

# A Study of Construct Validity of English Language Reading Test of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Examination in Bangladesh

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## Abstract

*The aim of this study was to investigate the construct validity of the English Language reading test of secondary school certificate examination in Bangladesh. A qualitative research method was incorporated to collect and analyze the data followed by a retrospective and introspective interview. For conducting the research, the eight SSC candidates of session 2021-2022 and three teaching and testing experts were invited. The students were asked to participate in an instant English reading test and the experts were invited to make judgments on three reading strategies and students' reading performances. The study found a little agreement among specified reading strategies of secondary education curriculum, experts' judgments and students' used reading strategies for establishing the construct validity of the English reading test of secondary school certificate examination in Bangladesh.*

**Keywords— Construct Validity, English Language Reading Test, Secondary School Certificate Examination, Bangladesh.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Bangladesh is a country where Bangla is only one state language and English language emerged in Bangladesh before 1971 and it has been included in the pedagogy of Bangladesh as an ESL/EFL for the Bengali speakers (Sikder, 2015). The British education curriculum are offered from primary to higher secondary education in Bangladesh since the British colonization and this is highly test oriented education system (Sultana, 2021). English was introduced from primary education in Bangladesh and English is considered as a gateway to communicate nationally and globally (Sultana, 2018). The Ministry of Education (2010) focuses on English language and Bengali language equally from primary to higher secondary education.

The SSC, HSC examinations are the high-stakes tests which are conducted nationally all over Bangladesh. The aim of these national examinations is to measure how the students master all the objectives and goals of the national curriculum. The feedback or score on the performances of the students' competence in the test is used as an indicator of the learners' ability. The grading policy of these high-stakes tests have a great impact on learners' professional and social life and also teaching, learning and society have a consequence for high-stakes test results. The result of these high-stakes tests also indicate how proficiently the designed curriculum is implemented in the classroom teaching and in the test system.

### 1.3 Construct Validity of High-Stakes Test

### 1.2 High-Stakes Test in Bangladesh

Validity is the most important foundation of a high stakes test. Inability to confirm the validity in any high-stakes test might bring the unavoidable problems for human society. Dawadi and Shrestha (2018) reported that a high stakes test having no validity will be considered as “a police force without a court system”.

The construct validity is something which refers to the meaningful and accurate interpretation of learners' ability based on the test scores. To interpret the learners' language ability into a score, we need a basis to justify whether the score is valid or not valid. The basis of justifying the score is something which is called the construct of the test. The construct of a test is highly hypothesis based (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

According to Fulcher (2010), conforming the construct validity for a test is the prime responsibility of the test developers to make any decision based on the interpreted score of the learners' ability. To make sure the construct validity, the test developers must think of the extent to which learners' abilities have been assessed in such a way that has confirmed all the criteria which have been prescribed in the curriculum specification (pp.21-26). A blueprint of language testing was designed by the International Language Testing Association (ILTA) to make sure the validity of a language test (Douglas, 2010).

#### 1.4 Research Statement

The purpose of this research paper was to investigate the construct validity of English reading test of secondary school certificate examination in Bangladesh. The result of this high stake test also indicates how proficiently the designed curriculum has been implemented in the classroom teaching and in the test. To investigate the implementation of designed curriculum, this study was conducted.

Many studies about high-stakes tests have been conducted to examine for various purposes. For instance, Ali and Hamid (2022) studied on teacher agency and washback of Bangladeshi examination. Islam, Hasan, Sultana, Karim, Rahman (2021) researched on English language assessment in Bangladesh today. But no specific study on finding the construct validity of the English reading test of secondary school certificate examination has been found yet. For this reason, research on the English reading test of secondary school certificate examination is an interest to find out the construct validity of the English reading test.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework of Reading

Reading is a way of obtaining the knowledge from the written discourse (Pranata, 2019). Abdalla (2017) claimed that reading is something which is the most important skill of the English language learner. A quotation of reading has been inserted below:

*The reading process has been broadly defined from two different perspectives: cognitive and social. Reading from the cognitive perspective is a process where a reader activates various cognitive process, such as parsing sentences through an analysis of the grammatical constituents, interpreting clauses and making inferences in order to comprehend a written text whereas reading from the social perspective, is a situated activity that takes place in a specific context with specific task demand (as cited by Dawadi, 2016, p. 4).*

Emphasizing on reading level and reading types to understand the propositions, expeditious and careful reading is the main concern of the reading test (Dawadi & Shrestha, 2018). Scanning, skimming are the priorities of expeditious reading. In contrast, inferring the meaning of text overtly and covertly is the main focus of careful level reading (Dawadi, 2016). These reading abilities are something which are called reading strategies to understand the context, theme and argument of a written text (Dawadi & Shrestha, 2018).

### 2.2 ESL/EFL Reading Test Design of Secondary Education

According to the National Curriculum (2012), English subjects have been divided into two sections: English I Paper and English II paper. English I paper consists of two sections: Reading and Writing. The reading section was designed for examining the reading ability of students and this reading section consists of three reading passages. Total seven tasks from three passages have to be solved to complete the reading test (Sultana, 2018).

According to the Ministry of Education (2010), the aim of secondary education is to facilitate the four competencies of students to communicate nationally and globally. To facilitate the competencies of the learners, the focus of the former grammar translation method has been directed toward the communicative language teaching (CLT). The aim of the CLT based curriculum is to master all four skills of the English

language such as, listening, speaking, reading and writing. For the reading test, ability to read text has been assessed for the comprehensiveness and high thoughtfulness of the learners stated by the National Curriculum (2012).

### 2.3 Reading Specification for Secondary Education

According to the Ministry of Education (2010), the aim of secondary education is to facilitate the communicative skills of the learners to make them able to interact nationally and globally. To develop the communicative skills, CLT based education emerged in secondary education in Bangladesh. The aim of the CLT based education is to emphasize on the four skills of English language. Reading is one of them. To develop the reading skill, scanning, skimming, inferring, interacting are focused more in secondary education and these are called reading strategies. These reading strategies are something which students are supposed to apply in solving the reading tasks (National Curriculum, 2012). The table of reading strategies is below:

*Table: 1. Reading strategies specified by the National Curriculum (2012).*

Reading strategies	
Activities of Teacher	Activities of Student
The teacher selects/prepares reading materials such as textbook and other authentic materials including pictures, diagrams, graphs and charts, literary pieces etc and organizes, facilitates, guides, monitors reading activities.	Students read silently for scanning, skimming, inferring and interacting with students and teachers.
	Students read and do while/post reading activities such as MCQ, gap filling, true/false, matching, open ended questions, information transfer, making sentences from substitution tables, rearrangement of sentences, describing charts, graphs,

	pictures etc.
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National curriculum (2012) specified three reading strategies for the secondary school students. They applied these three reading techniques while they will solve the reading tasks. By these reading strategies, students' reading ability has been assessed.

### 2.4 ESL/EFL Reading Test Assessment System

Assessment is a system which is taken into account to provide the reaction as an indicator of the learners' ability (Fox & Cheng, 2017). Testing is something which is globally practiced for the social human beings to construct the ability of them (Namara, 2000). The reading test is designed to measure the understanding of the written text (Dawadi, 2018).

The National curriculum (2012) has stressed on the summative assessment system in secondary level education. The secondary school certificate examination is a summative assessment system which is designed to measure how the students have mastered all the objectives and goals of the designed curriculum (Sugianto, 2017). The SSC English test is designed to measure how the students have facilitated the four skills. To examine the four skills separately, the English test has been divided into two sections: English I and English II. The total marks of the examination are distributed equally between two sections. Reading test is the part of the English I paper which has been assessed based on three passages. Based on these three reading passages, post reading activities such as MCQ, gap filling, true/false, matching, open ended question, information transfer, making sentences from substitution table, rearrangement of sentences, describing chart, graph, picture etc. have been designed to assess the reading abilities of the learners (National Curriculum, 2012).

To understand the expeditious readings, some strategies have been specified in the National Curriculum (2012) where lower level strategies such as scanning, skimming, inferring have been stressed for understanding the reading text and context. These are

the main reading skills and a test has been designed to justify how they have applied these three reading skills while solving the reading tasks. A passage incorporated in the reading test of SSC 2018 was memorized by a candidate who did not need to read the whole passage to answer the question. For this reason, the English reading test failed to build up the validity (Sultana, 2018). Dawadi, Saraswati and Shresta, Prithvi (2018) reported that the learners were expected to use nine different reading techniques which were prescribed by the curriculum. Instead, they accomplished the reading test by applying additional five different techniques which were not mentioned in the curriculum specification. So this also failed to make the validity of a reading test.

### 2.5 Construct Validity of ESL/EFL Reading Test

To establish the construct validity in reading tests is something difficult in Bangladesh. The secondary school and higher secondary certificate examination is a highly memorizing based test (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018). Selecting the reading passages for the reading test is inappropriate because the passages have been selected from previous examination questions (Ali & Sultana, 2016). In National Curriculum (2012), the reading strategies have been stressed on measuring the reading ability. Instead, memorizing the reading passages is demotivating; students apply the reading techniques in solving the reading tasks. These types of behavior of learners and inability of test developers might build poor construct validation of a test. The implication in order to judge learners' reading ability will not be meaningful or appropriate if all the stakeholders are not concerned about the reading strategies (Ali & Sultana, 2016).

## III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Exploring the gap between the curriculums specified reading strategies and used reading strategies by the students in terms of construct validity might be new. Collected literature of construct validity of English reading test claims that finding the construct validity of English reading test is a way which is much more challenging to accomplish the research consistently. To complete the study in a consistent way the qualitative research method is expected to be used for collecting the data by several interviews, conducting a small examination for testing English reading ability of eight SSC candidates of session 2021-2022 and they were asked how they completed the reading test and which reading strategies they applied to complete the reading

tasks. In this regard, the students and teachers were invited for collecting the verbal reports and judgements on the basis of English first paper's seven reading tasks of Chittagong board question 2019.

### 3.1 Research Method

This research paper was to use the qualitative research method on the demand of consistent study. To represent the collected data, some computerized data analysis systems were incorporated in this research paper. The data was collected in a retrospective and introspective way. All three English teachers were interviewed individually and students were given a 90 minutes examination on the basis of reading passages. Then they were interviewed individually to know how they completed reading tasks in the examination.

### 3.2 Test Materials

The test was on the reading section of the English I paper where three reading passages were assigned for testing the reading ability. The reading section consists of in total seven reading tasks such as multiple choice question (MCQ), open ended question, fill in the gap, completing the table, writing summary, matching and rearranging the sentences. SSC reading question of Chittagong board session 2017-2018 was collected for conducting the reading test and collecting the data.

### 3.3 Participants

To make the study more consistent, the candidates of SSC examination session 2021-2022 were invited to participate in this research. The eight participants (age 15 to 17) were selected from rural and urban secondary schools and they were all Bengali native speakers. Some of the students were from rural secondary schools and some of them were urban renowned secondary schools. Total eight candidates were invited from five different secondary schools.

To select expert English teachers for making judgements on seven reading tasks was the most important task of this research paper as judgements on seven reading tasks and performances were required to be meaningful and justified. By keeping this in mind, the most experienced English teacher who has been teaching for 20 years at secondary school and the other two English teachers were invited to make judgments. Two of them were from rural two secondary schools and one was from an urban renowned secondary school. Having this variety in selection made my research justified and authentic. I could have made a comparison between rural and urban school teaching systems.



### 3.4 Data Collection Procedure

For collecting the data for my research, two forms of collecting data processes such as introspective and retrospective interviews were conducted. According to introspective data collection, the students were given information about my data collection process and why and how this research has been conducted. Then making them understand that they needed to think aloud in the reading test. The students were asked for their preferences of medium of instruction.

After making the students warm up, they were given a small reading test where the specified reading strategies and reading test items in a table were given to them and they were asked to apply the three reading strategies for each item. They were given a total of ninety minutes to complete the test. This examination was a paper and pen based test.

After completing the test, immediately they were asked some open-ended questions about how they completed the reading test and which reading strategies they used for solving the reading problems. All responses of students I recorded on my mobile phone with taking the consent from them in accordance with the retrospective data collection process.

A chart of specific reading strategies on the basis of seven reading tasks was given to three teachers and they were asked to select one or more than one strategy for each task. Then they completed the task.

After completing the task, all experts were interviewed individually to get non biased judgements. They were asked why they thought these reading strategies were supposed to be tested in the reading test. In contrast, the strategies which were not applied by students in the test, were represented toward the three teachers and they were asked why the students were unable to use those reading strategies in the reading test. By this cross discussion, the main aim of the research was addressed.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data from students was analyzed in a verbatim process where individual verbal reports were transcribed in the finding section. The judgments of three teachers were analyzed according to a pie chart and bar chart in the finding section which represented the frequency of reading strategies and this was one kind of quantitative study in my research paper.

The reading test was analyzed item by item depending on the frequency of usage of reading strategies. The data was also analyzed based on comparing and

contrasting the students and teachers' verbal reports. A comparison between students' usage strategies and specified reading strategies by secondary education curriculum was another important issue to build up the construct validity of the English reading test. All comparisons and contrasts were discussed in the discussion section.

## IV. FINDINGS

The collected data from students and teachers have been analyzed on the basis of three specified reading strategies measuring the reading ability of students. The frequency of reading strategies used by students and referred by teachers has been the focus of this section. This study was trying to find out the agreement of reading strategies used by students, referred by English teachers and specified by secondary education curriculum. But it is quite surprising that there is a little compatibility among them, which my study found from qualitative research. Now I would like to discuss all the found data below.

### 4.1 Reading Strategies Used by Students

The students had not clear understanding about reading strategies while taking examinations on the basis of the Chittagong board 2019 question. They were asked how they completed reading tasks. Some of them said that first they read the whole passage carefully and understand the theme of the passage. Then they answered the questions.

Secondary education curriculum specified only three reading strategies for measuring the reading ability of students. But the surprise was that no one could understand what is scanning or skimming or inferring. They used mostly two strategies: careful reading and understanding the themes which were not specified by the secondary education curriculum.

#### 4.1.1 Participant 1 Task 1 (Multiple Choice Question)

I managed a student who is a SSC candidate for the 2021-2022 session. His name is Rony Sarkar who is a student of a rural school. Rony Sarkar was explaining how he solved MCQ questions. I have transcribed his utterances below.

*I read the passage two times and I was trying to understand the concept of the passage. When I understood the passage was about river erosion. It made me understand the whole theme of the passage. Understanding the theme of reading comprehension made it easy for me to answer all the MCQ questions. I was trying to answer the question*

*while trying to match four options of each question to the passage. Finally I answered all the MCQ questions but I do not know if my answer is correct or not.*

There is no evidence of using specified two reading strategies such as scanning and inferring designed by the secondary education curriculum. Rather Rony Sarkar was using skimming and other two reading strategies which were not specified in the secondary education curriculum. But surprising was that he had not any idea before about the reading strategies to answer the multiple choice question.

Understanding the theme and understanding the context of the assigned passage were the main two strategies which he used to solve MCQ tasks. To understand the context and theme of the passage, he read the whole passage twice. Another thing he did was matching the four options of each question with passage to choose one option. Careful reading and three reading strategies: skimming, understanding the theme and context were applied while answering the MCQ questions and these were done by him frequently over the examination.

Overall usages of participant 1 indicate that three reading strategies were applied answering the multiple choice question which were not specified in the secondary education curriculum of the English reading test. On the other hand, scanning and inferring were not incorporated in answering the MCQ questions. So there is no consistency between the reading strategies used by students and specified by secondary education curriculum.

#### 4.1.2 Participant 2 Task 3 (Fill in the Gap)

I interviewed another student who is from an urban renowned secondary school. Her name is Maliha Ahmed who is a SSC candidate for the 2021-2022 session. Maliha Ahmed explained the whole process how she filled up gaps from passage. The utterances of her are transcribed below:

*First I read the questions to know which words I was supposed to pick up for the gap filling. Then I started reading for five minutes. I would like to mention one thing that I did not read the whole passage precisely. I only read some sentences to understand the context and theme of the passage and then created an image in my mind. After I finished the shallow reading, I was going to answer the fill in the gap question. To find the best word for the gap, I looked at passages two or three times to confirm. So this is the way I answered the fill in the gap question.*

To answer the fill in the gap questions from the second passage, three specified reading strategies such as scanning, skimming and inferring, were incorporated by Maliha. But she applied additional three reading strategies for instance understanding the context, theme and creating an image. So she applied six reading strategies in total to answer the fill in the gap question.

Maliha applied a total six reading strategies from which understanding the context, understanding the theme and creating an image were not specified in the secondary education curriculum for examining the reading skill of students. These extra three reading strategies made her read not the whole passage but she was able to fill the gap with correct words and she completed her task within given time.

Here students need not only the lower level reading strategies but they need some higher level reading strategies also to understand and solve the reading tasks. So it can be said that there is no compatibility between students' reading strategies and reading curriculum.

#### 4.1.3 Participant 3 Task 6 (Matching the table)

Participant 3 is a student from a rural school. Her name is Monika Biswas who is a SSC candidate also for the 2021-2022 session. She was explaining how she solved the table. I have transcribed her utterances below:

*Solving the table was easy for me as I practiced this table three to five times while I was taking my SSC examination preparation. When I solved all the board questions, this table came frequently in SSC board examinations every year. I can say that this table might be memorized by me. So solving the table did not take more than five minutes.*

There is no evidence of any reading strategies for solving the table as the table was known by Monika before and this was possible only for practicing previous boards' questions. This table was assigned mostly every year in some boards of SSC examination.

Specified reading strategies by secondary education curriculum did not emerge in solving the table because of only memorization of tables. So the English first paper question of Chittagong board 2019 failed to construct the validity of the English reading test.

#### 4.2 Teachers' Judgements on Reading Strategies

The responses of teachers were different from each other on the basis of each item. They were asked to

judge on seven items for testing the reading ability of students. They were asked to give other reading strategies outside the secondary education curriculum to solve the reading tasks. One of them mentioned that sometimes students depend on their fate and he considered it as a reading strategy. This was quite surprising. The teachers' responses have been represented through a pie chart item by item below:

#### 4.2.1 Task 1 (Multiple choice question)

All teachers reacted differently on multiple choice questions. One was saying students should use scanning for answering the multiple choice question (MCQ). Another two teachers were claiming students should apply skimming or scanning and inferring in solving multiple choice questions. There is no consistency among their opinions and this is quite surprising. The pie chart is representing the frequency of referred reading strategies by the teachers for multiple choice question answer below:

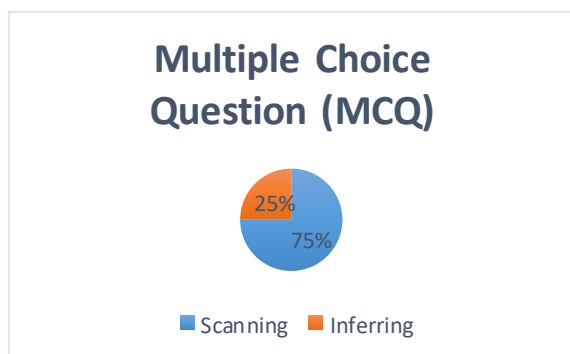


Table shows that students should use a scanning strategy to answer the multiple choice question and this was claimed by participant 1 and participant 3 (see table in appendix). They were asked to mention any other reading strategies for testing the reading ability of students but they were not willing to mention any additional reading strategies outside the specified reading strategies.

Only Participant 2, who was a five years experienced English teacher of a rural secondary school, was claiming that students should apply an inferring strategy also to solve the multiple choice question. So two reading strategies from specific strategies were recommended for answering the MCQ question. There is no evidence of using skimming strategies in teachers' judgments. Skimming was ignored by all English teachers in solving the multiple choice question.

Teachers made judgements on solving the MCQ question but there is no compatibility among their

judgements and this is not expected from them. This inconsistency makes the reading test invalid as teachers did not teach students how to solve multiple choice questions.

#### 4.2.2 Task 3 (Fill in the gap Question)

Here no consistency is found among the responses of English teachers though only scanning is judged by all of them for solving the fill in the gap question. The bar chart is showing all differences below:

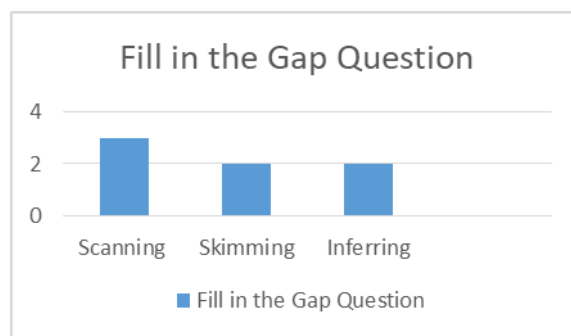


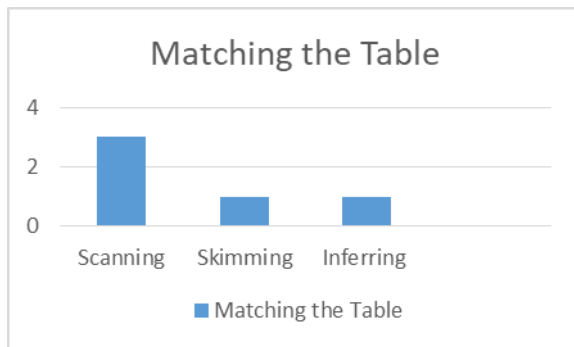
Table represents that scanning strategy is highly recommended by all teachers for students to solve filling in the gap question. By scanning students might be able to fill the gap with correct words. As a result, scanning strategy emerges in measuring the reading skill.

Skimming and inferring were referred by two teachers for solving task 2 also. The table shows that they were judged by teachers in an equal frequency. So it can be said that all the specified reading strategies of the curriculum were applied for solving task 2.

But one thing is noticeable here that all three teachers did not recommend all three specified reading strategies in answering fill in the gap questions. There is inconsistency among the teacher's judgments.

#### 4.2.3 Task 6 (Matching the table)

Matching the table was another reading task for which students did not apply any specified reading strategies as it was memorized by them. But teachers judged students use all three recommended reading strategies of the curriculum. This was quite surprising. So the bar chart is representing inconsistency below:



The above chart shows that scanning was highly recommended by all teachers for solving the table. So solving the table must require a scanning strategy and this was claimed by all three teachers. Skimming and inferring were preferred also by two teachers in the same frequency which the chart indicates. So solving the table needs all three specified reading strategies.

But yet there is incompatibility among three teachers as they all did not recommend all three specified reading strategies for answering the table. All three teachers recommend scanning but skimming was referred by one teacher and inferring was recommended by another one teacher. So inconsistency is still existing in solving the table.

## V. DISCUSSION

In this section I would like to discuss what I found from my qualitative research and consistency and inconsistency among all stake-holders of English reading test below:

The National Curriculum (2012) specified three reading strategies for examining English reading skill of students and these three reading strategies are considered a basic level of techniques designed for secondary education. Students must apply these basic three reading techniques while solving the reading task and in this way they know how to solve the reading tasks.

But reality is different from the national curriculum 2010. There is no consistency between the teachers' judgements and students' used techniques on solving the multiple choice question and also no consistency was found among teachers' judgements on solving the multiple choice question. Even they did not give any additional reading techniques for answering MCQ. They claimed that students were supposed to apply scanning strategy rather than other techniques solving the MCQ task.

But my study has found that students are not concerned in the regard of reading strategies and they were not taught how to solve the reading tasks. For instance, participant 1 who did not know what the reading techniques are for answering the multiple choice question (MCQ). Rather he read the passage twice to understand the context and theme of the passage while wasting his maximum time on reading the whole passage. The additional two reading strategies he applied in solving the reading tasks were not specified by the national curriculum 2010 and not also mentioned by the three English teachers.

So all collected data indicate that there is lack of consistency among students' used strategies, teachers' judgment and national curriculum 2010. This inconsistency might have occurred for lack of practicing the English secondary education curriculum properly. The national curriculum was not taken into account seriously by the authoritative administration for implementing the English reading curriculum at secondary school level.

Research data on filling in the gap question also indicates that there is a lack of compatibility between teachers' judgements and students' used reading techniques. Here also no compatibility was found among the teachers' judgements on reading strategies for filling in the gap question. Everyone judged the students' reading skill in different ways. They claimed that students should incorporate all three specified reading strategies for solving the fill in the gap question.

But students used additional other three reading strategies which were not mentioned by curriculum or teachers. For example, participant 2 completed the fill in gap task properly and she applied all three reading techniques. But surprising was that she incorporated additional three reading strategies for solving the task such as understanding the context, understanding theme and creating an image which were not mentioned anywhere in secondary education curriculum and teachers' judgements.

This was possible only because participant 2 was quite a bright student of an urban renowned secondary school. She was explaining how she completed the reading task and the process was quite logical and meaningful. She did not give much more time in reading the passage and she filled up the gap with correct words within the given time. So it can be said that a good school does matter to develop the skills of students as they are trying to maintain a standard



education. They take many steps outside the designed curriculum to enrich the standard of education and this is the reality of a renowned school.

Matching the table was another reading task in which lack of consistency was also found. Teachers were not focused on the same opinion. They made different judgments in this regard. Students also did not show any consistency of specified curriculum. For instance, participant 3 solved the table without applying any reading strategies as the assigned table was known to her and she considered it one kind of memorization. She was explaining how she solved the task. She pointed out that she practiced this table three to five times before while she was taking examination preparation and this was assigned in the board examination every year.

So solving the board questions made Monika able to solve the table without incorporating any reading strategies. This is quite unexpected for secondary education as the aim of secondary education is to facilitate all four skills of the English language to communicate nationally and globally. But this type of practice might interrupt learning the English language and distort the construct validation of a reading test. This has happened for various reasons such as students are suggested by the teachers to solve the previous board questions to get common in examinations and designing the board question is another reason which is done by the test developers. They have assigned the same task frequently in board examinations. These types of behavior break the system in primary, secondary and higher secondary education in Bangladesh.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Maintaining the consistency among all stake-holders is quite challenging in secondary education in Bangladesh. Lack of proficient teachers, test developers, sufficient funding and motivation for students might be a big obstacle in Bangladesh. The Ministry of Education and NCTB have revised the national curriculum frequently to ensure standard education in Bangladesh. So I would say building the construct validation in any examination in Bangladesh requires the agreement from all the stake-holders of an examination.

Research on the English reading test of secondary school certificate examination of Chittagong board question 2019 could not show the construct validity as there was lack of consistency among all stake-holders

of the examination. Most of the students were not concerned in the regard of reading strategies. Teachers were not much more attentive incorporating the reading techniques and secondary education curriculum has only focused on the basic level of reading techniques. So there is a lack of compatibility among three stake-holders of the examination which indicates that the validity of the English reading test of SSC examination did not emerge in the examination of Chittagong board 2019.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX: 1

Responses of All Participants				
Question Number	Question	Participant 1 (20 years experienced English teacher)	Participant 2 (5 years experienced English teacher)	Participant 3 (3 years experienced English teacher)
1	Which reading strategies do you think students will use in answering multiple choice question (MCQ)?	scanning	Scanning and inferring	Scanning
2	Which reading strategies do you think students will incorporate in answering the fill in the gap?	Scanning, skimming and inferring	scanning	Scanning, skimming and inferring
3	Which reading strategies do you think students will use in answering the true/false question?	Canning, skimming and inferring	Scanning, skimming and inferring	skimming
4	Which reading strategies do you think students will use in answering the matching question?	Scanning and inferring	scanning	Scanning and skimming
5	Which reading strategies do you think students will use in answering the open ended question?	Scanning and skimming	Scanning and inferring	Skimming

6	Which reading strategies do you think students will use in answering the re-arrangement of sentences	Skimming and inferring	Scanning and inferring	Skimming
7	Which reading strategies do you think students will apply in answering the describing a chart?	Scanning and skimming	scanning	Scanning
8	If you are thinking of any other reading strategies adding to test reading ability of a student, please mention those reading strategies below.	No comment	Sometimes the students depend on their fate/luck.	No comment

**Appendix: 2**

## Chattogram Board-2019

Sub Code 1 0 7

Time : 3 hours

English (Compulsory): 1st Paper

Total Marks : 100

[N.B.— Answer all the questions. The figures in the right margin indicate full marks.]

**Read the passage carefully and then answer the questions below.**

Meherjan lives in a slum on the Sirajgonj Town Protection Embankment. Her polythene-roofed shelter looks like a cage. She is nearly 45 but looks more than her age. In front of her shelter, she is trying to make a fire to cook the day's only meal. Her weak hands tremble as she adds some fallen leaves and straw to the fire. The whispering wind from the river Jamuna makes the fire unsteady. The dancing of the flames reminds Meherjan of the turmoil in her life. Not long ago Meherjan had everything—a family, cultivable land and cattle. The erosion of the Jamuna consumed gradually all her landed property. It finally claimed her last shelter during the last monsoon. It took the river only a day to demolish Meher's house, trees, vegetable garden and the bamboo bush. She had a happy family once. Over the years, she lost her husband and her family to diseases that cruel hunger and poverty brought to the family. Now, she is the only one left to live on with the loss and the pain. The greedy Jamuna has shattered her dreams and happiness. There are thousand others waiting to share the same fate like Meherjan. Bangladesh is a land of rivers that affect its people. Erosion is a harsh reality for the people living along the river banks. During each monsoon many more villages are threatened by the roaring rivers like the Jamuna, the Padma and the Meghna. It is estimated that river erosion makes at least 1,00,000 people homeless every year in Bangladesh. Infact, river erosion is one of the main dangers caused by climate change. If we can't take prompt actions to adapt to climate change, there will be thousands of more Meherjans in our towns and villages every year.

**1. Choose the correct answer from the following alternatives:**

1×7=7

(a) Meherjan tries to make fire to —.

(i) warm herself

(iii) make tea

(ii) cook day's meal

(iv) make night's meal

(b) Before the erosion of the river, she was —.

(i) wealthy

(ii) healthy

(iii) unhappy

(iv) joyful

(c) — has made Meherjan's life miserable.

(i) Old age

(ii) Sickness

(iii) River erosion

(iv) Frustration

(d) How old is Meherjan?

(i) Below 40

(iii) Below 50

(ii) Below 45

(iv) Above 50

(e) What does the word 'Demolish' mean?

(i) Build

(iii) Destroy

(ii) Preserve

(iv) Support

(f) What is the dangerous result of climate change?

(i) Cruel hunger

(iii) Landed property

(ii) River erosion

(iv) The curse of nature

(g) Meherjan's hands are trembling because —.

(i) she is frightened

(ii) she is feeble

(iii) she is tired

(iv) she is exhausted

**2. Answer the following questions.**

2×5=10

(a) Where does Meherjan live?

(b) What happened to her after the erosion of Jamuna?

(c) Describe Meherjan's residence?

(d) What property did Meherjan lose due to river erosion?

(e) What crushed Meherjan's dream and happiness and how?



**3. Read the following passage and fill in each gap with a suitable word based on the information of the text.** 1×5=5

26 March, our Independence Day is the biggest state festival. The day is celebrated every year in the country with great enthusiasm and fervour. It is a national holiday. The day begins with 31 gunshots. Early in the morning the President and the Prime Minister on behalf of the nation place floral wreaths at the National Mausoleum at Savar. Then diplomats, political parties, social and cultural organisations and freedom fighters pay homage to the martyrs. People from all walks of life also go there in rallies and processions. There are several cultural programmes throughout the day, highlighting the heroic struggle and sacrifice in 1971.

26 March is a (a) — day for the people of Bangladesh. On this day, our (b) — war began. The heroic sons of our country sacrificed their (c) —. So, the whole nation (d) — the day every year to (e) — respect to the martyrs.

**Read the following passage and answer the questions no. 4 and 5:**

Milton was a great poet after Shakespeare. His father early decided that Milton was to have a literary career. At the age of 7, in 1615 he got himself admitted in Star Palace School. But Milton could not pay attention to his studies in this school. After a couple of years, he left the school and studied at St. Paul's School till 1624. In the succeeding year, John Milton entered Christ College in Cambridge. He took his M.A degree at the age of 24 and went to his father's house in the village of Horton. Milton's father, however, had faith in his son and allowed him to continue his studies at Horton from 1632 to 1638. During his time, he made himself master of everything worth knowing in the literature of Rome, Greece, Italy, France, Spain and the Bible. In 1643, Milton met Mary Powel in a occasion and married her. But this great poet became blind in 1652. The idea behind his famous work 'Paradise Lost' developed after his blindness. 'Paradise Lost' saw the light of the day in the year 1665. Nine years after its publications, this great artist in Literature died.

**4. Complete the table below with the information from the passage.** 1×5=5

John Milton			
Name of events	Place	Year/Time	What/Contribution
Born		(i) —	
Studied from 1617-1624	(ii) —		
(iii) —		at 24	
Famous work			(iv) —
Milton passed away		(v) —	

**5. Write a summary of the above passage in your own words.** 10

**6. Match the parts of sentences given in Column A, B and C to write five complete sentences.** 1×5=5

Column A	Column B	Column C
(a) Education means	(i) conscious of our rights	(i) the individual.
(b) The purpose of education	(ii) frees a man	(ii) removing the darkness.
(c) Education makes us	(iii) aims at	(iii) from restrictions.
(d) Education	(iv) is to enlighten	(iv) from any educational institution.
(e) Education	(v) the receiving of formal learning	(v) and responsibilities.