

Individual and Social- Psychological Variables Related to Bangladeshi Students and Their Proficiency in ESL

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The main objective of the present study is to examine the relationship between different social psychological variables on the one hand and proficiency on the other. We have found a significant correlation between scoring for exact responses versus acceptable included responses, suggesting the Cloze procedure would well be appropriate for use with non-native speakers. Except for the medium of instruction, resentment motivation and class-room anxiety, all other variables, namely age, sex, socio-economic status, exposure to English, schooling, attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis, attitude towards English, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, manipulative motivation and parental support are significantly correlated with the Cloze scores. Cloze has shown a significant positive correlation with socio-economic status. This indicates that the learners who are from the lower rungs of society have not done well in the Cloze test even though they have a positive attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis and also have realized the importance of English in obtaining a better education and good jobs. Those students who have performed better have come from “high socio-economic statuses” and do not sustain positive attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis and also view English unfavourably. Those who come from good and English medium schools are generally from higher socio-economic statuses; therefore, there is a high co-relationship between socio-economic status and schooling. The results of our present study confirm that schooling is the most significant predictor of achievement and proficiency in second language

learning.

Key words: English language proficiency, Cloze test, correlation matrix, social-psychological variables, attitudinal and motivational orientation

INTRODUCTION

In the past three decades or so, the research work in second language learning has brought out the significance of the socio-psychological aspects of second language learning. In the context of successful foreign/second language learning, several researchers have stressed the significance of learner variables, such as attitudes, aptitude, motivation (motivational intensity/motivational orientation), authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, etc. This paper shows that achievement in a second language is related to the measures of attitudes and motivation, and the other concerns the precise meaning of the correlation between measures of attitudes and motivation on the one hand and second language achievement on the other.

The study of attitudinal and motivational variables is gaining in significance as can be seen from recent publications in the field. The pioneering research work in this field was established by the contributions of Canadian scholars, such as W.E Lambert, R.C Gardner and their associates. Lambert and his associates conducted a series of studies over a period of twelve years in the U.S.A, Canada and Philippines. Several of their studies were in Canada (e.g., Feenstra & Gardner, 1968; Gardner, 1966, Anisfeld, & Lambert, 1961; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Lambert, Gardner, Barik, & Tunstall, 1962). Their findings show that along with verbal intelligence and language aptitude, attitudes and motivation play considerable importance as variables in second language proficiency.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) and others, motivational orientation can be divided into four different types: integrative, instrumental, resentment and manipulative. They made a distinction between integrative

and instrumental motivation. A motivational orientation is said to be integrative if a person learns a foreign/second language in order to enter into an active interaction with the target language speakers, that is, socially and culturally he wishes to become a part of the target language community. The other one is instrumental if one learns the target language to get a job, etc., that is, a person learns a second/foreign language with utilitarian objectives, such as obtaining admission in a particular course or for trade purpose. They do not explore the latter motivations in detail. Some work has already been initiated in the attitude towards English in Bangladesh. A study done by Rahman (2005) showcases Bangladeshi students learn a foreign language mainly for its utilitarian value (instrumental orientation) rather than integrative motivation. His study is solely (besides a bit semi-structured interview) based on questionnaire, and targets only one private university's students in Bangladesh. The mentioned study does not aim to find out the link between varieties of motivational orientations and the language proficiency of the learners. The principle purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between different social psychological variables on the one hand and proficiency in English on the other. Our study shows that a significant correlation between scoring for exact responses versus acceptable included responses exists, suggesting that the Cloze procedure would be appropriate for use with non-native speakers. Except for medium of instruction, resentment motivation, and class-room anxiety, all other variables, namely, age, sex, socio-economic status, exposure to English, schooling, attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis, attitude towards English, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, manipulative motivation and parental support are significantly correlated with the Cloze scores. This paper maintains that age is positively correlated with the Cloze test, exposure to English, and total schooling, indicating that those students who are older have better schooling, more exposure to English and also have performed better in the Cloze test. Sex has an inverse correlation with Cloze, which suggests that male students have done better than female students. Cloze has a significant positive correlation with socio-economic status. This

paper also shows that more positive the attitudes and more integrative the motivation, the lower the level of proficiency of English of the learners. Schooling appears to be the most significant variable in relation to achievement in English. In addition to schooling, age and exposure to English also contribute substantially towards language proficiency in English.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

There has been a tremendous growth in the study of second language learning in the last decades or so. A study done by Noon-ura (2008) aimed at exploring the results of an intervention spanning 60 hours over three weeks designed to improve the listening-speaking skills of Thai students with low English proficiency for 60 hours over three weeks. Her study showed that the scores and the students' readiness, interests, and confidence in learning and using English were significantly increased after the intervention. Maleki and Zangani (2007) showed that there was a positive correlation between the two variables, namely English language proficiency and academic achievement (GPA) of Iranian EFL students. The correlation coefficient of the two sets of scores was 0.48. This suggests that as English proficiency increases, so does academic success, i.e. students with lower levels of proficiency in English had low academic performances. Feast (2002) found a significant and positive relationship between English language proficiency as measured by IELTS test scores, and performance at a university as measured by Grade Point Average (GPA). A substantial amount of research also has been conducted in the study of motivation in second/foreign language learning. Liu's (2007) study revealed that the Chinese students at tertiary level had positive attitudes toward learning English and were highly motivated to study it, and the students were more instrumentally than integratively motivated to learn English; moreover, the students' attitudes and motivation correlated positively with their English proficiency. In connection with the Bangladeshi context, the study by Rahman (2005) highlights that Bangladeshi students

learn a foreign language mainly for its utilitarian value rather than an integrative motivation. His findings seem to completely reject Maniruzzaman and Haque's claim (2000) that the integrative orientation is the dominant motivation/reason for the learning of English by Bangladeshi students. Rahman (2005) further proves that integrativeness is negligible for undergraduate students in the context of Bangladesh. Considered to be an important affective variable, anxiety has been found to be correlated with English-learning achievement among different groups of people in various contexts. Similar to the findings of Tang's study (2005) among college students, Na (2007) indicated that students indeed had a comparatively high level of anxiety in English learning classrooms with an especially strong fear of a negative evaluation. She also mentioned that males have a higher level of anxiety about English classes than females, and it was also found that a high level of anxiety plays a somewhat debilitating role in high school students' language learning, especially the anxiety of tests and English classes.

According to Stern (1983), proficiency can be looked at as a goal; thus, it is defined in terms of objectives or standards. He states that "proficiency ranges from zero to native-like proficiency. The zero is not absolute because the second language learner as speaker of at least one other language, his first language, knows language and how it functions" (p. 341). Bachman (1990) defines language proficiency as the language ability or ability in language use. Considerable amount of research in second language acquisition has shown that success in L2 can be related to measures of attitudes and motivation (Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1980; Gardner & Lambert, 1959, 1972). The research work concerning the role of attitudes and motivation on second language learning has made use of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery or the test derived from it (Gardner, Clément, Smythe, & Smythe, 1979). Gardner, et al. (1976) made a distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. To them, a person's motivation will be termed integrative if he/she learns a foreign/second language for active interaction with the speakers of the target (TL) language. On the other hand, a person's motivation will be called instrumental if he/she learns a foreign/second

language for utilitarian objectives, such as getting a better job, trading purposes or obtaining admission in a particular course.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), motivation to learn a second language is grounded in positive attitudes toward the second language community, and in a desire to communicate with valued members of that community and become similar to them. The role of orientation is to help arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals, either with a strong interpersonal quality (integrative orientation) or a strong practical quality (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

To quote Gardner and Lambert (1972):

We see now that the typical student of foreign languages in North America will profit more if he is helped to develop an integrative outlook toward the group whose language is being offered. For him, an instrumental approach has little significance and little motive force. (p. 101)

To measure L2 learners' motivation, Gardner (1985) developed the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a multi-component motivation test made up of around 130 items (variables). The development of the Battery has resulted in numerous research studies on L2 motivation, which reveal that, in general, motivation enhances second/foreign language acquisition, and that learners ranking high on integrative motivation work harder and learn faster than those who rank low on integrative motivation (Clément *et al.*, 1994; Lai 2000; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

Gardner, Lalonde and Moorcroft (1985) found that subjects who ranked high on language aptitude learned faster than those who ranked low and also those who had a high integrative motivation learned faster than those who had a low motivation. The hypothesis of Schumann (1978) is that acculturation works as major causal variable in second language acquisition and the degree of the learner's acculturation of the target language group (TLG) is as high as his acquisition of target (TL) language. Krashen (1982) has employed the Acculturation Model as a part of the theory the Monitor Model for a learner's language acquisition.

The significance of studying each language in its own setting has come prominently from Gardner and Lambert, and they also suggested that the configuration of variables obtained in one setting may not be valid in another setting. The growth of the research in the social psychological aspects of second language learning in different parts of the world in recent years is phenomenal. Khanna and Agnihotri (1982, 1984), Khanna (1983) and Young and Gardner (1990) found that motivational or attitudinal variables could not account for the variance in second language proficiency as much as social variables did. Au (1984) found the existence of a negative correlation between the desire of learning English and English proficiency measures. Au (1988) found substantial evidence against the hypothesis propagated by Gardner and Lambert, which is, integrative motivation positively correlated with second language achievement. Lukmani (1977) found that the instrumental motivation of Marathi speaking children correlated significantly with English proficiency scores, but she did not address social variables in her study at all. Khanna and Agnihotri (1982, 1984) and Khanna (1983) felt that Gardner and Lambert's distinction of motivational orientation might not capture the motivational complexity of obtaining English proficiency in the Indian situation. Their results made Khanna and Agnihotri (1982, 1984) and Khanna (1983) redefine the distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation made by Gardner and Lambert. To them, there could be two kinds of motivational reasons; one of them was complementary and the other one was supplementary.

As empirical studies on second language learning motivation blossom, it has been found that integrative and instrumental orientations are not at opposite ends of a continuum (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994). Instead, they are positively related and both are affectively loaded goals that can sustain learning; nevertheless, as to which one is more important varies from context to context.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample consisted of students from class eight (30), class ten (30) and twelve (30) from different institutions in Bangladesh. Figure 1 provides the details of the sample design.

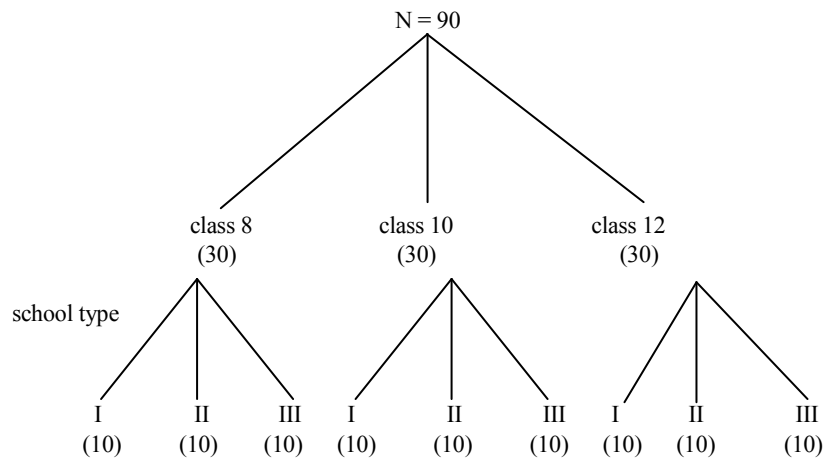


FIGURE 1
Sample Design

We had 30 students from each class room (section), that is, a total of 90 students. Three different kinds of schools (an English medium public school, a government aided public school and an ordinary school) were selected to address the socio-economic variables. English medium children were taken from a school of Dhaka, government-public school students from Jessore and ordinary students from Navaran and Jessore Bangladesh. We chose the co-educational schools so that we could collect data from both male and female students in the same class. A random sample selection was used in each class to select ten students. The information about the students and their socio-

economic background was obtained from their admission forms at the institutions. All of them were Bengali speakers though some of them had learned Arabic in their earlier years and were in the age group of 12-19 years.

Tools

We used the following tools to collect data from our informants.

- I. A Cloze test.
- II. A detailed social psychological questionnaire.

The Cloze Passage

The proficiency in English was measured through the Cloze test procedure. Following the principles of 'Cloze procedure', we used an extract from Jim Corbett's (1952) 'Lalajee' where every sixth word was deleted after leaving the first and the last sentence unmutilated. It was a very simple and interesting passage. It was about 242 words in length. We had a total of 30 blanks. The blank size was kept uniform throughout the entire passage.

Procedure

Examinees were given a copy of the test containing the instructions which stressed that only the one word which seemed the most appropriate within the context of the passage was to be used in each blank. Students were advised to read the passage twice before starting to fill in the blanks. Students were also told that spelling would not count against them as long as the scorer could read the intended word. The test administrator read through the complete instructions with the candidates. He then asked whether there were any questions. The time allowed for this test was thirty minutes. Students were told to consider the test as a challenge of their English language ability.

Method of Scoring

The test was scored *twice* for each candidate: once by the exact word method whereby only the words which were originally deleted from the text were considered correct and second by the acceptable scoring method whereby any word which was considered contextually and grammatically correct was also counted as correct. Each blank when filled correctly was assigned one point; hence, the score range of the cloze test was 0-30. Following 'an exact retrieval' scoring procedure, every 'exact' recall was given a score of 1. Thus, a subject could get a maximum score of 30.

The Social Psychological Questionnaire

This section consists of a detailed social psychological questionnaire designed for the informants (students) to elicit the following kinds of information: (a) Personal background, age, sex, socio-economic status, types of education received (b) Medium of instruction (c) Attitude towards English (d) Attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis (e) Motivational orientation (f) Parental encouragement to learn English (g) Classroom anxiety.

A total of 25 variables (v/vs) was created to examine the patterns of correlation obtained in our data. A complete list of variables is provided in Appendix. We surveyed variables, such as, age (v. 1), sex (v. 2), exposure to English (v. 3), schooling (vs 4-6), residence/ address (v. 7) under personal background and family information. We took the educational qualification of the subject's parents (vs 8-9), their monthly income (vs 10-11) and occupation (vs 12-13) as variables under Socio-Economic Status or SES (v. 14), and the total socio-economic status was seen as aggregate of the above variables (vs 7-13). The medium of instruction was considered as variable no 15 (v. 15). Attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis (v. 15) was designed to measure the informant's attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis. The variable for attitude to English was variable 17 (v 17). Integrative motivation (v. 18), instrumental motivation (v. 19), resentment

motivation (v. 20) and manipulative motivation (v. 21) were examined under motivation to learn English. The other variables examined in our survey were class-room anxiety (v. 22), parental support in learning English (v. 23), and the remaining two variables dealt with the Cloze test; one of them was the Cloze test exact (v. 23) and the other was the Cloze test acceptable included (v. 25). The questionnaire was administered to the students only after assuring them that the data to be collected from them would be strictly confidential and it had nothing to do with their college/school evaluation. The questionnaire provided was followed by the Cloze test. Schooling (vs 4-6) was seen in terms of the nature of schooling at two different levels, primary and secondary (post-primary). The type of school that the subject attended was measured in terms of the prestige of the institution, medium of instruction used, and other facilities. There are English medium schools where not only the medium of instruction is English but also other facilities required for an optimal control over English are available. There are other schools (run by government) where the medium of instruction is Bengali and facilities for learning English are minimal. A high school is suggestive of a strong bias in the total education of the informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We chose the co-educational schools so that we could get data from both male and female students in the same class, and got nearly equal number of male and female students. Out of the samples of students 47 were female and 43 were male. We used random sample procedure for each class-room (section) to select ten students. In 1976 English medium schools in Bangladesh following the British Ordinary Level Examinations (O-Levels)/ Advanced Level Examinations (A-Levels) level system started in Bangladesh, as exemplified by the establishment of Scholastica School. Students in Bangladesh now have the right to attend schools in the English-medium where courses are all taught in English using English books with the

exception of the Bengali and religious courses (if the school offers them), which are offered in Bengali and Arabic. These English-medium schools are privately owned and thus reserved for the higher wealthy class of society. Private English-medium schools are located exclusively in urban areas, where the middle and upper-classes live. It has been noticed that the gulf between speakers of Bengali and English pits students educated in the vernacular against those educated in the colonial language, with the latter enjoying a competitive advantage throughout the years in schooling and employment as well. Both O-Levels and A-Levels are prepared in England, administered in Bangladesh, and marked in England. Keeping this backdrop in mind, it has been observed that interestingly the teachers of English of English-medium schools in Bangladesh are mostly from Bengali medium schools with a few exceptions. These schools try to provide a qualified teaching staff, good libraries, and several recreational facilities. On the other hand, teaching in government-run schools/colleges is done mostly in the Bengali medium, following the national curriculum; even in English classes, the medium of instruction is Bengali to teach students English and these schools/colleges provide little exposure to English. The teaching faculty of government-run schools/colleges is competent as they are recruited through government-run examinations. The students of middle or lower-middle classes go to government-run schools/colleges. The ordinary schools/colleges cater to children coming from relatively poor socio-economic backgrounds. There are minimal opportunities for them to get exposure to English and the library and recreational facilities are limited, and the teaching staffs are not qualified to teach English and other subjects.

The analysis was done by using a software package SPSS/Win.

TABLE 1
Cloze Retrievals (%) of the Students

School	Class-room		
	8	10	12
English Medium (n=30)	33.00	47.66	48.33
Government-aided (n=30)	31.66	34.33	41.66
Ordinary (n=30)	16.00	20.66	29.66

Table 1 shows vertical progress of performance among schools. The students of the government-run school have performed better than students of the ordinary school. The students of English medium school have also performed better than students of government-run school. For example, the students of class eight of the government-run school performed (31.66%) than the students of class eight of ordinary school (16.00%) and the students of class eight of the English medium school performed (33.00%) than the students of class eight of the government-run school. The same can be said for the other two classes (class ten and twelve) of students as well.

TABLE 2
Cloze Retrievals (%) of the Students

School Type	Class-room					
	8		10		12	
	Age		Age		Age	
English Medium (n=30)	13-14	33.00	15-16	47.66	17-18	48.33
Government-aided (n=30)	14-15	31.66	16-17	34.33	18-19	41.66
Ordinary (n=30)	15-16	16.00	17-18	20.66	19-20	29.66

We also see horizontal progress of performance within the schools. The students of class ten of any school (English medium, government-run, or ordinary school) performed better than students of class eight and class twelve students of any of the three schools performed better than the students of class ten. Thus, we can say that the students of class twelve of English medium school are the best performers in the Cloze test whereas the students of class eight of the ordinary school have performed very poorly in the Cloze test. Here, we can also mention that as the students move up to higher classes, their English proficiency level also increases.

The interpretation of the variables based on Mean score, and Standard Deviation (S.D) is shown in the following table.

The mean age of the sample is 15.33 (S.D 2.02). On average, the students involved in this study are found to be half a year above the standard age of their respective classes. The students of the ordinary schools were perhaps sent late for their primary education by their parents.

The mean score of sex for the sample is 1.42 (S.D .49). This score shows that on an average, there are more female students than male students. The reason behind this can be the policy of the Bangladesh government which has started granting many schemes, scholarships for classes 6 to 12 to encourage female students to study.

English is taught from class one as a subject throughout Bangladesh. The mean score of exposure to English for the sample is 9.43 (S.D 2.27) on a scale ranging from 0 to 14. The reason for this healthy figure is because of their learning English from class one onwards.

The following Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of the variables of our study.

TABLE 3
Variable, Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable No	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Age	15.33	2.02
3	Exposure to English	9.43	2.27
4	Schooling Primary	5.14	1.72
5	Schooling Secondary	5.65	1.49
6	Schooling Total	8.92	3.62
14	SES	18.50	4.36
15	Medium of Instruction	32.27	2.31
16	Attitude to English-Speaking Bangladeshis	11.46	2.35
17	Attitude to English	31.49	4.79
18	Integrative Motivation	16.74	3.21
19	Instrumental Motivation	17.87	2.40
20	Resentment Motivation	7.93	2.40
21	Manipulative Motivation	7.23	2.49
22	Class-room Anxiety	8.53	3.94
23	Parental Support	16.47	3.84
24	Cloze Test Exact	10.11	3.94
25	Cloze Test Acceptable Included	16.73	5.65

The mean scores of primary schooling, secondary schooling and total schooling are 5.14 (S.D 1.72), 5.65 (S.D 1.49) and 8.92 (S.D 3.62)

respectively. The score for primary schooling (v. 4) and secondary schooling (v. 5) could vary from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 9 whereas the score for total schooling (v. 6) ranges from 6 to 18. The mean of total schooling shows that the students are from quite prestigious schools and also there are also some facilities for learning English.

The mean SES of the sample is 18.50 (S.D 4.36) on a scale ranging from 7 to 35. The mean score suggests that most of the students belong to the middle class and lower-middle classes.

The mean score of medium of instruction for the sample is 32.27 (S.D 2.31) on a scale ranging from 12 to 36. The mean score indicates that most of the students want greater amount of English to be used in teaching at all levels of education. The figure tends to suggest that there should be very little use of English at the primary level and more in professional levels of education. It is also noticed that if a student prefers an English medium at one level of education, he prefers the English medium for other levels of education as well.

Cloze test

The mean score exact, exact and acceptable included of the Cloze test are 10.11 (S.D 3.94) and 16.73 (S.D 5.65) respectively. The score range of the cloze test was 0 to 30. The mean scores reflect the poor performance of the students. The nature of the text coupled with such standard of Bangladesh education as well as the lack of qualified English teachers can be the reasons for the student's poor performance of the students.

Attitude towards English: The mean attitude towards English of the sample is 31.94 (S.D 4.79) on a scale ranging from 8 to 40. On an average, the attitude towards English of the students is on the higher side. The mean score suggests that the level of attitude towards English of the students falls between a slight positive (high) to a total positive orientation. The attitude towards English measured through its suitability for creative writing (see following Table 4) is not totally positive unlike scientific thinking. However,

it is considered overwhelmingly (67.7%) suitable for scientific thinking. Most students agree that the present system of education has benefited enormously (73.3%) from English and greater efforts (81.1%) should be made to spread English throughout Bangladesh.

Analysis of the Cloze Test

Following Haskell's (1976) level of judging a Cloze score, we have divided the sample into three groups in order to measure the overall global proficiency of the students. This classification is aimed at determining the proficiency level of second language learners and the difficulty level of the test the students are faced with.

TABLE 4
Sample Distribution According to Haskell's Criteria (N=90)

	Mean Score	Number of Students
Independent Level	Over 54	5
Instruction Level	44-53	14
Frustration Level	Below 43	71

A close look at the above Table 4 tells us that most of the students, i.e. 71 out of 90 i.e.78 per cent, of the students are at the frustration level. This indicated that the passage is difficult for the majority of the students and even extra help from the English teacher would have not been useful for them. The average mean score of Cloze Exact (see Table 3: Variables, Mean and Standard Deviation) is only 10.11 which suggests that the majority of the students are not proficient in English. The poor performance of the students clearly shows that a few students are able to acquire academic/cognitive level of proficiency in English in Bangladesh. Fourteen students, i.e. about 15 percent, are at the instruction level, which means that they are able to read and comprehend the passage and their performance would go up with the help of the English teacher. Only five students, i.e., nearly 6 per cent of the students are at the independent level which indicates that they have acquired

full grasp over English and have an academic/cognitive proficiency in English. It also shows that without the help from the English teacher, they are quite capable of comprehending the test.

Classifications of the Deleted Words

We have classified the deleted words of the Cloze test into content words (Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives and Adverbs) and function/grammatical words (Articles, Prepositions, Pronouns, Conjunctions, Determiner and Adverbial particles). This kind of classification helps us to determine which category or categories are easier or more difficult for students to retrieve.

TABLE 5
Percentage of Retrieval of Content and Function Words (N=90)

	Exact (%)	Acceptable Included (%)
Content Words	24.94	50.80
Function Words	38.88	58.83

From the above Table, we can say that the students have found the exact function words easier to retrieve than the content words of the Cloze test

Correlation Analysis

The level of significance of the values of the correlation coefficient (r-value) is dependent on the sample size. The sample size of this study is ninety and the loading considered significant is as follows: $r \geq .26$ $p \leq .01$ and $r \geq .20$ $p \leq .05$

TABLE 6
Correlation Matrix

	V1	V2	V14	V24	V25	V3	V4	V5	V6	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20	V21	V22	V23
AGE 1	1	-.119	-.076	.42**	.432**	.870**	.024	-.131	.522**	.006	-.285**	-.248*	.109	.057	-.032	-.139	.263*	.428**
SEX 2		1	.000	-.282**	-.243*	-.025	-.008	-.080	-.069	-.025	.195	.251*	.061	-.013	-.061	.146	-.059	.281**
SES 14			1	.246*	.196	.083	.298**	.338**	.122	-.072	-.348**	.073	.319**	.326**	.343**	.346**	.325**	.142
CLOZ EXA 24				1	.926**	.400**	.504**	.396**	.598**	.138	-.413**	-.491**	.320**	.291**	-.162	-.533**	.104	-.459**
COLZ ACC 25					1	.411**	.505**	.430**	.636**	.149	-.377**	-.429**	.287**	.259**	-.211*	-.499**	.056	-.469**
EXP ENG 3						1	.055	-.254*	.463**	.043	-.290**	-.178	-.086	.030	-.089	-.164	.120	-.415**
SCH PRIM 4							1	.617**	.589**	.310**	-.248*	-.384**	.218*	-.313**	-.266*	-.610**	.071	-.271**
SCH SECO 5								1	.892**	.395**	-.325*	-.314*	.484**	-.401**	-.221	-.364**	-.241	-.225
SCH TOTA 6									1	.241*	-.358**	-.390**	.250**	-.164	-.251*	-.445**	.052	-.385**
MED INST 15										1	.021	-.063	-.072	-.009	.070	-.090	.104	-.150
ATT EN BA 16											1	.405**	.416**	.235*	.286**	.354**	.046	.420**
ATT ENGL 17												1	.326**	.448**	.294**	.549**	-.128	.574**
INTE MOT 18													1	.538**	.117	.388**	.183	.513**
INSTR MO 19														1	.139	.534**	.181	.427**
RESE MO 20															1	.281**	.206	.208*
MANIMO 21																1	.120	.431**
CL ANXIE 22																	1	-.041
PAR SUP 30																		1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-

An Overview

Language Proficiency and Social Psychological Variables:

TABLE 7
Correlation of Social Psychological Variables with Cloze Test

Social Psychological Variable	Cloze Test
Age	.42**
Sex	-.28**
Exposure to English	.40**
Total Schooling	.59**
SES	.24**
Medium of Instruction	.13
Attitude to English-Speaking Bangladeshis	-.41**
Attitude to English	-.49
Integrative Motivation	-.32**
Instrumental Motivation	-.29**
Resentment Motivation	-.16
Manipulative Motivation	-.53**
Class-room Anxiety	.10
Parental Support	-.45**

i. A significant correlation ($r = .42$; $p \leq .01$) is found between age (v. 1) and

Cloze exact (v. 24). It suggests that the older students have performed better than the younger ones in the Cloze test.

ii. A significant inverse correlation ($r = -.28$; $p \leq .01$) exists between sex (v. 2) and Cloze test exact (v. 24). It suggests that boys have performed significantly better than girls in the Cloze test.

iii. Cloze test exact (v. 24) correlates ($r = .40$; $p \leq .01$) positively in a significant way with exposure to English (v. 3). This shows that those students who have more exposure to English perform better in Cloze test.

iv. Cloze test exact (v. 24) shows positive and significant correlation with total schooling ($r = .59$; $p \leq .01$). These positive correlations show that those students who have received better primary, secondary and total schooling perform reasonably well in the Cloze test exact.

v. A significant positive correlation ($r = .24$; $p \leq .05$) is found between SES (v. 14) and exact Cloze (v. 24) retrievals. This suggests that those who have come from high socio-economic status perform better than those of low socio-economic status in the Cloze test.

vi. Cloze test exact (v. 24) is seen to correlate ($r = -.41$; $p \leq .01$) negatively in a significant way with attitude to English-speaking Bangladeshis (v. 16). This suggests that those students who have performed better in Cloze test exact do not have positive attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis.

vii. Cloze test exact (v. 24) bears significant negative correlation ($r = -.49$; $p \leq .01$) with attitude to English (v. 17). This inverse correlation indicates that those students who have got better score in Cloze test exact do not view English more favorably.

viii. Cloze test exact (v. 24) holds a significant inverse correlation ($r = -.32$; $p \leq .01$) with integrative motivation (v. 18). This negative correlation shows that the students who have performed well in Cloze test exact have less integrative motivation for learning English.

ix. The correlation ($r = -.29$; $p \leq .01$) of Cloze test exact (v. 24) with instrumental motivation (v. 19) is also negative. This suggests that those students who have performed reasonably well in Cloze test exact do not have a high level of instrumental motivation to study English.

x. Cloze test exact (v. 24) correlates ($r = -.53$; $p \leq .01$) significantly in a negative way with manipulative motivation (v. 21). This negative correlation suggests that those students who have received a better score in the Cloze test exact do not sustain high level of manipulative reasons for learning English.

xi. Cloze test exact (v. 24) has an inverse correlation ($r = -.459$; $p \leq .01$) with parental support (v. 23) suggesting that those students who have performed better in Cloze test exact have received less parental support for learning English.

Cloze Test Acceptable Included (v 25):

A highly significant positive correlation ($r = .92$; $p \leq .01$) holds between Cloze test exact (v. 24) and Cloze test acceptable included (v. 25) (see Table 6). This correlation suggests that the students who have scored well in Cloze test exact have also got better score in Cloze test acceptable included (in the same Cloze test).

The correlation matrix of Tables 6 shows that proficiency in English is correlated far more significantly with social variables, such as, schooling, age, parental support, exposure to English, attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis, integrative motivation, etc. Schooling is significantly correlated with proficiency in English. Variables which have relatively low correlation with achievement in the Cloze test include sex, socio-economic status and instrumental motivation. Variables which are slightly more significant include age and integrative motivation. Exposure to English has a significant correlation with proficiency in English. It is found among those students who have studied in the English medium school. Attitude to English and manipulative motivation are also found to have significant correlations with proficiency in English. It appears that the learners who are negative in their outlook towards English and have less manipulative reasons for learning English tend to be proficient in English. It is very rare that manipulative motivation turns out to be significant; this area needs further investigation.

The network of all the significant correlations can be seen in Figure 2.

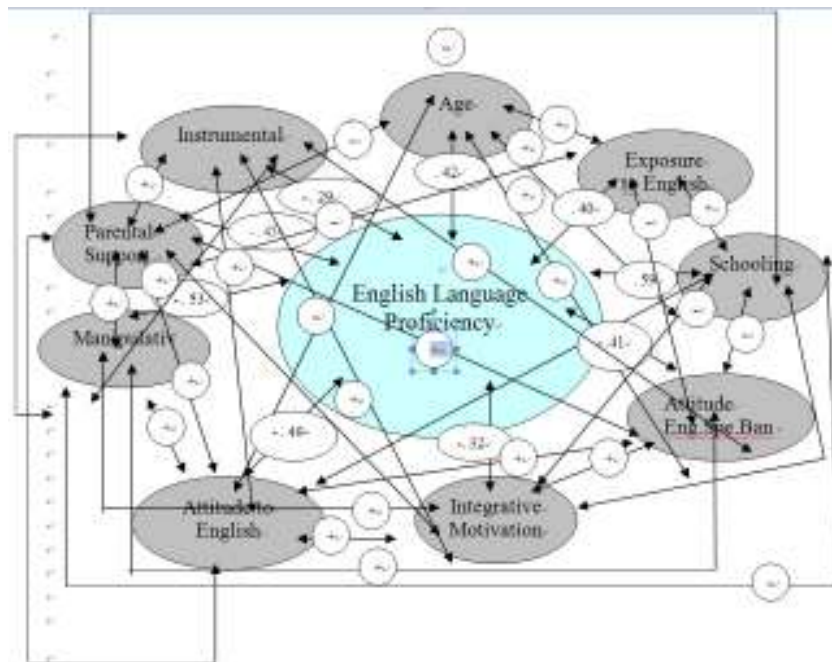


FIGURE 2
Correlation of Social Psychological Variables with Cloze Test

From Figure 2, we can say that among the socio-biological variables, age, exposure to English and schooling are not strongly and positively correlated with Cloze, but they are among themselves. It is thus possible to say that in general, senior students with higher exposure and better schooling have higher scores. Though attitudinal and motivational variables are positively correlated among themselves, they generally correlated negatively and strongly with Cloze scores. Though those who are positively inclined towards English are also positively inclined towards English-speaking Bangladeshis and have a strong motivation to learn English, they do not end up scoring highly on the Cloze. As in several other studies (Agnihotri *et al.* 1988, Khanna, 1983; Khanna & Agnihotri, 1982, 1984), it seems social variables are more important for proficiency in a second language. This study in fact

has shown that the cluster of attitudinal and motivational variables may in fact be negatively associated with language proficiency.

CONCLUSION

We have found a significant correlation between scoring for exact versus acceptable included responses suggesting the cloze procedure would well be appropriate for use with non-native speakers. Except for medium of instruction, resentment motivation and class-room anxiety, all other variables, namely, age, sex, socio-economic status, exposure to English, schooling, attitude towards English-speaking Bangladeshis, attitude towards English, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, manipulative motivation and parental support are significantly correlated with the Cloze scores. We have observed that age was positively correlated with the Cloze test, exposure to English and total schooling, indicating that those students who are older have better schooling, more exposure to English and also have performed better in the Cloze test. Sex has an inverse correlation with Cloze which suggests that male students have done better than female students. Cloze has shown significant positive correlation with socio-economic status. This indicates that the learners who are from the lower rungs of society have not done well in the Cloze test though they have a positive attitude to English-speaking Bangladeshis and also have realized the importance of English for getting a better education and good jobs. The reason might be that they do not enough access to English. Those students who have performed better have come from a high socio-economic status and do not sustain positive attitudes towards English-speaking Bangladeshis and view English unfavorably. We have observed that the maximum numbers of students, that is, over 78 per cent of them are at the frustration level. The other reasons that are responsible for this poor performance of the students are a lack of a standard educational system and overall poor teaching by unqualified English teachers. It is obvious that those who are from high socio-economic status can afford to

learn English through private tutors and also have access to other sources. Thus, we see from the results that the more positive the attitudes and more integrative the motivation, the lower the level of English proficiency of the learners.

Our study has shown that the variables which appear to be the most significant in their relationship with total achievement include age, exposure to English, and schooling. Total achievement in the Cloze test is highly correlated with primary, secondary and total schooling. Schooling, thus, appears to be the most significant variable in relation to achievement in English. Schooling also has been found to be a very significant variable in several other studies. Williams (1981), concerned with the relative significance of different social and psychological variables in relation to the ability of Nigerian children in reading English, also found that the 'type of school' accounted for no less than 37 per cent of the variance in the combined scores. Agnihotri *et al.* (1982) in their socio-psychological study of achievement in English tenses found that schooling explained 29 per cent of variance in the total achievement in the use of tenses. Khanna *et al.* (1984) pointed out that speech skills were significantly influenced by the type of school a student had attended. The importance of schooling in second language learning becomes clear when we realize that it is only good schools which provide suitable facilities for encouraging the conversion of 'input' into 'intake'. Agnihotri *et al.* (1983) pointed out that these schools generally have qualified teaching staff, very good libraries and several recreational facilities where children can learn while playing. On the other hand, teaching in government schools generally concentrates on discrete grammatical points and provides very little interesting exposure. The ordinary schools cater to children coming from relatively poor socio-economic backgrounds. There are minimal opportunities to use English and the library and recreational facilities are limited, and a similar situation prevails in Bangladesh. It is obligatory for the students to use English all the time in English medium schools. On the other hand, English is seldom used outside the class-room in government schools. There are minimal opportunities for the students to use

English in ordinary semi-government schools and the teaching is done in Bengali even in English classes.

Socio-economic status was found to play a very important role in the development of English proficiency. This finding corroborates the results of many other investigations reported by Burstall (1975). We have noticed that a positive attitude towards the English-speaking Bangladeshis does not correlate significantly with the achievement in English proficiency. It was expected that the socio-economic status of the learners would correlate highly with their schooling and with the overall achievement in the Cloze test. Children from higher socio-economic background generally go to good schools and speak English more fluently than others. But, in the test administered by us, socio-economic status seems to bear very low correlation with achievement. The present study has shown that age is one of most significant predictors of proficiency in English. Hamid's (2001) work based on Syrian college students acquiring English also found that age was one of the most significant predictors of achievement and proficiency in English.

We have also found that social psychological variables significantly interact with social variables, and social variables are found to be more important for language proficiency. Our study has also shown that out of all social psychological variables only attitude towards English and English-speaking Bangladeshis and motivation manipulatively instrumental in nature have significant correlations with proficiency in English. It seems that in foreign language learning situations, such as those examined by Gardner and Lambert (1972), social psychological variables may be more important in determining proficiency/ achievement in a foreign language whereas in second language learning situations, such as that of Bangladesh, social variables are more important. Khanna (1983) found that the best predictor of achievement in English were proficiency in English and schooling. It appears that different sets of social psychological variables are likely to cluster with different linguistic skills in different social settings. Our study shows that attitudinal motivations have strong negative correlations though the result is in line with Indian studies where socio-psychological variables, such as,

schooling and exposure to English are found as important predictors for English proficiency. The high negative correlations of attitudinal motivations of our study require further investigations.

The study aims to examine the relationship between different social psychological variables on the one hand and proficiency on the other, but at the end, our study shows that schooling appears to be the most significant variable in predicting the students' proficiency though initially the study did not aim to link between the kinds/types of schools the students are attending and other variables. A future study could focus on these findings to give more insights to show statistical significant differences.

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APPENDIX

Coding Sheet

Variable No.	Name	Coding
1	Age	Running
2	Sex	Male=1; Female=2
3	Exposure to English	Running 0-14
4	Primary Schooling	3-9
5	Secondary Schooling	3-9
6	Total Schooling (4-5)	6-18
7	Residence	1-5
8	Father's Education	1-5
9	Mother's Education	1-5
10	Father's Income	1-4
11	Mother's Income	1-4
12	Father's Occupation	1-6
13	Mother's Occupation	1-6
14	Total SES (7-13)	7-35
15	Medium of Instruction	12-36
16	Attitude to English-Speaking Bangladeshis	3-15
17	Attitude to English	8-40
18	Integrative Motivation	4-20
19	Instrumental Motivation	4-20
20	Resentment Motivation	2-10
21	Manipulative Motivation	2-10
22	Class-room Anxiety	3-15
23	Parental Support	4-20
24	Cloze Test Exact	1-30
25	Cloze Test Acceptable Included	1-30