

Editorial

This over-sized than usual issue of BELTA newsletter is a reflection of BELTA's robust activities despite the year-long pandemic presence in the world. BELTA has been operational in arranging the AGM, webinars, research wing presentation, teacher training project in collaboration with British Council and BELTA-THT event with the support of BELTA's long-tied friends working in Japan. We have also seen our chapters actively taking part in online activities through various teacher development programmes with the support of US Department of State through American centre, Bangladesh. Our teacher community also extended their support to the underprivileged ones through charity works. Our issue also highlights the postgraduate students' presence in the online teacher development programme indexing their reflection of this journey through their lenses.

The editorial team, therefore, extends their gratitude to the contributors/writers of the newsletter.

Special thanks are due to the BELTA President: Professor Dr Rubina Khan, Dr Mian Md Naushaad Kabir (Vice President), Ms Rabeya Binte Habib (Publications Secretary), Ferdoushi Rahman (Joint Treasurer), and Ahmed Bashir (EC Member) for the regular publication of the BELTA Newsletter.

We would like to request write-ups for the next issue from the members, chapter coordinators, or English teachers of any level on professional and academic activities. Selected write-ups will be published in the newsletter section of the BELTA website linked <https://www.belta-bd.org/newsletter-current>

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Message from the President



Dear All
Greetings for the new year!

2020 left our lives ravaged by a pandemic that robbed us of our freedom, happiness and peace of mind. Although the year took a toll on our physical and mental health, I am grateful to see how well we have managed to cope with our solitude and our losses. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the brave Beltans for their dynamic efforts in engaging in professional development and re-

search activities, alongside their regular duties amidst these trying and unprecedented times.

We now have the daunting task of holding the 9th BELTA International Conference. With your support, we hope to organize a day-long virtual International conference on 06 March 2021, in tune with what other teacher associations have done.

A big thank you to all those who have contributed towards the professional development of teachers, partaken in research endeavours and promoted the association's image in various ways. A special note of gratitude to the Newsletter team for their dedication and hard work in bringing out this current issue despite multiple constraints. This edition of the newsletter is abuzz with news of activities and accomplishments of BELTA members. I am proud to say that our members have brought laurels not only for themselves but also for BELTA and the teaching-learning community across the nation. I hope you will enjoy reading the news items and brief write-ups in the newsletter and share these with your peers at home and abroad.

I would like to end with this message encouraging everyone to engage in more partnerships. Partnerships are the key driving forces in bringing about changes and improvement in teaching practices. Let us all work together to foster the spirit of cooperation and aim for transnational collaborations. Let us all engage in collaborative teaching and research as well as guide our students to focus on innovative practices that will lead to synergistic experiences.

With the knowledge that collaborations can lead to a bigger impact than individualistic approaches, let us pledge to promote collaboration at all levels and take the work of teacher educators forward.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and hopeful 2021!

Dr. Rubina Khan
President, BELTA

BELTA AGM 2020 Report

The **first virtual** Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2020 of the Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) was held on Friday, 24th July 2020 from 3.30-5.30pm. 115 participants including BELTA Executive Committee members, chapter coordinators and general members from home and abroad joined the AGM. The meeting started on time with the welcome speech by BELTA President, Professor Dr Rubina Khan.

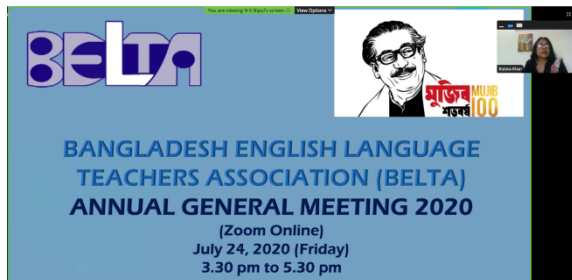


Photo: Opening remark from the President

After the President's welcome speech, the minutes of the last AGM were read out by Joint Secretary, Ms Adiba Murtaza, which was unanimously approved by the members. Later, General Secretary, Mr Nanda Kumar Das Bipul, presented the Annual Report 2019. He gave a short description of the significant events that took place during this period.

The chapter coordinators presented their reports one after another. Coordinators from Barishal, Chandpur, Chattogram, Chattogram South, Cox's Bazar, Cumilla, Gazipur, Kush-tia, Mymensingh, Narayanganj, Pabna, Pan-chagarh and Sylhet presented their respective

chapter reports. Chapter coordinators in their presentations shared a summary of the activities that they carried out last year and outlined their strategic plans for the next year. Most of the coordinators highlighted the importance of organising more teacher development programmes in their regions. After the chapter reports, Dr Akhter Jahan, Treasurer BELTA, presented the Audited Annual Financial report for January 2019 to December 2019 and the Proposed Budget for 2020-2021. She also asked the general members for their approval of Ahmed Zakir and Sons as the Audit firm for 2020-2021 which was approved immediately.

Quite a few issues were raised by some general members during the Q/A session and these were answered mostly by the BELTA office bearers. Most queries were related to the ways to increase teacher development programmes and participation of resource persons from Dhaka at regional seminars and workshops. They were also interested to know about the new date for BELTA International Conference. The meeting ended with the Vote of Thanks delivered by BELTA Vice President, Dr Naushaad Kabir.

Report on the Recent JALT Extensive Reading Forum

At the recent Extensive Reading SIG Forum, held during the international JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) conference, Ms. Shamsi Ara Huda of Daffodil International University, Dhaka, and Prof. Cherie Brown of Akita International University, Japan, co-presented the "Stories About Ourselves" project.

Prof. Brown described the project background, which was motivated by earlier research into Bangladeshi learners' reading

preferences and observations of their struggles with culturally unfamiliar reading materials Akter and Begum (2017)*. She described how the collaboration between THT ('Teachers Helping Teachers') and BELTA members, and with generous support from the BELTA Executive Board, has evolved, culminating in the new "Stories About Ourselves" website. The site provides free, graded reading resources, written by Bangladeshi writers, with a Bangladeshi focus, to English teachers and learners across Bangladesh.

the project may be found via the portal on the BELTA website, at the following link. <https://www.belta-bd.org/> or on the "Stories About Ourselves" webpage, at <https://www.stories.-belta-bd.org/>

* Akter, S. & Begum, T. (2017). "Effectiveness of Homegrown Material in Non-native Speaking Countries". NELTA 2017 presentation at Premier International IB World School, Khulmatar, Lalitpur, Nepal.

Cherie BROWN
Akita International University, Japan
Email: cbrown@aiu.ac.jp

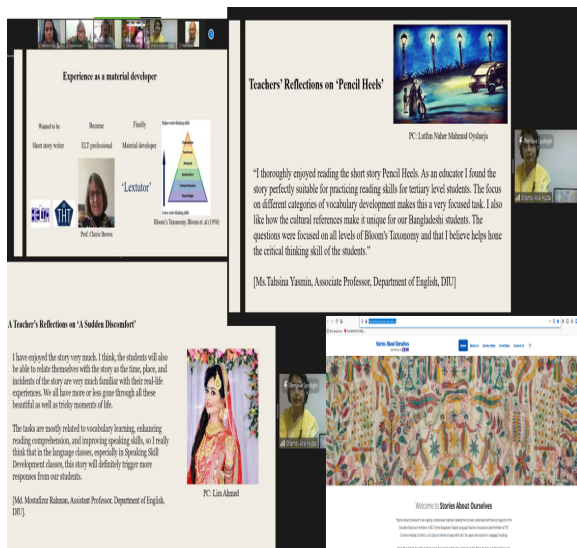


Photo: Snaps taken during the presentation on "Stories about Ourselves" project

Ms. Shamsi Ara Huda followed up with a description of the impact of the project on her both personally and professionally, enabling her to fulfil her earlier dream of becoming a writer and later an EFL materials developer. She also outlined responses to the project materials that her own students, and other English teachers, have provided, that indicate the project resources are being increasingly well-received.

The project continues to grow steadily, as new writers publish their stories, and new material becomes available. More details about

BELTA President@ NELTA Virtual Think-in, TESOLANZ, SPELT & JALT

The President of BELTA, Dr. Rubina Khan, presented a paper at the NELTA International Virtual Think-in-2020 (10-12 September 2020). The theme of the conference was, "Education in the Post COVID Context: Exploring Opportunities and Coping Strategies. Dr. Khan shared insights from her collaborative research study titled: *Emergency remote teaching at higher education in Bangladesh: overcoming barriers and the way forward*.

Professor Khan also participated as a panelist at the online panel discussion forum organized by TESOLANZ (TESOL New Zealand), 5-6 September 2020. The focus of the discussion was on how Covid-19 impacted Teacher Associations around the world. Dr. Khan shared views about the impact of COVID-19 on BELTA, the strategies used to overcome the challenges and shared plans for the coming days. She also attended the SPELT Virtual International Conference, November 7-8, 2020.

Prof. Khan was also an invited speaker at the THT SIG of the JALT International Conference, November 16-23, 2020. She was invited to share the success story of the BELTA-THT programme. She emphasised that teachers had immensely benefitted from the series of professional development seminars offered by the THT teacher educators. Dr. Khan discussed the highlights of the Virtual BELTA-THT programme, 30-31st October, 2020. She enjoyed attending the Extensive Reading SIG sessions and a number of other presentations at JALT.

Dr. Khan was also a panelist at the International Webinar on “Teaching and Learning Virtually: Coping with the Pandemic as an Academic”, organized by Canadian University of Bangladesh on 2nd October 2020.

BELTA-THT Virtual Teacher Training Programme

The two-day long BELTA-THT Virtual Teacher Training and Development Programme with the theme “Online EFL Teaching and Learning: Practical Tips and Techniques” was held from October 30-31, 2020 on a zoom platform. 165 participants of different educational institutions from home and abroad attended the event. The programme was inaugurated by Professor Dr. Rubina Khan, President BELTA and Professor Dr. Patrick Dougherty, Team Leader, THT on October 30 at 8:45 AM. There were nine presentations in total facilitated by eight international educator volunteers: Professor Cherie Brown, Professor Dr. Patrick Dougherty, Professor Anne Howard, Ms. Aya Dougherty, Dr. Joshua Jodoin, Mr. Yuichi Tagane, Professor Marian Wang and Professor Brent A. Jones- who are currently teaching in different universities of Japan.



Photo: Banner of the first virtual BELTA THT 2020 event

The facilitators talked about a wide range of topics related to ELT including how to create graded reading materials with a Bangladeshi focus, how to create a sense of academic community in online classes, how to write academic paragraph and essay through student collaboration based on Google Doc/ Drive and the app ‘duflow.com, how to use students’ heritage projects for active learning, how to publish research articles in renowned journals, how to utilize Google Forms and Flip-grid as tools for engaging students in Emergency Remote Teaching(ERT), how teachers’ flexibility can ensure classroom management in a distance learning setting, how Japanese SAC assistants are motivated to develop their English language proficiency and how Team-Based Learning(TBL) can be operated in online for CLIL(Content and Language Integrated Learning)courses. The intensive teacher training programme was ended by the closing remarks of Professor Dr. Patrick Dougherty, Team Leader, THT and Professor Dr. Arifa Rahman, Adviser, BELTA upholding the significance of friendship in materializing wonderful experiences even at the tough time of Corona pandemic.

The Teachers Helping Teachers Forum at JALT 2020

From November 16 – 23 November 2020, the Japan Association for Language Teaching held its 46th annual international conference on language teaching and learning. As part of that conference, on Friday, November 20th, Teachers Helping Teachers (THT), a Special Interest Group of JALT, held its annual forum. The forum brought together Teaching Helping Teachers officers, THT members, country coordinators, interested parties, and invited guests from countries and organizations with which THT held virtual conferences this year. One of the invited speakers was Prof. Rubina Khan, President of the Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA). Prof. Khan discussed the THT-BELTA friendship and our fall virtual THT conference that was held from October 30 – 31, 2020. She explained that the THT virtual program had eight presenters and about 150 attendees. Dr. Khan reflected on how this virtual program and other programs over the past fifteen years of the THT BELTA friendship have assisted BELTA in providing faculty development support and training for teachers in Dhaka and at other BELTA chapters throughout the country.

The Teachers Helping Teachers Forum was recorded and may be found on YouTube To access it, please go to this link: https://youtu.be/PKITmou65_8

Prof. Patrick Dougherty, Ed. D.
Dean of Academic Affairs
Professor, Akita International University Japan &
THT, Team Leader

Virtual BELTA-THT Programme 2020: Assorted Comments from MA (DU) Students

The BELTA-THT Zoom 2020 Virtual Teacher Training and Development Programme was very informative and insightful. I hope to integrate what I learnt from the programme into my teaching in the near future. – Nusrat Hossain

This webinar was very useful. I will try my best to share my webinar experiences with all my classmates. – Nahida Newaz Mimi

As an MA student I was ecstatic to learn from such a unique platform. I learnt about integrating technology, materials development and how to get published. The facilitators were very helpful and patient during the Q&A session which I thought was wonderful. – Nashin Sayara

It was an insightful programme. I picked up new ideas and tips for teaching. – Mst. Sumona Akter

This programme has given me some courage to teach students with optimism and confidence. – Israt Jahan

It was a very good experience. The sessions were interesting and engaging. I hope to join more THT-BELTA programmes in the future. – Moomtahina Nazifa Islam

BELTA-THT 2020 Virtual Teacher Training and Development Programme was an exclusive experience for me in this pandemic. It was my first active participation in an international programme and I learnt so much. – Md. Sajib Mia

Experience at JALT 2020 Online Conference

My ‘trip’ to the JALT2020 online conference was rather uneventful. The COVID-19 induced restrictions which meant that the conference could only be held online. The few sessions I could catch up including my talk, I did on my laptop from the comfort of my home. While it saved time and money, there was no joy of meeting people in person and chatting to them over coffee during the breaks.

Nevertheless, I was fortunate to attend the online conference as a BELTA representative. I must thank Professor Rubina Khan, the President of BELTA, Professor Arifa Rahman and the members of the executive committee for nominating me. My talk titled “Readiness for Online Education in Bangladesh” was based on a large-scale research project myself and three of my colleagues, Dr. Rubin Khan, Ahmed Bashir and Md. Elias Uddin, had conducted in July and August 2020. In the short presentation, I focused on the challenges to online education in the public universities in Bangladesh and shared strategies for implementation. The talk is available on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gw_arFWOltg. Looking back as I am writing today, I feel grateful that the conference took place despite the pandemic and I was in good health to participate virtually.

Bijoy Lal Basu, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of English
University of Dhaka

Plenary Speech by the Vice President, BELTA at International Webinars

Dr. Mian Md. Naushaad Kabir gave a talk on ‘**Choosing materials while teaching online**’ at the International Webinar organized by the

English Department, Sri Sivasubramaniya Nadar (SSN) College of Engineering on 17 October 2020. The talk can be accessed at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gT-gtPJNwWvQ&feature=youtu.be>



He also delivered a plenary speech on ‘Online University Education and English Language Teaching: Scopes and Challenges’ in the Two-Day Virtual Conference on **University Education and ELT: Scope and Challenges** organized by Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), India, on November 13-14, 2020. The talk can be accessed at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbbA1KkGkKg>

Acquiring the Four Skills of the English Language

Lynnet Rita Martin
Life Member, BELTA # 503

In Bangladesh, the scope of practicing English language is limited within the classroom walls only. The teacher plays the main role in the large size mixed ability classroom. The teacher can help the learners acquire the four skills in the following ways.

- Non-academic books and materials can be suggested to the learners to develop their **reading** habit.

- Proficiency in spelling, vocabulary, punctuations and sentence construction needs to be guided first. Then, gradually lead them to develop **writing** habit.
- An atmosphere of **speaking** can be created in the classroom. The teacher may guide with proper intonation, collocation and expression while speaking.
- Dictation, storytelling, reading aloud, conversations and interviews in the classroom may help to develop listening skills. Movies, audio clips, various channels in English dubbing can be presented to the learners as well.

BELTA Webinar Series

BELTA Webinar 02

Title: Investigating Learner Autonomy and 21st Century Skills in Blended EAP

Presenter: Dr Farhana Ahmed
Adjunct Faculty at Sheridan College, York University, and University of Toronto

On 26 September 2020, BELTA organized a webinar on “Investigating Learner Autonomy and 21st Century Skills in Blended EAP”, presented by Dr. Farhana Ahmed. Dr. Ahmed has a Ph.D in Applied linguistics from York University, Toronto, Canada and she is an adjunct faculty at Sheridan College, York University, and University of Toronto.

The webinar presented a study that examined learners’ autonomy and 21st-century technological skills in a blended post-secondary English for academic purposes (EAP) programme. In this research, 16 Chinese students (9 male and 7 female) from intermediate level

participated. Learners’ beliefs about EAP technology integration, perceptions of benefits, limitations of teaching and learning along with constraints inhibiting the use of technology (Google Drive, Google Doc and Slide, Google + Community, Google+ Hangout and Google Map) use were focused.

Through a systematic, multi-phased and exploratory case study approach, data were gathered in three phases from an EAP context. In Phase I (week 3-4), teacher interviews, online survey-1 and classroom observation-1 were conducted. In Phase II (week 5-7), students’ digital diaries, stimulated recall interviews and classroom observation -2, 3, 4, 5 were maintained, and in the 3rd Phase, focus group interviews and online survey 2 were carried out. Research participants were encouraged to work collaboratively and advised to practice the activities more.

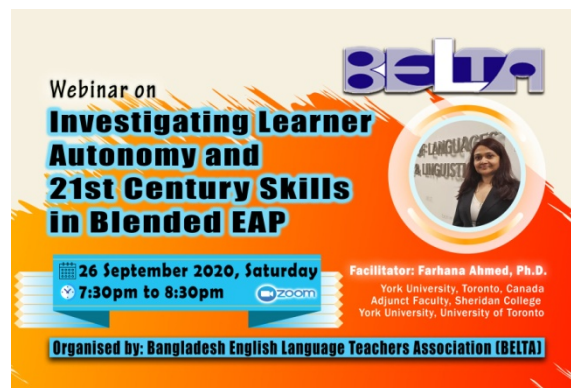


Photo: Banner of BELTA Webinar 02

At the end of this study, it was observed that students displayed a heightened critical awareness and movement towards learner autonomy through fostering of some 21st century competencies, when innovative pedagogical methods were supported by intervention in learning. Implications for English language teaching, teacher education, curriculum

design, and ongoing research were discussed at the end.

BELAT Webinar 03

Title: Digital Literacy and CALL: What's the Difference?

Presenter: Dr Claire Bradin Siskin
English Language Specialist
Email: csiskin@edvista.com

The presenter, Clare Bradin Siskin, is a consultant, teacher trainer, and practitioner of computer-assisted language learning (CALL). In this webinar, she explored the relationship between 'digital literacy' and 'computer assisted language learning (CALL) in her presentation titled, Digital Literacy and CALL: What's the Difference?

Claire mentioned that digital literacy in teacher education is the ability to select, use, and evaluate technology based on its affordance and capable of engaging in activities that may contribute to the realization of someone's learning or teaching goals.

Digital literacy also deals with, copyright, intellectual property, privacy, research skills, and language data. She explained that 'CALL workshops' include 'computer literacy'. Admittedly, she made clear that 'CALL' has a very vague term because there are so many options involved here such as, access to authentic language (www), computer mediated communication (emails, blogs, chat rooms, webcast), constructivist projects (word processing, presentation software, digital audios, web pages), tutorial CALL (course ware), web based CALL, concordances electronic references, online courses, argument and virtual reality, gamification, mobile assisted lan-

guage learning (MALL) and social media. These provide a clear difference between digital literacy and CALL. She perceived digital literacy is 'knowing how to do things' while CALL is about language learning. She also analyzed the issues contradict CALL such as; rapid changes in technology, and how e-reading threatens learning in humanities.

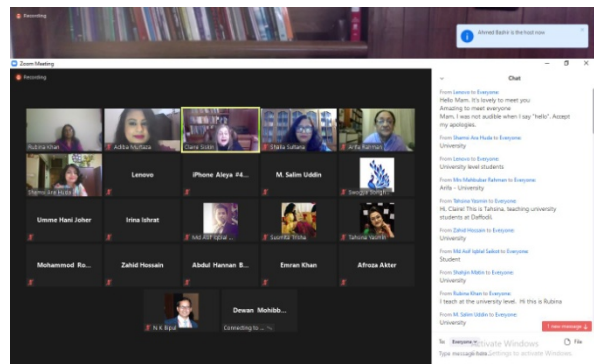


Photo: Audience engagement at the zoom session

Claire Bradin Siskin finally discussed the paradox in which technology is praised for its effectiveness, but it cannot replace teachers. She argued that the relationship between technology and the language teachers should be examined candidly. She also suggested that language teachers should trust their own instincts as teachers.

BELTA Advisor: Dr Arifa Rahman, at a Number of Virtual Events

1. WISE Qatar Foundation and Global Salzburg Seminar Series: *Education Disrupted, Education Reimagined*.
Part 1: April 15-16, 2020. Part 2: June 23 – 25. Part 3: September 14
Brought together key stakeholders from education systems around the world to examine

the implications of the COVID-19 crisis on 21st century school leadership.

2. BELTA Seminar & Panel discussion: Participated as Panel Discussant on September 5, 2020.
3. October 5 - World Teacher's Day 2020. Delegated as a Speaker on behalf of BELTA.
4. OCT 5-7 Salzburg Global Seminar, Part 1, Part 2: *Social & Emotional Learning and Social Justice*.
5. October 24: IATEFL GISIG Publication Launching. *Creating Global Change: Global Issues in ELT Around the World*. I contributed an article.
6. October 29. Attended live zoom meeting of Asia TEFL Executive Council and Advisory Board.
7. October 31: BELTA-THT-Conference – made the closing speech.
8. November 7: Attended 36th SPELT International Conference.
9. November 10: Asia Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group (AP MLE WG) Webinar series #1: *Addressing the digital divide for Ethnolinguistic Minority Children in the post COVID era through development of digital learning materials*
10. November 17 & 18: DOHA - USC-WISE virtual Seminar: *Moving Forward: Rebuilding a more Just and equitable Educational Future*
11. November 26-29: AsiaTEFL 2020 International Conference
12. November 29: Asia TEFL Annual General Meeting
13. November 28: Organised participation of 2 BELTA members for the AsiaTEFL Primary and Secondary School Teachers Panel discussions – Ferdoushi Rahman (Primary) and Mohammad Emdadul Hoque (Secondary) participated with teachers from S Korea, Japan, Indonesia, China, Malaysia.

BELTA Partnering in PRELIM Project

BELTA is delighted to be selected as a partner for delivering training on enhancing English language skills of the underprivileged primary school teachers in Bangladesh in conjunction with the PRELIM (Partnered Remote Language Improvement) project – supported by the British Council, IATEFL, and English UK. The PRELIM project aims to facilitate English language teaching in 20 different countries around the world by raising the target language proficiency level of the teachers. This global initiative will link the local teaching associations with dedicated UK partners and education providers to co-design language development programmes in line with the needs, objectives and challenges faced in the local ELT education context. This three-month teacher training programme is scheduled to kick off in.



Photo: The inaugural meeting of the Prelim project January 2021 with a cohort of teachers from Mymensingh, and the training will be conducted by the trainers from NCG Liverpool and Manchester School, UK. A four-member committee comprising Dr Rubina Khan, Mr Harunur Rashid Khan, Dr. Akhter Jahan as members, and Dr Zulfeqar Haider as the coordinator has been formed in this regard.

Research on Online Education during COVID-19

A research article by a Dhaka University English Department research team led by BELTA President Dr. Rubina Khan has been published in the Winter 2020 issue of the *Journal of ASIA TEFL*. This is one of a series of papers to be published based on a collaborative research project on online instruction at public universities in Bangladesh during COVID-19. The other members of the team are BELTA EC member Ahmed Bashir and lifetime members Dr. Bijoy Lal Basu and Md. Elias Uddin.

Khan, R., Bashir, A., Basu, B. L. & Uddin, M. E. (2020). Emergency Online Instruction at Higher Education in Bangladesh during COVID-19: Challenges and Suggestions. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 17(4), 1497-1506. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2020.17.4.26.1497>

To read the article you may visit the link <http://journal.asiatefl.org/>

AsiaTEFL Panel Discussion (Primary Teachers)

Ms Ferdoushi Rahman, who is currently teaching 5th and 6th Graders at DPS STS School Dhaka, presented at Asia TEFL during a panel discussion by primary teachers of different countries. Representing her country and its primary education, Ms Ferdoushi shared some background information regarding COVID19 situation in Bangladesh. Gradually Ms. Ferdoushi explained all the phases she has gone through and is still experiencing till date, starting from last March 24, 2020. She has presented her views on the challenges that the teachers are having to face and how it's affecting the teaching method-

ologies as well as the learning of individual students.

Ms Ferdoushi mentioned the core challenge as “All teachers are not the IT Teachers” which made a huge transformation in teachers! #FACTCOVID19# Teachers have had to become students as they are learning how to use technologies to engage their learners in the learning process virtually! She further quoted, “Being the digital natives, students are in an advanced stage of taking the control of their virtual classroom” and how teachers have learned to take over among students and utilize those students’ skills to promote learning. “On the other side a new group of students has joined the online classrooms, who are the parents!” she exclaimed. This piled on the immense challenge that the teachers have been facing while teaching online! “But the teachers happily accepted all the challenges thrown at them and are trying to learn and acquire more knowledge to keep up the pace with the students and make sure they are receiving the education they deserve” she stated in respect to the hardworking educators.

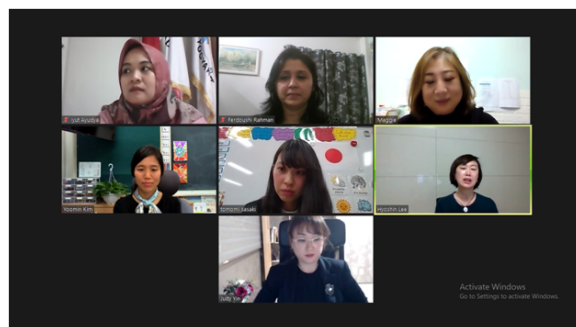


Photo: Panelists at Asia TEFL (Ms Ferdoushi centre on the first row)

At last, she concluded her presentation thanking the BELTA advisor Professor Dr. Afira Rahman, President Dr. Rubina Khan & Bangladesh English language Teachers Association for providing her with the opportunity

to represent her country on a platform like Asia TEFL.

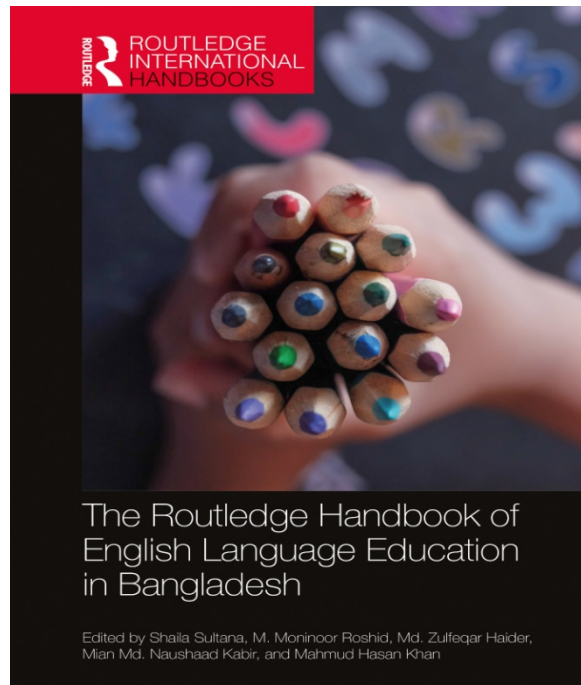
Publication of *The Routledge Handbook of English Language Education in Bangladesh (2021)*

It is our pleasure to inform you all that *The Routledge Handbook of English Language Education in Bangladesh (2021)*, first ever comprehensive book depicting the scenario of English Language Education in Bangladesh is published.

Among the five editors (Shaila Sultana, M. Moninoor Roshid, Md. Zulfeqar Haider, Mian Md. Naushaad Kabir, and Mahmud Hasan Khan), four editors are BELTA EC members, including the Vice President and the Organisation Secretary. The *Handbook* contains contributions from both eminent and budding scholars in the field of English language education in Bangladesh, including the write-ups from the Advisor, the President, the Treasurer and other EC and life members of BELTA. Several foreign experts on Bangladeshi ELT also contributed to the volume. Alastair Pennycook wrote the Foreword to the Handbook while the book was endorsed by Professor David Nunan and Professor Suresh Canagarajah.

Get a 20% purchase discount using the code (FLR40) given in the flyer. For the details regarding placing an order for the *Handbook*, refer to the link below.

https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Handbook-of-English-Language-Education-in-Bangladesh/Sultana-Roshid-Haider-Kabir-Khan/p/book/9780367405755?fbclid=IwAR2EO_DFQbvwni-AnTAnADY4gfLmT42f3a3Qafry7kcSxdJ41WS-Ca5t1Nam8



Implementing Symbol-based Aid to Teach Pronunciation

Teacher: Pronounce the word 'pleasure' [shows word card].

Student: plea-J-A-R [mispronounces]

Teacher: plea-/z/-A-R... try making the sound in between বাংলা and জ [shows /z/ flash-card].

Student: pleasure...

Teacher: Good! Now, pronounce 'vision'.

The above dialogue emphasizes that the knowledge of the sound symbols aided the teacher in identifying and correcting the mispronunciation of the student. Basically here, instead of repeating the same word a number of times, the teacher simply held a flashcard to show that particular sound symbol. This worked as an immediate and effective communicative tool to teach English pronunciation. In English language, there are 44 internationally recognized sound symbols: 24 consonants and 20 vowels. The chart below presents consonant sounds along with Bangla letters and English word examples. Other than

Bangla letters (as debatable due to translation), places of articulation can also be added.

প/p/= potato	ফ/f/=phone	স /s/ =sea	ন /n/ =n e v-er
ব /b/= ball	ভ/v/=vote	য /z/ =zoo	ঙ /ŋ/ =sing
ট /t/= time	শ/f/=shut	হ /h/ =hi	ওআ /w / =walk
ড /d/= door	in between (শ+ জ) /z/=pleasure	ঢ /tʃ/ =chair	র /r/ =ring
ক /k/ =king	থ/θ/=thanks	জ /dʒ/ =jug	ইয়া /j/ =yes
গ /g / =gate	দ /ð/=that	ম /m/ =moo n	ল /l/ =lamp

Chart: Consonant Sounds (Original Work)

Tanzia Siddiqua
Senior Lecturer, ULAB

Game-based ESL Teaching

It is no secret that most students would happily spend hours of their time playing games on the internet but would find a 15-minute online video lecture to be excruciatingly mundane and almost borderline painful to sit through. Why is there such a disparity of enthusiasm within the same medium? The most common use of tech in education includes Google Classroom, BdREN ZOOM and YouTube tu-

torials to name a few. These tools lack the extra captivating quality to retain the learner's attention. Video game companies, on the other hand, have utilized AI, algorithms and interactivity to prioritize persistent engagement. We will, therefore, be looking into using Interactive Multiplier computer games to teach ESL. First, the content immediately becomes relevant to the learners as they are actively playing with the trainer in real-time in a virtual world that reacts to their actions. This allows for the usage of authentic material. Second, given the cooperative nature of real-time gaming, learners are forced to attempt to communicate regardless of any limitation to their vocabulary. This enhances situational learning. Third, the interactivity will allow the trainer to visually represent the words and instructions that are being given, allowing the learners to better comprehend the overall message. This serves the purpose of being a communicative visual aid. Fourth, as words and instructions are constantly being communicated, the listeners become more comfortable with the sounds, inflections and rhythm of the language. Finally, the familiar virtual environment allows the learners to get creative in mixing words, similar to how they mix in-game assets.

The write-up is based on:
Chen, S., et al. (2020). Games Literacy for Teacher Education. Towards the Implementation of Game-based Learning. Taiwan: Educational Technology & Society

Afzal Mahmud Hussain,
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Lesson Plan For Your Digital Classroom: Tertiary Level Students

Topic: Informative speech

Duration: 1 hour 20 minutes

Level: Intermediate **Students:** 20

Skills focused: Listening and speaking

Approach: CLT, CALL

Brief Description: The lesson has been designed around Shrum and Glisan's (1994) components of a lesson plan (in *Richards and Renayanda, p. 33) which divides a lesson plan into the following lesson phases:

- I. Perspective/Opening
- II. Stimulation
- III. Instruction/Participation
- IV. Follow-up
- V. Closure

Specific lesson objectives:

- a. Students will be able to listen in detail to identify correct information and detect incorrect ones.
- b. Students will be able use the structure of informative speech to identify distinct parts of an informative speech.
- c. Students will learn to use online search engines to gather information to deliver an informative speech.

Opening (10 minutes):

- Students will join the class in Zoom.
- Teacher will share a browser tab and students will be shown a video- 'Rockets 101' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yBwWLunlOM>).

Stimulation (15 minutes):

- Students will be shown a PowerPoint slide through screen casting.
- The slides will contain 10 statements. Some of the statements contain correct information from the video and some of them contain incorrect information.
- All students will discuss along with the teacher to identify the correct and the incorrect statements.

Participation (20 minutes):

- The class will be shown the structure of an informative speech. Students can download it from Google Classroom as well.
- Students will play a matching game on different grabbers (https://www.educaplay.com/learning-resources/4204664-types_of_grabbers.html).
- The teacher will play 'Rockets 101' video again. Students will be instructed to ask the teacher to pause when they can identify distinct parts according to the structure (e.g. Main idea, Thesis statement etc.).

Follow-up (30 minutes):

- Students will be divided into 10 breakout rooms in pairs.
- Pairs will be given different topics to prepare their informative speech in 10 minutes. They can use Google, Wikipedia to collect information on the topic.
- Teacher will visit all the breakout rooms randomly to assist and monitor the pairs.
- Breakout rooms will dissolve after 10 minutes. Pairs will give their speech one by one.

Closure (5 minutes):

- The teacher will give feedback to all 10 pairs.

Assessment

Though there is no formal end-of-the-lesson assessment, the teacher will assess the students by monitoring their performance in the pair work and through observing the class.

*Richards, C.J & Ranayanda A. Willy (Eds.). (2002) *Methodology in Language Teaching*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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BELTA-British Council Collaboration to Train English Teachers at Grassroots Level

As part of British Council's various endeavours to enhance the quality of education in Bangladesh especially by training teachers, British Council in collaboration with BELTA trained English teachers of 15 BELTA chapters. Many of the teachers from these chapters who teach at rural and semi-urban areas do not have much training on the use of ICT in language teaching. President of Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association remarked that "This ICT training conducted by the British Council will certainly enhance the confidence and skills of our teachers and enable them to deliver online classes in an informed manner. A very timely initiative indeed" (source: British Council Bangladesh website).

BELTA Delegates at MELTA 10th MIRCELE conference 2020

Seven teachers including six executive committee members of BELTA and four graduate students were nominated to attend the 10th MELTA International Research Conference in English Language Education MIRCELE Online 2020 mainly sponsored by Pearson on Saturday, 7 November 2020. The executive committee members who were present at the conference were Ms Rabeya Binte Habib, Ms Adiba Murtaza, Ms. Ferdoushi Rahman, and Ms. Roxana A Chowdhury. The conference had most of its presentations pre-recorded and later was also shared at MELTA youtube. The participants attended the opening Special Address by Datuk Dr Habibah Abdul Rahim from the

Ministry of Education, Keynote Speech by Professor Dr Low Ee Ling of National Institute of Education, Singapore and plenary sessions by Dr Troy McConachy, University of Warwick and Dr Janet Scull, Monash University, Australia on Microsoft Teams. The recorded parallel sessions were shared with the participants throughout the day.

BELTA Chittagong South Chapter in 2020

The Chapter in association with Global Aid for Sustainable Development (GASD) does a remarkable amount of charitable work and hosts three webinars, two Cascading Sessions, one MOOC and a talk in 2020. Under "Help the Needy" project, it supports 480 disadvantaged families in urban and rural areas.

A MOOC on Using Technology in the English Language Classroom sponsored by US Department of State is facilitated by its coordinator and the MOOC is completed by 193 teachers from home and abroad.

With the attendance of total 790 educators, the virtual sessions titled Training and Research Collaboration, Exploring Digital Tools for Online Learning, Thriving through Tough Time, Service Learning, Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into the Exploration of Culture in an EFL Setting, and TESOL Methodology are facilitated by US English Language Specialists. BELTA and NELTA Presidents, delegates from US Embassy, Dhaka, Bangladesh and RELO, Kathmandu, NEPAL addressed the sessions.

BELTA-THT 2020: A Graduate Student's Perspective

The BELTA-THT 2020 programme was a great learning platform for students as we

could learn many practical tips and techniques on online language education.

The webinar focused on the practical aspects of English language education such as improving the reading skills of students with graded reading materials in Bangladeshi context, preserving one's own culture and heritage while learning another language. Suggestions were provided on developing academic community in online courses along with our organizational and language skills. The presentation on publishing research papers was very useful for students because many suffer due to lack of proper guidance and fail to publish in reputed journals. Other important presentations included use of emergency remote learning tools such as Google Forms, Flipgrid etc., effective online classroom management techniques, and the importance of learner autonomy in language learning. In short it was a unique learning experience for all of us.

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BELTA life member Ismat Zarin receives “Noble Asian Educator Award”

Ismat Zarin, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka, Bangladesh was awarded the venerated “Noble Asian Educator Award” as a part of ISTAR “End of the Year 2020 Excellence Recognition Awards” on December

20, 2020 by the International Society of Teachers, Administrators and Researchers (ISTAR) Global Headquarters at Bangkok,

Thailand. Her contribution and performance in research and education in Bangladesh and Asia was highly acclaimed by ISTAR. Her commendable research and collaboration, international publications and presentations with recognizable research impact have nourished researchers and educators across borders. Considering her contribution, ISTAR has elected Ismat Zarin the Deputy National Director of ISTAR Bangladesh (ISTAR's chapter in Bangladesh).

Dissemination of BELTA Research Findings on Online education in private universities during COVID-19: Access, equity and quality

The global outbreak of COVID-19 has severely impacted every aspect of human life including uncertainties in the campus-based face-to-face education globally and locally. In this backdrop, the newly formed research wing of Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) consisting of six BELTA members, namely Professor Dr. Rubina Khan, Professor Dr. Zulfeqar Haider, Professor Dr. Shaila Sultana, Dr. Mian Naushaad Kabir, Dr Akhter Jahan, and Dr. Mohammad Moninoor Roshid, initiated its maiden nationwide research on access, equity, quality education of the emergency remote teaching programs at the Bangladeshi private

universities. This research primarily focused on technological preparedness of teachers and students for online education, pedagogical approaches used, and assessment strategies applied. Moreover, this mixed-method study explored the challenges which may jeopardize the financial sustainability of the universities having possible consequences. Data were collected through an online survey on 208 teachers and 674 students from 28 private universities followed by a total of 10 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with them.

To disseminate findings of the study titled: **Online education in private universities during COVID-19: Access, equity, and quality.** BELTA organized a virtual webinar which was chaired by Professor Dr Rubina Khan, President, BELTA on 5th September, 2020. In the webinar, Professor Dr Md Sazzad Hossain, Member, University Grants Commission (UGC); Professor Dr. H.M. Jahirul Haque, Vice-Chancellor, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB); Professor Dr. S.M. Mahbub Ul Haque Majumder, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Daffodil International University, (Acting VC); Professor Dr Arifa Rahman, Advisor, BELTA; and Mr. Harunur Rashid Khan, Immediate Past President,

BELTA critiqued the findings and appreciated BELTA for conducting the research. Data were presented by Dr. Roshid, Professor Sultana, Dr. Kabir, and Professor Haider. Dr Jahan led the questions-answers session.

Crossword Puzzle for English Class

Word Search - Coronavirus

Can you find all of the words hidden in the puzzle below?

F	M	I	R	E	T	A	W	N	S	I	O	J	N	M
H	O	M	N	O	I	T	N	E	V	E	R	P	O	A
F	O	M	N	P	R	A	H	S	E	S	K	Z	I	S
P	Z	U	Z	O	E	E	P	S	M	N	C	L	T	K
P	X	N	U	L	I	R	V	O	O	O	Y	W	A	O
C	H	E	C	F	E	T	T	E	R	A	A	W	L	F
D	G	S	K	A	Q	P	C	O	F	S	P	E	O	R
R	U	Y	D	H	M	D	N	E	H	E	A	U	S	Y
U	O	S	I	Y	T	A	T	H	F	P	P	C	I	O
B	C	T	S	T	V	E	A	U	Y	N	K	D	N	T
I	C	E	O	I	C	O	V	I	D	G	I	G	N	I
O	C	M	R	H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	I	X	Y	S
N	U	U	I	M	M	E	Q	N	X	Z	K	E	U	S
M	S	Z	F	G	B	A	I	J	D	H	Y	M	N	U
L	B	E	P	X	I	S	F	O	A	Q	T	L	H	E

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Quote for the Issue

The trick to be having happy students is to first be happy yourself

Taken from <http://blog.getrightmaine.com/>

Upcoming BELTA Event

The 9th BELTA International Virtual Conference 2021 will be held on Saturday 6th March, 2021 from 9:30am to 4:30 pm.

The theme of the conference is "Education during the Pandemic: Learning amid crisis and emerging opportunities"

The Conference will feature papers, research findings and panel discussions by international and national English Language educators, practitioners, researchers and applied linguists.

Online Registration:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfkB1JwVddrwNTfK8SaMI3w6XNqJGvpYP1K2bOEhCAXPEu6rw/viewform>

BELTA in Virtual Reality

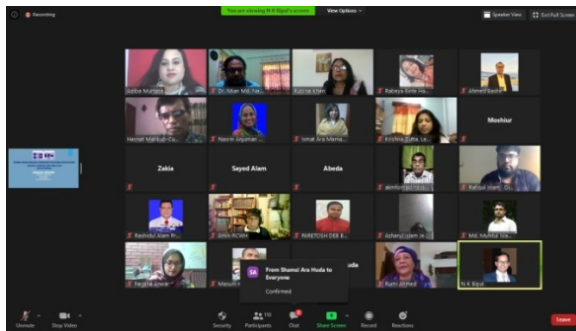


Photo: Part of Audience at BELTA AGM



Photo: Dissemination of Research Findings by BELTA Research Wing



Photo: Part of Audience at BELTA THT 2020

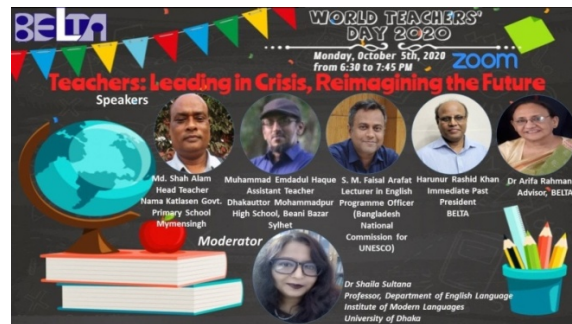


Photo: BELTA Arranged an Event on World Teacher's Day 2020



Photo: Dr Patrick Dougherty (bottom right) at BELTA THT 2020

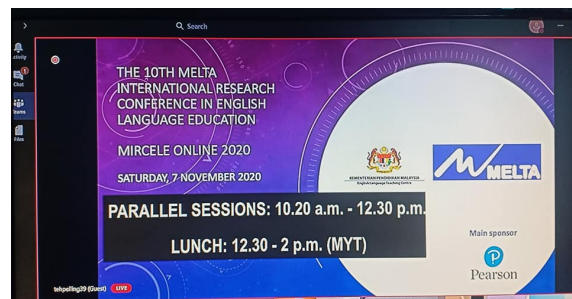


Photo: 10th MELTA MIRCELE Online 2020 Conference

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BELTA is a non-profit professional forum of ELT practitioners connected to the teaching of English in Bangladesh Reg. No. S979/48 of 1984-1985 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 issued by the Registrar of joint Stock Companies on February 13, 1985

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BELTA NEWSLETTER

Notes for Contributors

Contributions are welcome for BELTA Newsletter

GENERAL INFORMATION

BELTA Newsletter is aimed at practicing classroom teachers, administrators and managers. It is not a refereed journal, but a newsletter aimed primarily at members of BELTA.

Send your contributions to the BELTA Newsletter. Your write-ups on any ELT events, your experiences related to teaching or any tips on teaching are welcome. Please send them as a word file **within 250-350 words, font size 12in Times New Roman.** We accept contributions all year round.

WHERE TO SEND YOUR WRITE-UPS

Write-ups and further questions should be sent to the editorial board at info@belta-bd.org keeping at least one or all members of Newsletter Editorial Board at CC.

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