow-paced learners need enough motivational supports. Finally, in this study, the purpose has been served by the teacher's interview, observation schedule and focus group discussion. It was the primary assumption that slow-paced learners who are more motivated definitely s/he will perform better than their previous status. It is also important for further research to base on this initial and condensed study and for the ministry of education to develop such guidelines and

related findings to enhance teaching in supporting slow-paced learners. Thus the aim of the study convincingly argued that if slow-paced EFL learners get enough motivational supports then they can keep pace with the mainstream learners.

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