



# Two Rural School Teachers' Perception about Integrating Computer for Teaching Listening and Speaking in EFL Classrooms of Rural Bangladesh

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**ABSTRACT:** In this modern world of technological epoch, computer is being used largely in all walks of life. Education is also enjoying the full advantages of using computer. Specially, in the present post covid-19 era, computer is playing multiple roles in the sector of education. Bangladesh has also paid a grand welcome to the computer in the educational system of the country. It is notable that Bangladesh being an EFL country has made English a compulsory subject from the very elementary level of education. However, it is unfortunate that Bangladeshi students are still deprived of explicit teaching of English listening and speaking skills which are two essential language skills. The aim of this paper is to explore the perceptions of the secondary school teachers of rural Bangladesh regarding the implementation of computer aided listening and speaking class. This study would investigate the rural school teachers' perceptions about the use of computer for English language teaching in the classroom. Also, this paper would focus on how computers can be utilized for teaching English listening and speaking skills in the context of rural Bangladesh. This study would take qualitative research approach where participants would be interviewed for collecting data. After interpreting the result, it has been found that though the teachers acknowledge that use of computers in the classrooms is a demand of this present age, they are not motivated to use computer in their classrooms because of various unfavorable contexts. Also, teachers could not demonstrate any particular plan to use computers in their classrooms to teach listening and speaking skill which indicates gap in their knowledge of computer assisted teaching.

**Index Terms:** Education, EFL Classroom, Rural Bangladesh, Integration of computer, Perception.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT

In the present days, computer has been an important part of education by providing increased facilities in the field of education. Bangladesh, like many other countries of the world, has also grandly welcomed the emergence of computer in the educational sector. However, Bangladesh being a developing country faces issue in conducting computer aided classrooms. Aziz (2020) argues that digital inclusion in the present socio-economic condition of Bangladesh is a challenge. Moreover, things are much different in rural area than the urban area. According to Asadullah and Chakraborty (2019), while urban areas of Bangladesh are initiating the digitalization in every sector, rural areas are lagging behind because of unequal economic privileges. That is why multimedia facilities are not yet available in the rural classrooms of Bangladesh whereas in the urban areas, many schools are now setting multimedia classrooms. The aim of this paper is to identify how the teachers of rural area of Bangladesh can utilize computers in their EFL classrooms to teach the students English listening and speaking skill. Also, this paper would explore the rural school teachers' perception about the impact of computer aided listening and speaking classroom if that is implemented in the national curriculum of Bangladesh.

### 1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE USE OF COMPUTER IN THE EFL CLASSROOMS OF BANGLADESHI SCHOOLS

In Bangladesh, English is a foreign language. However, English has a great prestige here as it opens door to many opportunities, which is why English is taught here from the very elementary level of education. It is concerning that where the whole world is enjoying advantages of using computer in the second or foreign language learning classroom; Bangladesh is still lagging behind there due to the poor economy of the country. In rural areas, the picture is even worse. Another fact is that though some schools have set up computers in the classrooms, hardly they are used in teaching English language here. They are mainly used for "Computer Education" subject (Sarowardy & Halder, 2019). So, students of Bangladesh are deprived of computer-aided EFL classroom facilities.

However, since the time of Covid-19, the use of computer for educational purpose was amplified. Bangladesh also adopted online activities for coping up with the rest of the world. However, online education was more problematized than other online works as technology use for the teachers and specially for the students had been a whole new concept where other sectors were somewhat used to it (Emon et al., 2020). So, the government and national universities were closed for more than a year. On the other hand, private

universities were more privileged and after a short period, they started online classes where updated computer aided platforms were being used to teach the students (Dutta & Smita, 2020). Meanwhile, the school and colleges started their operation but computer was still less utilized. Mobile version of Zoom Meeting, Google Classroom, Facebook and WhatsApp were more popular because of their simplicity and easier accessibility (Rouf et al., 2022). Nevertheless, any customized platform was not used for English language teaching in the schools or college. So, computer was not utilized fully for English language teaching at the schools and colleges of this country.

It is notable that English language teaching in the schools and colleges of Bangladesh involves only teaching writing and reading skills. Two other language skills: speaking and listening is not taught explicitly here. Shurovi (2014) reports ELT of Bangladesh to be faulty because of the lack of explicit teaching of listening and speaking in the classrooms. So, for many reasons, ELT of Bangladesh has been criticized over time.

### 1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In present days, computers are being used broadly in the educational sector. Al-Saleem (2020) reports that specialized use of computer software is being conducted to teach all four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, Bangladesh is still not utilizing computers for ELT. That is why this study would highlight rural Bangladeshi school teachers' perceptions regarding the use of computer to teach English listening and speaking in the classroom and also would provide information about how computers can be utilized in the rural school classrooms.

### 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. What is the rural school teachers' perception regarding the use of computers to teach their students?
- b. How computers can be utilized to teach listening and speaking skills in the context of rural Bangladeshi schools?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study mainly focuses on shedding some lights over the two Bangladeshi rural school teachers' perception about how computers can be utilized in the underprivileged rural areas to teach the students listening and speaking as well as their opinion about the implementation of computer aided listening and speaking classes at the secondary level of Bangladesh. This section of the paper thus gives an overview of the use of computer in English language teaching and the English language teaching practices in Bangladesh.

### 2.1 THE USE OF COMPUTER IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

This section would discuss the evolution of Computer assisted language teaching over time, the areas where computer assisted language teaching is being used, and some insights into the evaluation of computer assisted language teaching.

#### 2.1.1 THE EVOLUTION OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE TEACHING

The use of computer in language learning is remarkable from the early 1960s (Davies et al., 2012). Scholars have attempted to discuss the evolution of CALL under different typologies. One of such typologies comes from Warschauer (2004) which is based on phases. Warschauer (2004) divides the evolution of computer assisted language teaching into three phases: Structural CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL. Another typology comes from Bax (2003) who divides the periods as Restricted CALL, Open CALL and Integrated CALL. Currently, the diversity of different technologies has given birth to set of divisions like computer mediated communication, blended learning, gamification etc. (Singh, 2015). Also, CALL has developed various sub divisions like CALL for ESP (English for Special Purpose), CALL for EAP (English for Academic Purpose), CALL for young learners and many more (Singh, 2015). Now-a-days, computer is not being used separately rather in integrated manner. Technology, pedagogy and content knowledge is now being overlapped (Graham et al., 2012). So, with the span of various technological development, computer assisted language teaching is evolving over time.

#### 2.1.2 AREAS OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE TEACHING

English language has four skills: Reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Computer is being used in all these areas of English.

A-comprehension and B-Text processing are some computer software that is being used widely to teach reading skill (Al-Saleem, 2020). There are many other software like MAC Reader, Story Board and Reading Galaxy that are being used to teach English reading skills like timed reading, paced reading, cloze text, sentence jumble, paragraph jumble etc. to the students (Alkhatani, 1999).

Again, there are software that allows the learners auto correction of spelling and grammar. Again, there are several software programs that provide learners the chance to develop their writing skills in the earlier stage through sketching and mimicry dictation (Lund & Hauge, 2011).

There are many software like the speech recognition software that converts the spoken word to machine-readable input and the device provides feedback on the accuracy (Zou, 2011). Also, the teachers can suggest dialogues of the target language to the students so that they can hear correct utterances and produce accordingly (Al-Saleem, 2020).

There are many language laboratory computer programs that help to understand sounds of English language skills (Al-Saleem, 2020). Also, through machines, learners can rehearse several times that increases their hearing ability (Zou, 2011). Thus, computer aids the teachers to make their job easier as they can let some responsibilities on the computers.

### 2.1.3 THE EVALUATION OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE TEACHING

Different scholars have provided their opinion about the computer assisted language teaching by experimenting and implementing various kinds of computer software in language teaching environment. For instance, Wang et al. (2021) have experimented with language knowledge skills, communication ability and discourse construction ability through both the computer assisted teaching and traditional teaching, and the result showed that computer plays a more positive role in teaching English language than the traditional style of teaching though the participants expressed their fondness towards mobile assisted language learning because of the simpler application. Again, Bahari (2020) has reviewed computer assisted language testing as duplicate to pen-and-pencil assessment process which reveals positive attitude towards computer assisted language teaching. Another experiment comes from Baz and Tekdal (2014) who experimented with Dynamic Education software, concluded that it is suitable for determined students only because, though it helps students to develop their language skills, it causes distraction to the students and sometimes they are found browsing other online activities. Thus, scholars have highlighted issues with computer assisted language teaching by evaluating different computer applications in language teaching.

## 2.2 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN BANGLADESH

In the early 1990s, the curriculum of Bangladesh used to follow Grammar Translation Method (Ali & Walker, 2014). In 1996, the curriculum was shifted from GTM to CLT (Rahman, 2015) but CLT method failed in Bangladesh for lack of expert teachers (Karim, 2004). Moreover, education in Bangladesh is mostly teacher-centered (Yasmin, 2009) which is contradictory to student-centric CLT approach.

Another concerning fact about English language teaching in Bangladesh is that here only reading and writing is taught till the higher secondary level, no explicit teaching of listening and speaking is there. Surovi (2014) argued that even after 14 years of introducing CLT in Bangladeshi curriculum, speaking and listening is hardly practiced in the classroom.

Now-a-days, computers are being used broadly in English language teaching as computer makes the teaching job easier and also helps the learners to develop their skills (Ellis, 2008; Khan, Hasan & Clement, 2012). However, Talukdar and Saba (2016) reports that computers are not being used in English language teaching in Bangladesh for lack of teachers' proficiency though students are very positive about using computers in the classroom. Also, setting up computer facilities in the classrooms is a challenge because of the poor economy of Bangladesh (Ibrahim, 2008).

It is obvious that computer can play very positive role in ELT. Though computers are now being used in the education of Bangladesh, there is no specialized use of them can be noticed in ELT of Bangladesh. Moreover, many of the rural areas are deprived of multimedia classrooms where they can be found more in urban areas (Asadullah & Chakraborty, 2019). Previous literature with ELT and computer aided education in Bangladesh is mostly focused on the documentation and criticism of ELT in Bangladesh (Karim, 2004; Yasmin, 2009; Shurovi, 2014) and failure of the implementation of computer aided classrooms (Ibrahim, 2010; Talukdar & Saba, 2016). This paper aims at highlighting some different issues apart from that. This paper wants to explore teachers' perception about computer aided classrooms for teaching listening and speaking skill in the context of rural Bangladesh which is still a less focused area by the researchers. Basically, through this study, teachers' perception about implementing computer aided classrooms for teaching listening and speaking which is still not in the National Curriculum of Bangladesh for Bangla medium schools would be highlighted. Also, their opinions about how to utilize computers in the context of rural Bangladesh would be given a voice throughout this study.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to acknowledge the Bangladeshi rural school teachers' perceptions regarding the use of computers in the classroom to teach listening and speaking. This chapter would discuss the methodology for conducting this study which includes the research design, theoretical framework adopted for this study, data collection, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations.

### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study has taken a qualitative approach for obtaining the research purpose. Semi-structured interview has been conducted for this study.

### 3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As this study is about teachers' perceptions regarding the use of computer, "Teacher Acceptance of Use of Computer" framework by Abdullah et al. (2006) has been adopted as the theoretical framework of this study. Stallard (1998) conducted a study over the use of computers by the teachers and found that many teachers show negative attitude towards the use of computer as they are afraid of not having the enough expertise. On the other hand, ease of use and usefulness is derived by motivation (Davis et al., 1989) that causes positive attitude. Thus, Abdullah et al. (2006) suggests that teachers' behavioral change of using or rejecting computers is determined by their attitude and motivation that influence the actual use of computers. Through this framework, this study has highlighted the possible utilization (actual use) of the computers in the context of rural Bangladeshi schools from the perspectives of the teachers along with investigating their attitude and level of motivation.

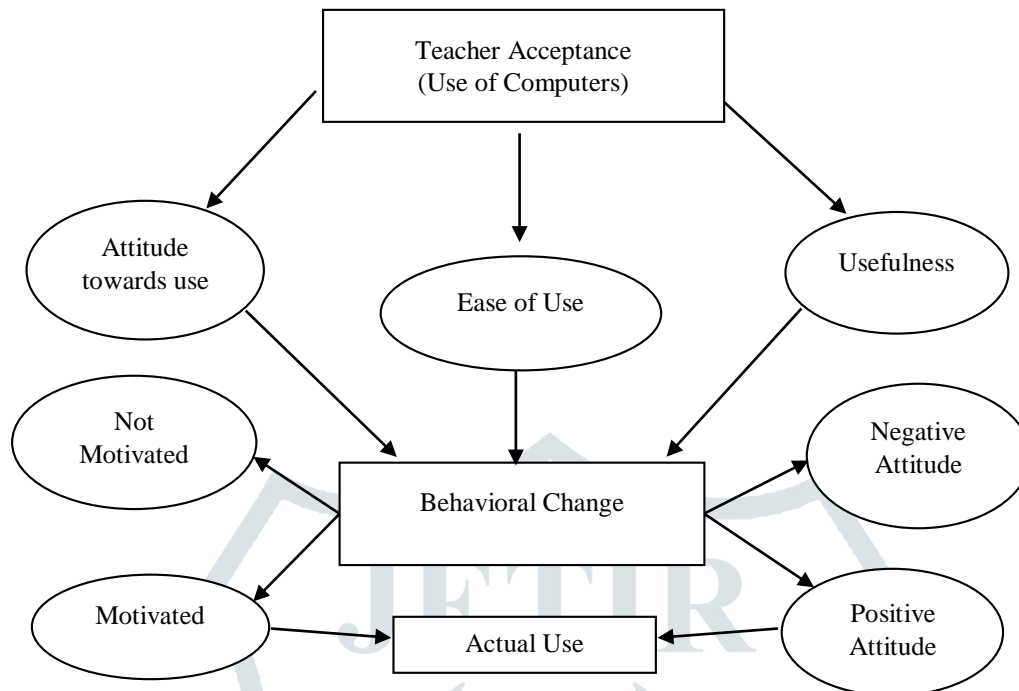


Figure: Teacher Acceptance Framework of Use of Computers

### 3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

For this study, participants are some Bangladeshi rural school teachers selected from two rural schools. Data was collected through semi-structured interview and was recorded as per the consent of the participants.

### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

For data analysis purpose of this study, data analysis framework of Saldaña's (2015) has been followed. This is a four-step process. The steps of the four-step process are: (1) identifying codes in the data, (2) creating categories of codes, and developing high-level categories, (3) reviewing high-level categories and synthesizing them to generate themes through analytic memoing, and (4) applying emerged themes to the research questions of the study.

### 3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

While conducting the study, we have tried to keep in my mind about maintaining ethics in every activity with my participants. For including them in the workshop and recording the workshop, we have sent them a consent form to sign before the workshop. Also, I have attempted to maintain their privacy by providing them pseudonyms.

## 4. FINDINGS

This section discusses the significant findings of the study obtained from the teachers' individual interview.

### 4.1 TEACHERS' MOTIVATION TO USE COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

For every activity of life, motivation plays a great role. After analyzing the data, it was found that teachers are not motivated enough to use the computers in their classrooms. While inquiring about if they wanted to use computers in their classroom to teach listening and speaking, negative responses came from most of them for a number of reasons. One of the respondents said:

*For now, I see many challenges of introducing computer-aided listening and speaking classrooms because teachers are not yet ready for that. We do not have training. Also, we don't have a single computer in this school. It will take a lot of time for making computer set up classrooms. I don't think I can use computer in my classroom as there are many barriers.*

So, the participant here is a rural school teacher and is mentioning a number of challenges for setting up a computer-aided classroom which clearly indicates that he is not motivated to use computer in the classroom. Another participant who is at his late 40s also expressed that:

*I don't want to use computer in my classroom because I find it very difficult. I even have difficulty in operating a smart phone.*

This reveals that this participant is not a tech-savvy. That is why he directly says “No” when it comes about using computers in the classroom. In contrast, another teacher from young generation, expressed positivity towards the use of computer in the classrooms and said:

*Using computer in the rural classrooms is going to be revolutionary. I would like to be a part of computer-aided classroom but the fact is that it is very difficult to set up a computer aided classroom in rural areas.*

The participant here is motivated to use computers in their classrooms but she is concerned about the limitations of setting up a computer-aided classroom in the rural area of Bangladesh.

#### 4.2 PERCEIVED USEFULNESS OF COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

While investigating teachers’ perceptions about the necessity of the use of computers in the classroom, one participant responded that:

*Setting up computer-aided classroom is actually a good idea because today’s world is running by technology. Computer technology can help a teacher indeed to teach listening and speaking.*

This implies that the participant believes that computers should be used in Bangladeshi rural classrooms for keeping pace with the technology ruled world. Another participant expressed:

*There is no doubt that using computers in the classroom gives assurance of improving the quality of education. Listening and speaking are two new concepts for the students in Bangladesh. So, with computers we teacher can make interesting content for the students so that they get motivated and learn well at the same time.*

So, the teacher here is optimistic that using computers in the classroom would provide her students the privilege of coping up with the new inclusion of listening and speaking skills in the curriculum.

#### 4.3 SCOPES OF USING COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM IN THE CONTEXT OF RURAL BANGLADESH

One aim of this study was to find out the scopes of using computers in the context of rural Bangladesh. After investigating, it was found that right now, teachers are not optimistic of using computers in the classrooms of rural Bangladesh because they see many challenges of using computers in the classroom. However, they have mentioned that with the aid of government, changes of this scenario might be possible. One of the respondents implied that:

*If we get training, I think we can use computer to teach listening and speaking. Also, setting up enough computers in the school is necessary as we have a large number of students.*

Another participant mentioned:

*There are lot of ways to teach listening and speaking through computer. I also think that students would enjoy class if computers are used in the classroom. However, we can use that if we get positive environment like training, funding etc.*

Such responses from participants imply that there is not much opportunity in the rural classrooms right now to use computers, but they are open to it provided that certain conditions are met.

### 5. DISCUSSION

This study was about investigating the rural school teachers’ perceptions about the use of computers in teaching English listening and speaking skills in their classroom and also finding out the scopes of using computers in the context of rural Bangladesh. It was found that most of the teachers are not motivated to use computers in the classroom as they find a lot of challenges in it. It is common that an unfavorable context demotivates the students (İşlen, 2013). Again, though most of them showed resistance to the use of computers, that was because of the challenges in setting up the computer-aided classroom in the rural area. One participant who is at his late 40s, revealed that he is not comfortable in using technology which is why he does not wish to use computers in the classroom. This reveals that age of the teacher might have any impact on teaching listening and speaking through computer. However, while teachers are not motivated to use computers, at the same time they admit that using computers in the classroom is actually a good idea as it improves the education quality and also allow the teachers to make interesting content for the students. Unfortunately, the teachers at this moment do not find any scope of using computers in their classroom for lack of trained teachers and unavailability of resources. Still, they are positive to the inclusion of computer-aided listening and speaking classroom and expects government assistance for the success of such projects.

### 6. CONCLUSION

In the present days, computer has a huge role in educational sector. To keep pace with the rest of the world, it is also necessary for Bangladesh to adopt computer-assisted classrooms. Through this study, it is revealed that the rural area of Bangladesh is in a very unfavorable position to introduce computer-aided listening and speaking classroom which is why teachers are not motivated as well to use computers in their teaching. This scenario should be fixed. Teacher training should be provided. Resources should be supplied. Also, various programs and campaigns might be run there for encouraging computer assisted teaching and learning.

This study shows a picture about what might happen in the rural schools of Bangladesh if computer assisted curriculum is implemented. The findings would help the scholars to consider various things before planning such implementation. Also, it opens the scope of further study which might be the ways to solution or any extended work in the same field.

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## APPENDIX A (Interview Questions)

1. Which class do you teach?
2. Have you ever taken any listening and speaking class?
3. Do you use computer for teaching purposes?
4. How much scope is there at your classroom to teach listening and speaking to the students using computer?
5. Would you like to use computers in your classroom? Why or why not?
6. What would be your stand regarding the implementation of computer-aided listening and speaking classes at your school?
7. Can you mention some of the prospects of implementing computer aided listening and speaking classroom at the schools your region?
8. Do you find any privilege of using computers in the classroom? Why or why not?
9. Can you mention some strengths and weaknesses of using computers in your classroom to teach your students?