

# **Language as a Tool for Adapting to Bangladeshi Culture**

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**30 November 2016.**



Inspiring Excellence

**BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

# **Language as a Tool for Adapting to Bangladeshi Culture**

**A Thesis**

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**of**

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**by**

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**BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

### **Declaration**

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material of others except where due references have been provided. I have clearly acknowledged others' contribution in my paper with due references that I have included in my work. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in a whole or in a part, for a degree or award in this or any other institution.

.....

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**30 November 2016**

### **Dedication**

This paper is dedicated to all my teachers for their valuable guidance throughout my academic career and also to my parents for their immense support in my life.

### **Acknowledgement**

My heartfelt thank goes to the Almighty for allowing me to complete this research and for showing me the right path always.

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## **Abstract**

Migration has become a common phenomenon as the world is being globalized day by day. Migration refers to shift from one country to another. This shifting makes the migrants learn the new language and cope with the new environment. Life in a new country is very difficult as the migrants have to face many barriers and problems in the new country. Without knowing the language of the host country, it becomes more difficult for the migrants to adapt to the host country's culture. People from different countries are also migrated to Bangladesh. This paper looks at how learning the language of Bangladesh influences foreign students' adaptation to the culture of Bangladesh. 30 foreign students were interviewed to collect data for this research. The researcher used a questionnaire with 14 open ended questions for the foreign students. A mixed method of data analysis comprising both qualitative and quantitative methods has been followed for analysis. The findings of this study show that learning Bangla language is one of the initial ways to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture. This paper will serve as a model for any foreign student in Bangladesh who is trying to adapt to Bangladeshi culture. Moreover, the study can be replicated in foreign student context of other countries.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

In this world of globalization, migration is very common in any country of the world. Many people are seen to be migrated in other countries and there are different reasons behind migration. The reasons can be categorized as economic, social, political and environmental. People move to another country to find job in economic migration. Then in social migration, people move to another country to get a better quality of life. Sometimes political insecurity or war makes people to move to another country, which is called political migration. And the last one is environmental migration, in which people move to another country to get rid of natural disasters like flood (“Migration”, 2014, para 1).

Many people from different countries are also seen to migrate to Bangladesh and different reasons work behind this migration. Some people migrate to Bangladesh for educational purpose, some for working purpose. For educational purpose, a large number of students come to Bangladesh every year. Therefore, Rahman (2015) added that “currently over two thousand students from abroad are enrolled in Bangladeshi universities” (para 2).

As they have come to a new country; the language, the culture, the environment everything is new to them. To survive in this country, they need to cope with the new environment over here. They need to learn Bangla language and they need to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture as well. For adapting to a new culture, language is very necessary as “language is a part of culture and a part of human behavior” (Kelompok, 2011, para 14).

Learning a new language and adapting to a new culture is not that easy. But to communicate or to survive in a new country, these are really necessary. That’s why the foreigners in Bangladesh

learn Bangla language first as they need to communicate with the Bangladeshi people. Then with the help of Bangla language, they start to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture. It is seen that most of the foreigners in Bangladesh learn the Bangla language from their surroundings and gradually they adapt to the Bangladeshi culture.

As the foreigners have come from different countries across the world, they find much dissimilarity between their culture and the culture of Bangladesh. Food, attire, norms, and beliefs everything is quite different and sometimes the religion is also different. As Bangladesh is a Muslim country, it is a little bit easier for the Muslim foreigners to adjust to this country's culture rather than the foreigners belonging to other religions.

Educational purpose or the working purpose, whatever the reason behind the staying of foreigners in Bangladesh is; they are treated very well. According to Saha (2013), Bangladeshi people are the most friendly and polite people and this friendliness help the migrated people or the foreigners to learn Bangla language easily (para 4). So a friendly environment also helps the foreigners to adapt to the culture of Bangladesh.

This study mainly focuses on how the foreigners in Bangladesh are using Bangla language as a tool to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture. This also emphasizes on foreigners problems in Bangladesh and how they get over those problems by learning Bangla language. Apart from these, this study also represents the thoughts of migrated people about Bangladeshi people and Bangladeshi culture.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1. Cultural Adaptation

The term 'cultural adaptation' is related to culture. Kim (2001) and Gudykunst (1988) defined cultural adaptation "as the long term complex process in which individuals adjust themselves and finally feel more comfortable in the new cultural milieu" (as cited in "Living," n.d., p. 2-3).

Moreover, the theory of cultural adaptation refers to the process and time it takes a person to assimilate to a new culture. It is not always an easy transition. According to Nanda & Serena (1987), "Cultural adaptation means adjusting the existing culture by adopting ideas, technologies and activities from another culture, that will help that culture to survive in a certain environment" (as cited in Afreen, 2013, p. 5). So it can be said that cultural adaptation is a major part of acculturation, which has similarities with the term acculturation.

##### 2.1.1. Acculturation

In a migrant or immigrant situation, the study of acculturation is very relevant "to understanding how individuals are adapting to their new situations" ("Acculturation," n.d., p. 2). Acculturation takes place mostly in a migrant or immigrant situation. Berry (1990) defined acculturation as "the process of psychological and social change following intercultural contact". He also added that acculturation of all the migrants are not the same, according to him, the acculturation follows two dimensions. In one dimension, migrants hold their own cultural identity and influence the host society in their culture. And in another dimension, migrants adapt with the host society's culture (p. 23).

### **2.1.2. Culture Shock**

According to Zhou, Snape, Topping & Todman (2008), culture shock “is understood as the stimulus for acquisition of culture-specific skills that are required to engage in new social interactions” (p. 65). Again it is defined as “the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse” as different cultures have different norms and values. Most of the migrants or immigrants face this shock in their abroad life. As they enter to a strange culture, they feel like “fish out of order”. This shock is mostly felt by the immigrants or migrants but some of the people affected by it severely and some of the people affected by it mildly (“What”, n.d. p. 1). However, Kohls (2001) mentioned culture shock as a move that "can cause intense discomfort, often accompanied by hyper-irritability, bitterness, resentment, homesickness, and depression. In some cases distinct physical symptoms of psychosomatic illness occur" (p. 63).

### **2.1.3. Gender Role for Adapting to Culture**

According to Berry et al. (2006), “gendered acculturation is related to how male and female adolescents negotiate between their commitments to their heritage and mainstream cultures”. They also added that “girls are more likely to show biculturalism in the sense of differentiating their heritage and mainstream cultures clearly and combine them more easily than boys; boys tend to show more undifferentiated pattern in their acculturation orientations, (...)”. But Berry et al.(2006) also researched that boys adapt psychologically better than the girls, on the other hand, girls adapt socio culturally better than do boys in Turkey and Vietnam (as cited in Chuang & LeMonda, 2013, p. 181-182).

#### **2.1.4. Relationship between Language and Culture**

Language and culture are very interrelated. Sapir and Whorf (1998) believed that culture can be “expressed through the actual use of the language”. So language is the key to adapt to certain culture (p. 14). Again, Nawaz et al. (2012) stated that, “language is an integral part of a culture”, so we cannot separate language from its respective culture (p. 1).

#### **2.2. Bangladeshi Culture**

The culture adopted by people of Bangladesh is called Bangladeshi culture. When the country Bangladesh got its sovereignty in 1971, from that time to now Bangladeshi people maintain certain values, social norms and beliefs in them. Apart from these, Bangladeshi culture also includes Bangladeshi literature, Bangladeshi arts, Bangla language, and attire and so on. Then the twentieth century witnessed a rapid rise of Bangla theatre and cinema, which is also a part of Bangladeshi culture. Cuisine is also a part of Bangladeshi culture; here the main food is rice. So the people of Bangladesh are known as ‘bheto Bangali’ or ‘rice-eating Bangalis’. The main attire of Bangladesh is ‘saari’ for girls and ‘lungi’ for boys but the strong effect of globalization has replaced the attire with ‘salwar kamiz or pant t-shirt’ for girls and ‘pant shirt’ for boys. Though the girls are seen to wear ‘saari’ for special purpose, ‘lungi’ is about to extinct from the urban boys. On the other hand, saari and lungi are mostly seen in rural areas of Bangladesh. Majority of people are here Muslims. However, there are some Hindus, Christians and Buddhist people in the country as well (“Bengali”, 2015).

#### **2.3. Theory of Racism**

Eyessenck (n.d.) defined Racism “as prejudice and discrimination against others because of their race or their ethnicity” (para 1). Racism is the systematic oppression of “people of color and the

related ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority”. The origin of the racism was in the United States; racism shaped the U.S. society from the early 1600’s until the present. And the theory of Racism basically formed by Karl Marx which was based on the capitalist class and working class people (Bohmer, 1998, para 5-6). In this regard, Fiske (2002) argued that only about 10% of individuals in Western societies have overt and obvious racial biases. In addition, as many as 80% possess various subtle racial biases, which lead to “awkward social interactions, embarrassing slips of the tongue, unchecked assumptions, stereotypic judgements, and spontaneous neglect” (p. 124, as cited in Eyesenck, n.d. para 1).

Dijk (2003) discussed how discourse may contribute to racism. He mentioned that “discourse may first of all be a form of verbal discrimination” and he also added that dominant group can show racism through their text, talk and communication with the minority group (p. 145).

In Bangladesh, a very small percentage of people are racist rather than USA or other countries. So the people from Nigeria or Uganda can find Bangladesh friendly, not biased (Hasan, 2013).

#### **2.4. Psychology of Migrants**

Migrants have to face so many problems while migrating in a new country, which increase their stress level and depression level. They face problems in getting the pronunciation of the host country and vice versa. These “language problems can create obstacles to social and professional integration, increase stress, and reduce self esteem, creating more social isolation”. Also the culture creates great impact on migrants. As the food habit, attire, norms and values are

completely different in the new country, “this creates confusion and mental stress” (Craig, 2012, para 1-7).

Therefore, Jha (2008) wrote a feature on Nepalese living in Bangladesh and there he interviewed some Nepalese people and found that they face many problems in Bangladesh regarding language, culture and religion, which increase the stress level of them (para 13).

## **2.5. Theories of Language Learning**

### **2.5.1. Language Shift**

Abtahian (2009) stated that it “is the process by which a speech community in a contact situation gradually stops using one of its two languages in favor of the other” (p. 5). According to the *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (1985), “a change from the use of one language to the use of another language” is called language shift (p. 322). Then in the book titled *Introduction to Bilingualism*, Hoffman (1991) mentioned that if a community neglects their mother tongue and adopts another language that causes language shift (p. 186). Thus changing from one language to another is called language shift which basically occurs in a migrant situation.

Moreover, Codo & Garrido (2014) also expressed the similar conception and added that, “not knowing the language may hinder migrants’ job opportunities, and thus, that language learning come first” (p. 396), which means shifting language is a must in a migrant situation.

### **2.5.1.1. Factors of Language Shift**

If a country has migrants from other countries, in that case language shift is a common phenomenon. Besides, there are also other factors behind language shift. According to Fishman (1991), major factors that lead languages to shift are Political, social, economic, cultural and geographical factors (as cited in Holmes, 2001, p. 70).

- **Political Factor**

Sometimes the government of a country decides what language should be used by the speaker and this phenomenon is mostly seen in the multilingual countries. Thus government imposes the country people to shift their language (Tere, 2009, para 6).

- **Social Factor**

When a community does not feel the necessity to use another ethnic or minority language, the minority people are then bound to use the majority language to communicate. Thus the social factor contribute to language shift (Diposkan, 2012, para 2).

- **Economic Factor**

Holmes (2008) mentioned that job seekers see the importance of learning a new language which is widely used in business. So the speakers shift their language to get a good job and to be financially affluent (p. 60).

- **Geographical or Demographic Factor**

Tere (2009) stated that “when there is a community of speakers moving to a region or a country whose language is different from theirs, there is a tendency to shift to the new language”. This is called the demographic factor, which plays a vital role in language shifting. (para 3)

### **2.5.2. Language Maintenance**

Pauwels (2004) described the term language maintenance as “a situation in which a speaker, a group of speakers, or a speech community continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life despite the pressure from the dominant or majority language” (as cited in Hudyma, 2012, p. 3). Language maintenance refers to a situation where the speakers want to use the language what they have used before their migrant or immigrant situation, which is very difficult and makes the situation tough for them to cope with the culture of the migrated country (Kuncha & Bathula, 2004, p. 2). But Lai (2010) added that language maintenance needs a good exposure and stronger family support and then the language can be well maintained in a migrant situation (p. 86).

### **2.5.3. Language Choice**

A person’s language choice is influenced by two categories of factors. The first one is preferences and the second one is constraints. In the preference category a speaker will always be comfortable with his or her native language, so he or she will always prefer his or her mother tongue. But in the constraints category, the situation will make the speaker choose his or her second or third language apart from his or her mother tongue. In a migrant or immigrant situation, a speaker will fall under this category of constraints and so she or he will choose

another language to communicate. And this is called the term language choice (Buda, 2006, para 9-10).

#### **2.5.4. Language Loss**

According to the *Longman dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (2010), language loss takes place where the second language is used more than the first language and for this reason; speakers lose the proficiency in their first language (p. 318). Holmes (2001) stated the same and added that lack of using the mother tongue, the speakers start forgetting that language and thus it brings death of that language (p. 57). Language loss mainly occurs when the language cannot be transferred to the next generation, as ancestors dies with their own language. Moreover, fluency in the language increases with age, as younger generations prefer to speak another tongue; usually the dominant societal (Crawford, 1996, p. 57).

However Haynes (2010) mentioned two levels for language loss. One is familial level, which is seen basically in the immigrant communities and another one is ceasing, where the first language is ceased to be spoken at all, which is seen basically in the indigenous communities (p. 1).

#### **2.5.5. Monolingualism**

Grosjean (2001) asserted that monolinguals refer to users of “only one language on a regular basis”, but it is really difficult to find a country or a society which is purely monolingual (p. 1).

#### **2.5.6. Bilingualism**

According to the *Longman dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (2010), bilingualism is the ability of using two languages either by an individual or by the group of people or community is fairly called as bilingualism (p. 55). It is argued that the bilingual people should have a strong

grammatical proficiency on both languages. While it is also mentioned that a minimum or certain communicative skill is enough for being a bilingual speaker. So requirements of bilingualism are very controversial. (Chakma, 2014, p. 14). Hall (1952) added by stating that bilingual people must have some command over the grammatical structure of both the languages (p. 65).

However, bilingualism is worldwide; it is a phenomenon that has existed since the beginning of language in human history” (Grosjean, 2001, p. 1). We know that, bilingualism takes place in a migrant or immigrant situation but bilingualism can also take place without a migrant and immigrant situation. For example: in some parts of the world bilingualism exists only in the urban areas, also in some countries, bilingualism depends on social class or working class. For example, in Spain, “Guarani is the language of the rural areas (...) whereas Spanish is the language of public occasions (..)” (Grosjean, 2001, p. 10). Attitude towards bilingualism also differs, as in: Ghana really encourages bilingualism and people feel proud in being bilingual because they are generally looked upon with respect (p. 9). But in some countries, bilingual minorities are looked down upon. Thus bilinguals differ a lot.

- **Circumstantial Bilingual**

Valdes and Figueroa (1994) have added a kind of bilingualism and that is “circumstantial”. “Circumstantial bilinguals learn another language in order to survive in a new environment (e.g. immigrant)”. So in a migrant or immigrant situation, there is a possibility that the speakers may become circumstantial bilingual. This type of speaker when learning another language to survive in the new environment, apart from their native language; may lack proficiency in four skills of language at the same time. Generally it is seen that the migrant or immigrant speakers get the

proficiency in speaking and listening only and most of the time they lack in reading and writing. But speaking and listening skill is enough to survive in a new environment (Sarker, n.d. para 3).

- **Childhood and Adulthood Bilingualism**

Bilingualism can begin to emerge from the childhood or can be seen much later. Childhood bilingualism mainly applicable for the second generation of migrant or immigrant group and adult bilingualism is mostly dependent on the situation, context or on the social or political factors. Adult bilingualism is more proficient for a speaker. It refers to the “situation where a child or adult acquires a first language, and later becomes proficient in the second language (...)” (Baker, 2011, p. 116).

### **2.5.7. Multilingualism**

According to the *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (2010), multilingual refers to the people who know more than two languages (p. 379). So multilingualism is slightly different from bilingualism. Hoffman (2001) mentioned that multilingualism has “characteristics of its own” (as cited in Aronin & Singleton, 2012, p. 5).

### **2.5.8. English as Lingua Franca**

In a migrant or immigrant situation, English as a lingua franca or ELF is a common phenomenon. Basically it’s a common means of communication for the speakers of different first languages. As “English has been welcomed as a (...) new means of communication for globally emergent localities in a variety of non-mainstream subcultures,” (Mauranen & Ranta, 2009, p. 1). So it plays a vital role in a migrant or immigrant situation. When two different native language speakers communicate to each other, they use English as the means of communication. More specifically, in a migrant or immigrant situation, when a different native language speaker wants

to learn or shift his or her language to the host country's native language, he or she takes the help of English to learn the target language. Otherwise, the host country's people won't understand his or her native language. In this case, the migrated or immigrated learner translates his or her native language to English first and then he or she translates that English to the target language. And thus the migrated or immigrated learners learn the target language gradually. Without knowing English, it's almost impossible to learn the migrated or immigrated country's native language (Cogo, 2008, p. 58-61).

## **2.6. Theories of Discourse Analysis**

### **2.6.1. Politeness Theory**

The theory of politeness has been developed by two linguists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1978). This theory is distinguished between 'positive face' and 'negative face'. Positive face refers to the desire to gain approval from others and negative face refers to wish to be unbounded by others in one's action. In this theory, the notion of 'Face' introduced by the sociologist Ervin Goffman (1967). However, the content of face saving strategy differs in different cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 61-62).

Brown and Levinson (1978) constructed their theory of politeness on the basis of speech acts that are basically threatening to face. Speech acts are threatening when they do not support the face wants of the speaker and those of the addressee. Brown and Levinson (1978) defined face-threatening acts (FTAs) according to two basic parameters: "(1) Whose face is being threatened (the speaker's or the addressee's), and (2) Which type of face is being threatened (positive- or negative- face)" (p. 65-67). According to Wagner (n.d.), acts that threaten an addressee's positive face include those acts in which a speaker demonstrates that he or she does not approve of or

support the addressee's positive face or self image. For example: complaints, criticisms, accusations and so on. Then the acts that threaten an addressee's negative face include when the addressee is pressured to accept or to reject a future act of the speaker, for example: offers, promises etc (p. 22-23).

### **2.6.2. Body language**

According to Fast (2002), "body language can include any non-reflexive or reflexive movement of a part, or all of the body, used by a person to communicate an emotional message to the outside world" (p. 3). It includes "all the communication through the non-verbal channel". It also can include how we sit, how we stand, how we move our hands, how we move our eyes, how we greet and so on (Rugsaken, 2006, para 3).

However, body language varies from culture to culture. For example: Chinese bow down their head while talking to others it reflects their respect to the speaker (DeLuca, n.d. para 2-3). Again, a signal for 'yes' can be interpreted as 'no' for other countries and a signal for 'good bye' can be interpreted as 'come here' for other countries (Rugsaken, 2006, para 1). Thus "facial expressions, gestures, mannerisms, and degree of eye contact vary greatly across countries" (Elkins & Nudelman, 2015, para 1).

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Design**

This chapter consists of the research methodology that was followed by the researcher to conduct the entire research. More specifically, a detailed discussion on the objective of the research, the significance of the study, participants, instruments, methods of data analysis, procedures of data collection and limitations that are faced during data collection have been included here.

#### **3.1. Research Objective**

The objective of the research is to investigate how Bangla language helps the foreign students to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture.

#### **3.2. Research Questions**

1. What kind of problems did the foreign students face after coming to Bangladesh?
2. What kind of difficulties did they face in adapting to Bangladeshi culture?
3. How do they manage to communicate with the common people who do not know English?
4. To what extent learning Bangla help the foreign students to adapt to Bangladeshi culture?

#### **3.3. Significance of the study**

The foreign students of Bangladesh come here to study in different government and private institutions. For this reason, they suffer from the problem of lack of knowledge in knowing

Bangla language, coping up with the new environment and adapting to the new culture. This study investigates how they deal with these problems by learning Bangla. More specifically, this study will prove that Bangla language is an important tool for adapting to Bangladeshi culture for foreigners.

### **3.4. Participants**

The participants of this research were 30 foreign students of Bangladesh. Among them, 14 are male students and 16 are female students. Among the male students, 4 are from Uganda, 3 from Nepal, 2 from Malaysia, 2 from Philippine, 2 from Bhutan and 1 from Japan. Then, among the female students, 9 from Nepal, 4 from Kashmir (India), 2 from Dehradun (India) and 1 from Uganda. The age range of the participants is mostly 18-25 years. The researcher traced them out from different Universities in Bangladesh.

### **3.5. Instruments**

All the participants were interviewed by the researcher. A consent form (see Appendix 1) was signed by the participants prior the interview process.

#### **3.5.1. Interview questions**

The interview questions (see Appendix 2) were asked to get some specific and detailed information from the participants.

### **3.6. Methods of Data Analysis**

A mixed method of data analysis comprising both qualitative and quantitative methods has been followed to collect data for this research. Collected raw data were organized by Microsoft Excel 2007. Later on, the percentages of the data were arranged in several tables in Microsoft Word

2007. Thus the quantitative method has been followed. Then the qualitative data have been analyzed based on the answers provided by the participants.

### **3.7. Procedure**

The researcher contacted the foreign students from different universities in Bangladesh. At first the researcher took the permission from the university authorities and then, with the help of the authority and with the help of one of the known students (Bangladeshi friend of the researcher) in the certain university, the researcher began to take interview of the foreign students. The researcher took the participants' permission on the consent form and recorded those answers while taking the interviews. The researcher used code numbers as pseudo names for each participant so that their identity is not disclosed. Each of the interviews was transcribed by the researcher to analyse the data (see Appendix 3).

### **3. 8. Limitations**

There are many foreign students in Bangladesh but the researcher was able to interview 30 students only. If the researcher could cover all the foreign students in Dhaka city, then the number of participants could be large in number. Moreover, some of the foreign students did not want to take part in the interview thinking of their own privacy and security. For this reason, it was really difficult for the researcher to get in touch with more foreign students.

## Chapter 4

### Findings and Analysis

#### 4.1. Quantitative Analysis of Participants' Interviews

**Table 1: Problems faced after coming to Bangladesh.**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Language	(14) 100%	(16) 100%	100%
Weather	(8) 57.14%	(9) 56.25%	56.67%
Food	(4) 28.57%	(3) 18.75%	23.33%
Being cheated	(7) 50%	(0) 0%	23.33%
Traffic Jam	(6) 42.86%	(1) 6.25%	23.33%
Afraid of language loss	(2) 14.29%	(0) 0%	6.67%

In table No. 1, it is seen that 100% of foreign students faced problem regarding language as initially they were not familiar with the Bangla language. Then the second problem, faced by both female and male students is weather. After that, 23.33% of total students faced problem in food and traffic jam. Also it is seen that, 23.33% of total students were cheated by the Bangladeshi people after coming to Bangladesh but here the female students claimed that they were not cheated at all. On the other hand, 7 male students were cheated after coming to Bangladesh. Then only 14.29% of male students became afraid of language loss of their native

language but no female students have such problem of language loss. The result of the table shows that the foreign students faced huge problem regarding language after coming to Bangladesh and along with this problem, they also faced some minor problems like-inconvenient weather, mismatch with their food habit, and endless traffic jam etc.

**Table 2: Difficulties faced by foreign students in mixing up with Bangladeshi people.**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Language	(12) 85.71%	(8) 50%	66.67%
Mentality differs	(9) 64.29%	(6) 37.50%	50%
Culture differs	(8) 57.14%	(7) 43.75%	50%

In table No. 2, it is also seen that the language is the highest barrier in mixing up with Bangladeshi people for the foreign students. Then the 50% of total students claimed that the different culture and the different mentality also create a barrier in mixing up with Bangladeshi people.

**Table 3: Difficulties faced by foreign students in adapting to Bangladeshi culture.**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Attire	(9) 64.29%	(14) 87.50%	76.67%
Religion	(11) 78.57%	(12) 75%	76.67%
Food	(11) 78.57%	(10) 62.50%	70%

The result of the table No. 3 shows that, in adapting to Bangladeshi culture, 76.67% of the total foreign students faced difficulties in both religion and attire. In religion, both female and male students faced almost the same difficulty to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture. But on the other hand, in adapting to the Bangladeshi culture, 14 female students faced difficulty in attire, which is more than the male students; because only 9 male students of total faced difficulty to adapt to the attire of the Bangladeshi people. Then the 70% of total students faced difficulty in adapting to Bangladeshi food culture.

**Table 4: Bangladeshi people are friendly or not according to the foreign students.**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Friendly	(10) 71.43%	(12) 75%	73.33%
Depends on individual people	(4) 28.57%	(4) 25%	26.67%
Not friendly	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	0%

Table No. 4 shows that, most of the foreign students admit that Bangladeshi people are friendly. Only 26.67% of total students think that friendliness depends on individuality. And no students think that Bangladeshi people are not friendly. So according to table 4, it can be said that Bangladeshi people are mostly friendly with the foreign students.

**Table 5: How foreign students communicate with people who do not know English**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Basic words	(14) 100%	(8) 50%	73.33%

Used Hindi Language	(3) 21.43%	(8) 50%	36.67%
Sign language	(3) 21.43%	(4) 25%	23.33%

If we notice table No. 5, we can see that 100% of male students learn basic Bangla words to communicate with the ‘no English people’ in Bangladesh, but on the other hand, only 50% of female students learn basic Bangla words. The reason of this diversity is female students mostly use Hindi language to communicate with the ‘no English people’ over here and the Bangladeshi people are very familiar with the Hindi language. But the male students are less familiar with the Hindi language that’s why they learn more basic Bangla words to communicate with the ‘no English people’. And then the use of sign language to communicate with the ‘no English people’ is almost same in female and male foreign students.

**Table 6: Proficiency level of foreign students in Bangla Language**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Can't read	(13) 93%	(16) 100%	96.67%
Can't write	(13) 93%	(16) 100%	96.67%
Understand Bangla	(7) 50%	(9) 56.25%	53.33%
Can continue a conversation	(7) 50%	(9) 56.25%	53.33%
Only know some basic phrases	(3) 21.43%	(7) 43.75%	33.33%
Know some of the Bangla alphabets	(2) 14.29%	(0) 0%	6.67%

Table No. 6 shows that, 96.67% of total foreigner students cannot read and write in Bangla. Only 1 male student can read and write in Bangla. Then 53.33% of total students understand Bangla and can continue a whole conversation in Bangla. And then, those who cannot understand Bangla or cannot continue a Bangla conversation, those students just know some Bangla phrases to communicate and 33.33% of students are this kind of students. Very little of the foreign students are familiar with some Bangla alphabets and 6.67% of total students are this type of students, who are familiar with some Bangla alphabets.

**Table 7: Reasons of shifting to Bangla language from the foreign students' native languages**

<b>Response</b>	<b>% of male students</b>	<b>% of female students</b>	<b>Total</b>
Communication purpose	(14) 100%	(16) 100%	100%
Educational purpose	(9) 64.29%	(15) 94%	80%
Both Educational & Communication	(9) 64.29%	(15) 94%	80%

If we look at table No. 7, we will come to know that the communication purpose is the main reason of shifting to Bangla language from the foreign students' native language. Then 80% of the total students indicate education purpose as one of the reasons of shifting to Bangla language. Again 80% of the total students mention both education and communication purpose as a reason for shifting to Bangla language. But the result of this table shows more emphasize on communication purpose as the prominent reason of shifting to Bangla language.

**Table 8: Differences found by foreign students in Body language of Bangladeshi people**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Didn't find any differences	(3) 21.43%	(15) 93.75%	60%
Girls are shy	(11) 78.57%	(1) 6.25%	40%

From table No. 8, it is understood that 60% of the total students did not find any differences in body language of the Bangladeshi people. On the other hand, 40% of the total students found differences in the body language of girls. They claimed that Bangladeshi girls show shyness in their body language. But here 11 male students think that Bangladeshi girls are shy, but 1 female student agrees with this concept.

**Table 9: How politeness works in Bangladeshi people according to the foreign students**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Literates are more polite	(8) 57.14%	(7) 43.75%	50%
Depends on individual person's background	(6) 42.86%	(9) 56.25%	50%

Table No. 9 gives us a 50-50 result. 50% of students claimed that literate people are more polite in Bangladesh, but the illiterate people are less polite. And 50% of students think that politeness depends on individual person's background.

**Table 10: Foreign students who needed to change their greetings**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Namaste to Salam	(4) 28.57%	(11) 68.75%	50%
Use Good Morning	(7) 50%	(1) 6.25%	26.67%
Not changed	(3) 21.43%	(4) 25%	23.33%

If we observe table No. 10, we will notice that half of the total students needed to change their greetings from Namaste to Salam as Bangladesh is a Muslim country. Then 26.67% students use good morning but 23.33% students did not change their greetings because they are also Muslims.

**Table 11: Way of learning Bangla language chosen by foreign students**

Response	% of male students	% of female students	Total
Learnt from surroundings	(13) 92.86%	(16) 100%	96.67%
Admitted in institution	(1) 7.14%	(0) 0%	3.33%

Table No. 11 shows that majority of foreign students learn Bangla from their surroundings and the total percentage is 96.67%. but just 1 male student among the total students, learnt Bangla from an institution and so the percentage is 3.33%.

#### **4.2. Qualitative Analysis of Participants' Interviews**

##### **Question 12. Can you mention any good or bad experience after coming to Bangladesh?**

**M1** stated that, once his 100 taka note fell on the road and he did not notice that. But a rickshaw puller picked up the note and gave that to him and it was his good experience.

**F1** mentioned a bad experience and stated that she was not used to rickshaw riding, so she fell from rickshaw and got injured.

**F2** mentioned her good experience by saying that once she was invited to a Bangladeshi friend's house and she enjoyed a lot there.

**F3** stated about bad experience by saying that she was ragged in her campus and got cheated by shopkeeper.

**F4** mentioned that once in a chemist shop, a man talked with her rudely and she felt bad because she thought she is black and so the man was rude to her.

##### **Question 13. Do you have any stereotype notion about the Bangladeshi people?**

**F5** stated that she thinks Bangladeshi people are more religious.

**M2** and **F4** mentioned that he thinks Bangladeshi girls are very shy in nature.

**M3** said that he thinks Bangladeshi people are very conservative.

##### **Question 14. Did language help you to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture?**

**M4** mentioned that after learning Bangla language gradually, he was able to cope up with the Bengali culture.

**F6** also stated that she came to know about Bangladeshi attire, after learning the Bangla language.

**F7** added that Bangla language helped her to adapt to the Bengali food culture.

### **4.3. List of basic phrases, mostly learnt by the foreign students**

#### **4.3.1. The phrases that are used in a right way**

1. Mama koto? (How much uncle?)
2. Kemon acho? (How are you?)
3. Ami oikhane jabo (I want to go there)
4. Apni jaben? (Will you go?)
5. Amake namai den (Drop me here)
6. Mama amar khata lagbe, pen lagbe. ( Uncle I need exercise book and pen)
7. Aktu olpo rakhen (Keep a little less)
8. Kichuna. (Kichuna)
9. Bujhina (Don't understand)
10. Mane ki? (What do you mean?)
11. Amar khida lagse (I am hungry)
12. Ghumabo (Want to sleep)
13. Khabona (Don't want to eat)
14. Cholo (Let's go)
15. Bosho (Sit)
16. Ektu ektu (Little bit)
17. Kichu kichu (Something)

18. Dada ki bolbo? (Brother what can I say?)
19. Ami janina (I don't know)
20. Arre dada, onek beshi ( Oh brother, it's too much)
21. Hobena (Not acceptable)
22. Keno? (Why?)
23. Arekbar bolen. (Say again)

#### **4.3.2. The phrases that are used in a wrong way by foreign students**

1. Cholben dada? (Jaben dada?)- Do you want to go brother?
2. Eta koto taka ache? (Etar dam koto or Ekhane koto taka ache? ) – How much is this?
3. Apni jaba? (Apni jaben?)- Do you want to go?
4. Ki korte lagbe? (Ki korte hobe?)- What should I do?
5. Apni kemon acho? (Apni kemon achen?) – How are you?
6. O ki jaise? (O ki gese?) – Did she go?
7. Amra to hindu asi (Amra to hindu) – We are hindus.
8. Shob e jon kurti pore (Shobai kurti pore) – Everybody wears kurti.
9. Manusher shathe kotha bolte shomoi... (Manusher shathe kotha bolar shomoi..) – To talk to a person.
10. Kotha korte hoi (Kotha bolte hoi) – Have to talk.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion

The main concentration of the research paper is to find out how language plays a vital role for foreign students in adapting to Bangladeshi culture. The study shows that language is the main barrier for foreigners after coming to Bangladesh and also in mixing up with Bangladeshi people. 100% of the participants claimed language as their prime barrier after coming to Bangladesh. And then 66.67% participants mentioned language as the main barrier in mixing up with Bangladeshi people. So the result shows that language is the main barrier for adapting to Bangladeshi culture because for adapting to any culture, one needs to mix up with the target culture's people; where she or he needs to overcome the language problem for adapting to the target culture. But in the problem of mixing with Bangladeshi people, the percentage of male students is 85.71 and the percentage of female students is 50. So the study shows that the female students have fewer problems regarding language in mixing with Bangladeshi people because girls can easily cope up with a new environment. According to Chuang and LeMonda (2013), "In general, girls are more likely to show biculturalism in the sense of differentiating their heritage and mainstream cultures clearly and combine them more easily than boys; (...)" (p. 181). So this is the reason of mixing up with Bangladeshi people more easily than boys as the girls can adapt to or combine any culture easily.

Furthermore, the study shows that the participants faced difficulties in adapting to Bangladeshi culture. Apart from language, they faced difficulties in matching with the attire, religious differences and matching with their food habits. 76.67% of the total participants claimed that they faced difficulties in adapting to the new dressing sense of the Bangladeshi people where the percentage of the female students (87.50%) is a bit more than the male students (64.29%).

Because the male students indicated that the variation of their dress is very limited, on the other hand, female students claimed that the variation of their dress is really vast. According to Paoletti (2016), “(...) compared with women’s dress, the topic of men’s fashions has been studied much less” (p. 1) as the variation of the male dress is very less. And this proves that because of the less variation of the male dresses lead them to adapt to any attire culture easily. But on the other hand, great differences in the female dresses make the situation of adapting to the new attire culture difficult for them. Then the other sectors of difficulties in adapting to Bengali culture, ‘Religion’ and ‘Food’, are more or less similar in between female and male students. 75% of the female students and 78.57% of the male students claimed that they faced difficulties in adapting to the religion and culture over here. Again, 62.50% of the female students and 78.57% of the male students indicated that they faced difficulties in adapting to the food habit over here.

73.33% of the total students claimed that Bangladeshi people are friendly, on the other hand, no participant claimed that Bangladeshi people as unfriendly. But 26.67% of the total participants indicated that they think, friendliness depends on individual people. This friendliness creates a friendly environment for the participants which helps them to learn the target language in a fast speed and also helps them to adapt to the target culture with the help of the learnt language. Pearson (2014) also found that to learn a foreign language, friendly environment created by friendly people is very necessary (p. 2).

Moreover, in a migrant or immigrant situation sometimes the participants need to communicate with such people who do not know English. In that case, 100% of male students depend on learning basic words of target language where just 50% of the female students depend on learning basic words. Here the female students are seen to be less interested on using basic words to the ‘No English people’ and the reason behind it is that female students are more comfortable

in using Hindi language. But the male students do not know Hindi properly and for this reason just 21.43% male students know Hindi. Female students know Hindi better than male students may be because the female students are more habituated to Hindi movies and Hindi serials. On the other hand, foreign female students and foreign male students claimed that 'No English people' in Bangladesh are very well known of Hindi language. They can understand Hindi language and also can speak in Hindi language. This is the effect of Indian media on Bangladeshi people. Not only Bangladeshi people are getting affected by Indian culture but also they are adopting Indian language frequently (Islam, 2013, p. 21). Apart from using Hindi language and learning basic words, some participants claimed that they use sign language to communicate with the 'No English people' and this number is very little. Only 21.43% of male students and 25% of female students use body languages.

Now the question arises, only basic words, Hindi language and using body language are enough to survive in a migrant or immigrant situation in Bangladesh? Here the answer is 'No' because to survive in such a situation someone will need more than this, according to the participants. That is why the participants are seen to learn Bengali language. But most of the participants (96.67%) mentioned that they cannot read or write in Bangla. On the other side it is seen that, 53.33% of the total students have already learnt to speak in Bangla and understand Bangla language to survive in this country. A very little percentage of the total students (33.33%) are on the way to learn Bangla properly, they just know some Bangla phrases till now. So among the 4 skills of language (Reading, writing, speaking and listening), the participants are mostly proficient in two skills and those are listening and speaking. But just 6.67% of the total students are seen to learn some of the Bangla alphabets, which the participants indicated as their own interest.

To survive in a new environment, the participants needed to communicate with the people of the host country and to communicate; they needed to shift their native language to the target country's native language. There are many factors for language shifting and one of them is social factor. Here the main factor of the foreign students is social factor. In social factor, the minority groups shift their native language to the particular language that is used by the dominant group (Borbely, 2000, p. 29). It has been found that, 100% of the foreign students shift their language for the communicative purpose. All the participants claimed that without communication, they cannot survive in this country. So for the sake of communication, they shift their native language to Bangla. Moreover, 80% foreign students added education purpose as their reason of language shifting. These 80% students mentioned that, though the books are written in English, the teachers more often explain many English terms in Bangla in the classroom. So without knowing Bangla language, they will not be able to understand the terms properly. Then 80% of the total participants indicated both communication and education purpose for their shifting to Bangla language. Though the participants here only mentioned the social factor behind their language shifting, language shifting has also other factors like: Demographic factors, negative attitude towards a language, political factors and economic factors (Tere, 2009, p. 1). Tere (2009) also explained demographic factors by saying that "when there is a community of speakers moving to a region or a country whose language is different from theirs, there is a tendency to shift to the new language" (p. 1). From this explanation, it can be said that all the foreign students under this research have demographic factors behind their language shifting. But no student mentioned any political or economic reasons behind their language shifting as most of them claimed that they will go back to their native country after completing their study in Bangladesh, so no economic factors are found here.

After that, the participants were questioned about body language. Body language differs from culture to culture. It “includes all the communication through the non-verbal channel. This can include how we greet others, how we sit or stand, our facial expressions, our clothes, hair styles, tone of voice, eye movements, how we listen, how we breathe, how close we stand to others, and how we touch others” (Rugsaken, 2006, p. 1). So there must be differences between the cultures regarding body language. But the 60% of the total participants claimed that they did not find any differences in the body language. Actually there should be differences, but maybe this 60% did not notice anything that carefully. On the other hand, 40% of the total participants mentioned that they found Bangladeshi girls very shy in approaching themselves. And this difference is mostly noticed by the male foreign students. Here they claimed that Bangladeshi girls do not take initiative in talking with a boy. Bangladeshi girls expect the boy to be approaching first and then they will talk. Also some of the male foreign students claimed that Bangladeshi girls maintain a physical distance while talking to a male person. Again some of the male foreign students also added that Bangladeshi girls most of the time avoid eye contact. For these reasons, they found Bangladeshi girls shy in their body language. These 40% students mentioned that this body language is quite different from their cultures’ body language.

Just like the theme body language, the politeness is also another factor which needs to be observed very carefully. Brown and Levinson (1978) have categorized two types of politeness: positive face and negative face (p. 61-62). But these two types of politeness are not found from the participants’ speech. The possible reason of this can be, the participants did not count politeness according to these two categories; rather they counted it as literate and illiterate categories. Thus 50% of the total students claimed that they think literate people in Bangladesh are more polite than the illiterates. They also explained that literate people in Bangladesh know

very well how to present themselves politely. These 50% students also mentioned that the habit of saying ‘sorry’ and ‘thank you’ is mostly noticeable among the literates of Bangladesh. On the other hand, another 50% of the total students indicated that they think politeness depends on individual person’s background. Here it is seen that the participants could not find out the differences of politeness from culture to culture, they just explained politeness from their own perception in a very general way by mentioning literate and illiterate categories. But different cultures around the world can have wildly different notions of politeness and how they expect polite people to behave. For example: “Japanese (...) has many different levels of politeness that would be unimaginable in English, German or French” (“The”, 2011). The stereotype notion for the Japanese can be ‘being polite’ but this stereotype is actually not all that far – fetched in many cases. The term ‘stereotype’ would be explained clearly in the later part of the discussion where the participants would give ‘stereotype’ notions for the Bangladeshi people.

In a migrant or immigrant situation, minority groups need to shift their language and along with the language sometimes they need to change their greeting style. In this research, most of the participants belong to Hindu religion, so 50% of the total students shift their greetings from Namaste to Salam, as Bangladesh is a Muslim country. Then 26.67% of the total students use to say ‘Good Morning’ for greetings. These 26.67% students are either from a different religion or they use ‘Good Morning’ as a “safe-side” greeting and so some of them claimed that ‘Hello, Good Morning/Evening’ are greetings that can be used for any religion’s person. And lastly, 23.33% of the total students did not need to change their greetings because these students have come from another country but they belong to Islam religion just like Bangladeshi people.

All the participants of this research paper have already claimed that they needed to learn Bangla to adapt to the Bengali culture. There are many ways to learn Bangla. But 96.67% of the total

foreign students claimed that they have learnt Bangla from their surroundings because they think that surrounding is the best input to learn a foreign language. Beus (2012) has also stated that, “the best way to learn a foreign language is to live where that language is spoken so that you are completely immersed in the language. That means that you speak and listen to your new language all day every day. There is NO better way”. But just 3.33% of the total students got admitted to an institution to learn Bangla language. Among the total students, just one male foreign student from China got admitted to Bangla Language Institute (BLI) at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) to be proficient in all the four skills of Bangla language.

The participants came to Bangladesh to study that is why they have learnt Bangla to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture because they need to stay in Bangladesh for a long time. So, they need to mix with this country’s people very nicely. Their long journey in this country, often gives them bad experiences and often good experiences. While researching, many of the students shared their experiences and how they felt about those good or bad experiences. One of the participants mentioned that she was invited to a Bangladeshi friend’s house and enjoyed a lot. Again, another participant talked about her bad experience in rickshaw as she fell from the rickshaw. Thus other participants shared their good or bad experiences, which are mentioned in the chapter 4 (Findings and Analysis).

The participants were also asked questions about their stereotype notion for Bangladeshi people. According to Vilinbakhova (2013) “stereotype is seen as a fixed content, a fixed mental image of a person, an object or an event” (para 3). So here the participants talked about their common conception about Bangladeshi people where some of the students indicated Bangladeshi people as religious, as conservative or as shy in nature.

And lastly the foreign students explained how Bangla language helps them to adapt to Bangladeshi culture. Some of the students adapt to food culture through Bangla language, some of them adapt to attire culture with the help of Bangla language.

### **Conclusion**

Many foreigners are coming to Bangladesh every year for educational purposes, work or sometimes to settle here. A large number among them are students, who have come to Bangladesh to get higher studies. These foreign students have to survive in this country for a long span of time. During this time, language plays a vital role in their life to cope up with the new environment, to communicate or to adapt to the new culture. Without learning the language, it is nearly impossible to survive in this country. So the first target of these foreign students is to learn the language of this country. While learning, they go through many difficulties; sometimes they get some good experiences and sometimes they face some bad experiences. Still, they cannot stop learning the language. Gradually the language is learnt and then gradually they get to know about our culture. Thus, with the help of language, these foreign students adapt to our Bangladeshi culture and norms.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Language as a tool for Adapting to Bangladeshi Culture**

#### **Consent form**

##### **Investigator**

Jannatul Hisan Disha

Student

Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

##### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this research is to investigate how language helps the migrants of Bangladesh to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture.

##### **Explanation of Procedures**

If you are interested to participate, then you have to be the interviewee. Some questions, relevant to the topic will be asked to you. You will be sharing your experiences and also you will be providing sufficient information through your answers. The whole interview will be recorded and some important notes will be written by the researcher for later analysis. There is no time limit for you. You can freely express your thoughts.

**Confidentiality**

The information collected in this study will remain confidential. Your identity will not be disclosed, only the investigator will have this information. The recordings of your interview will be erased after the completion of the research. If any reference is used in the research, which can reveal your identity; either that portion will be represented by using a pseudo name.

**Risks and Discomforts**

The researcher does not expect that participating in this interview will create any psychological or physical risks in the life of the interviewees. But if any interviewee feels uncomfortable to answer any particular question, she or he will be given full freedom to skip that question. Every interviewee holds the power to stop giving interview at any time.

**Benefits**

You will get a chance to share your any kind of experience through this research. Your valuable information may help the people who want to be migrated to Bangladesh. Apart from this, maybe the researcher will try to send this research paper to a renowned publication. So your valuable information will be placed in that publication.

**Freedom to Withdraw Participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You will not be penalized in any way, if you want to withdraw your participation. You are getting full freedom to step back from this research at any time.

**Contact Information**

If you have concerns about this research or you want to have a copy of this research after the researcher has completed this study, you can directly contact Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University. Or you can contact the investigator by sending e mail to her at this address – [xxx.xxx@gmail.com](mailto:xxx.xxx@gmail.com)

**Your signature below shows that you have understood the above policies and agreed to participate in this research as an interviewee.**

Participant's full name \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Interview Questions

1. What problems did you face after coming to Bangladesh?
2. Which difficulties did you face in mixing up with Bangladeshi people?
3. Which difficulties did you face to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture?
4. What do you think about Bangladeshi people?
5. How do you manage to communicate with people who do not know English?
6. How is your proficiency level in Bangla? (Four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking)
7. What are the reasons of shifting from your mother tongue to Bangla?
8. Do you find any difference in Bangladeshi people's body language and your culture's body language?
9. Do you think Bangladeshi people are polite?
10. Have you changed your greetings after coming to Bangladesh?
11. How did you learn Bangla language?
12. Can you mention any good or bad experience after coming to Bangladesh?
13. Do you have any stereotype notion about the Bangladeshi people?
14. Did language help you to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture?

### Appendix 3

#### Transcription of a participant

##### R for Researcher and M8 for 8 No. Male interviewee

**R:** What problems did you face after coming to Bangladesh?

**M8:** I faced different kinds of problem in different areas. Like...the first problem I faced was language barrier that.. I could not understand the local language..So I faced problem. Whenever I went any market or any public gatherings or even in my class room, when they talk to each other, I didn't understand many things. That's the first problem I faced. And apart from that, I faced problem in food, the local food..I think Bangladeshi foods are spicy and oily..so it was kind of problem for me.

**R:** Which difficulties did you face in mixing up with Bangladeshi people?

**M8:** Yeah... I have been here for last 4 years. Right now I am not getting any problem but initially there was a bit problem like..whenever any people know that I am not Bangladeshi, initially they didn't want to mix with me easily. My classmates.. I mean my college mates make it easy and I found them much more friendly. So it becomes easier for me right now.

**R:** Which difficulties did you face to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture?

**M8:** OK.. I had problem with the food, attire here. Especially the taste of the food is different. Here people eat more spicy and oily food and I am not used to it. Again, what can I say about

dress code.. Umm...I did not find that much dissimilarity in dress codes. But I found Bangladeshi women are much more conservative. So I have seen Bangladeshi girls wearing Borkas and they dress up in a much more conservative way. What I find any Malaysia that..girls are much more .. I mean they wear skirts or t shirts. But in Bangladesh, it's bit rare. But 4 years ago, the scene was total different...right now it's changing. So that's the basic difference. And the men wears are almost similar I find. Both men in Bangladesh and Malaysia wear shirts jeans etc. As I'm a boy, so I did not face that much difficulty to adapt to the Bangladeshi dress culture.

**R:** What do you think about Bangladeshi people?

**M8:** Ahh..Ok.. Definitely..most of them are friendly. As I have said earlier that I have found some good friends in my college and they made this pretty easy. I found Bangladeshi people very friendly, when I went any place or I needed any help..they helped me. So they are friendly.

**R:** How do you manage to communicate with people who do not know English?

**M8:** Umm.. it was a problem initially but by the time goes, I have learnt a few Bengali words from my friends and my college mates.. like whenever I went to any shop, if I want to buy anything, I used to tell "mama, eta den" (give me this one) or whenever I want to take any rickshaw, I used to ask "okhane jaben?" (do you want to go there?). This type of colloquial language or some phrases I used to learn from my friends.

**R:** How is your proficiency level in Bangla? (Four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking)

**M8:** I cannot read Bangla properly but I can speak Bengali, usually the phrases or the common words I can tell. Then I can't understand Bangla properly but I can.. I mean guess most of the sentences and some sentences I can clearly understand.

**R:** What are the reasons of shifting from your mother tongue to Bangla?

**M8:** Basically, for the communication and the education purpose.

**R:** Do you find any difference in Bangladeshi people's body language and your culture's body language?

**M8:** Yes, there is a difference..the reason is cultural difference I find. Most of the cases, the women are bit shy.. so they don't initiate any conversation.

**R:** Do you think Bangladeshi people are polite?

**M8:** I find their culture is good and most of them are polite and gentle. Literates are more polite and modest. That's it.

**R:** Have you changed your greetings after coming to Bangladesh?

**M8:** No.. as I'm Muslim, so I did not need to change my greetings.

**R:** How did you learn Bangla language?

**M8:** I am learning it from surroundings and friends. I have not admitted in any institution.

**R:** Can you mention any good or bad experience after coming to Bangladesh?

**M8:** OK... I can call it bad experience that..when I first came to Bangladesh, I didn't know the rickshaw fare. I was cheated once. I went to Dhanmondi from my college but the rickshaw puller

took 200tk but after some day when I realized the fare was actually 60tk or 70tk that time...so it was a bad experience for me. And I found Bangladeshi people are much more helpful. Once I attacked by fever, I was in bed and couldn't attend college, though it was my first year but my friends helped me a lot. They prepared my notes and they took care of me. So it was unexpected but that was my good experience.

**R:** Do you have any stereotype notion about the Bangladeshi people?

**M8:** Umm.. I think Bangladeshis are conservative. I mean they are more religious.

**R:** Did language help you to adapt to the Bangladeshi culture?

**M8:** Yes.. language helped me a lot. After learning Bangla, I started to understand the culture of Bangladesh. Also I came to know about everything deeper. So yeah.. Bangla language helped me a lot.

**R:** Ok.. that's all. Thank you.

**M8:** Most welcome.