AN EXPLORATION OF THE FUNCTIONS OF ENGLISH IN URBAN BANGLADESH

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfilment of the
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.

2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Abstract

In present world, use of English language is prominent in every part of people's lives, even in countries where English is not the native tongue. In a developing country like Bangladesh, people are using English in different social spheres, which in turn is increasing its role in formation of people's identity. In this paper, the researcher has adopted a qualitative approach to collect data primarily from 10 Dhaka city dwellers to create a sociolinguistic profile to portray different usages of English language, understand people's attitude towards the language, and examine it role on identity creation. The research has suggested that English has different functional needs in urban Bangladeshi context, and people give higher status to this language. Meanwhile, there is still a lot time needed in order to form a distinct Bangladeshi English variety in Bangladesh. The findings of this research will be beneficial to people interested to study the spread of English language in Bangladesh from the lenses of World Englishes. Finally, it can be useful for policymakers who are in charge of making language planning decisions.

Keywords: Bangladeshi English, Identity formation, World Englishes, Functions of English, Attitude towards English

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation paper to my beloved parents.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and background of the study

1.1 Introduction

English is an important language in the context of Bangladesh and is used in various stages in the socio-cultural community of Bangladesh. The growth of English language has expanded so much in Bangladesh that it has allowed Rashid (2014) to claim that in many sectors in Bangladesh, Bangla and English can be used concurrently. In many spheres of day to day life in the urban context people need to rely on English which has generated both positive and negative attitude towards English language. Moreover, it cannot be denied that language has a major role to play in order to form people's self-identity.

Here, the study will explore the dimensions of English use which will project the scenario of Bangladeshi English among other world Englishes. This paper will investigate the role of English in Bangladesh, and its functions in different domains of use (i.e., education, work, administration, legal work, media, personal use etc). It is likely that people will have different attitudes towards these usages of English; so, the study will discuss attitude towards English as well. As language plays an important part to create identity of a person relationship between English use and construction of self- identity will be elaborated. Therefore, this research paper aims to look into the use of English and attitude towards usage of English in Bangladeshi urban context as well as its role to construct self-identity of an individual.

1.2 Problem statement

In Bangladesh, Bangla and English language both plays important and distinct roles in the lives of majority of the population. Although Bangla is the native language, English has significant functional roles to play in Bangladesh and has been used for years for different purposes; thus,

it has become a part of the sociocultural system (Banu & Sussex, 1999). It is of great importance to explore the role of English played in the situation of Bangladesh. Although, there are some studies (For instance; Ahmed & Tinny (2013), Banu & Sussex, Basu (2016), Sultana (2014) and so on) that explores issues such as, code switching between Bangla and English, growing need of English in Bangladesh, popularity of English amongst the youth etc.; there has been very little research which tries to establish the context of English use in the urban context (namely, Dhaka city) of Bangladesh. Moreover, there has not been any significant research on influence of English use to construct self-identity and its relationship with people's perception regarding English language. Meanwhile, in the era of world Englishes, it is of acute importance to investigate where the English of Bangladesh or. otherwise termed as Bangladeshi English stands at present. Therefore, this research enquires the role of English and tries to understand the function, attitude and role (namely, to form self-identity) of English in Bangladesh in parallel with the theoretical framework of world Englishes. In short, this paper will construct a comprehensive sociolinguistic portrayal of English and its role to generate self-identity in the context of Bangladesh.

1.3 Central research questions

This research addresses the following questions and aims to answer them through this study:

1. What is the distinctive role of English in the urban socio-cultural context of Bangladesh? Does it have any role in forming people's self-identity?

2. What is the attitude towards the use of English in the urban context of Bangladesh?

1.4 Purpose of the study

In order to understand where Bangladeshi English stands at present along with other world English, it is crucial to develop an in-depth scenario which highlights the use, function, role, perception, attitude and distinct characteristics of Bangladeshi English. Therefore, this study investigates the context of English use and people's perception towards English use in the

urban social context (in particular in Dhaka city) of Bangladesh. Furthermore, it explores how English language use and attitude towards use of English play the role to construct self-identity. This research will be of great value as it portrays the situation of English use in Bangladesh. It will be important for researchers and linguistics interested in the studies of world Englishes. Besides, policymakers can use the data found in this research for large scale policy making and language planning in Bangladesh. Besides, further research can take place based on the findings of this study.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1 Overview

This chapter will provide an overview of the previous research done in the field of world Englishes, and the spread of English and its use in the context of Bangladesh, This review is a "narrative review" (Bryman, 2008, p.102) which provides an overview and critical analysis of existing literature regarding world Englishes, emergence of English in the context of other countries in the world, the role of English in the socio cultural context of Bangladesh and the research gap will be elaborated.

2.2 World Englishes

Jenkins (2003) mentioned that in about 75 regions English is spoken either as a first language or as an official (institutionalised) second language in areas of government, law and education. Now, for every native speaker there are at least four non-native English speakers (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1996). On the other hand, Graddol (2003) gave an estimation where only 8% of the world population are native speakers of English. Crystal (2003) provided two main reasons for the present international status of English language. They are; colonial legacy of the British

Empire and the rise of the United States as the leading economic and military power in the 20th century (as cited in Jenkins, 2003, p. 39).

Kachru gives the three-circled model (the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle) which portrays the spread of English. Inner circle includes 'norm-providing' countries; such as, the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand etc. where English is the native language. The outer Circle represents 'norm-developing' ESL countries which were under colonisation by Britain and the USA where English has the status of an additional language for intranational purposes of administration, education, law, etc.; such as, India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore etc. Finally, the Expanding circle includes the 'norm-dependent' EFL countries where English is primarily used as a medium of international communication. For example, China, Europe, Japan, Korea, the Middle East etc.

The Kachruvian model (1985) is perchance the most common and universal static or categorical model of world Englishes. However, Kachru's (1985) three-circle model ignored complex realities of English within societies where the classification is absolutely based on political and colonial history ignoring the sociolinguistic one. Kachru (1997) himself pointed out that the three-circle model "fail to take account of the multilingual reality of communities…and the reality of more transient, interacting groups throughout the world" (as cited in Jenkins, 2006, p. 145). Bruthiaux (2003) stressed that although Kachru's model fails to account for diversity in the various dialects of English and to act as a guide for other languages of the world (such as, French or Portuguese); it should be considered that it is not possible for one model which portrays the complex phenomenon of diversity of language worldwide to explain everything in the sociolinguistic setting.

There are some key ideas in the discourse of world Englishes. Kachru (1983b) highlighted the difference between 'range' and 'depth' where English use in different domains is termed as range and, the degree of English use within different social classes is termed as

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depth. Kachru (1983a) also explained that "linguistic schizophrenia" (p.179) occurs when there is discrepancy between performance variety and the target model of the language. Kachru (1994) also introduced two distinct processes that can occur in contact situations regarding English with other local languages; Englishisation and nativisation, which can take place simultaneously and subconsciously.

2.3 Emergence of English in non-native context

The migration of people from the south and east of England to primarily America, Australia and New Zealand developed the first diaspora of English with new native verities of English; also known as "new Englishes". Colonisation of Asia and Africa developed the second diaspora with second language varieties of English, often known as "New Englishes" (Jenkins, 2003, p.5). Moreover, the legacy of British colonisation has given birth to several transplanted non-native varieties of English with their distinct linguistic ecologies in their particular context of usages and functions (Kachru, 1986).

According to Platt et al (1984), a New English needs to be developed through an education system, in a region where native English is not spoken by majority of the population, used for various functions among the people who speak or write in it in the region of use, and become localised or nativised through adoption of distinct language features (such as, phonology, syntax, lexis etc) (as cited in Jenkins, 2003, pp. 25-26). Bamgbose (1998) further identified five factors; such as, demography of the users, geographical penetration of English, authority of English, codification of English, and acceptance of English; which decide the status of English as a New English variety (as cited in Jenkins, 2003, p. 26).

Kachru (1986) mentioned that the linguistic and cultural pluralism of Africa and South Asia helped the spread of English in these regions and contributed to its retention after the end of colonisation. In India, South Asia and some parts of Africa, English serves as an administrative language as well as provides a medium of national and international

communication. It has acquired a "neutrality" (p.8) attitudinally and linguistically in these contexts where native languages, dialects and styles are attached with unappealing connotations and are marked in terms of region, caste, religion and so on. English being originally coloniser's language, remains unmarked from such connotations in these contexts (i.e., in the West Bengal for the Bengali speakers, or in Tamil Nadu for Tamil speakers).

Institutionalised varieties of English refer to the varieties of English used by second language users in non-native context developed in many multilingual countries formerly colonised by Britain and the US. These varieties are seen in Nigeria, Kenya, the Republic of South Africa, Ghana, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. These are labelled as "interference" varieties as there is a distinct linguistic and cultural interference of the native language and culture non-native. The second language varieties have geographical distribution, numerical strength and varied users of English. However, localisation of English can produce more varieties of English and can make it "unEnglish" (Kachru, 1986, p.20).

Crystal (2003) gave three levels of English language varieties. They are; the base level (the family dialect), the second level (the Standard variety of English), and the third level (for International communication). He predicted that in near future the International Standard English variety will emerge. Kachru (1986) further pointed out that it is possible to distinguish between two models of English, "exo-normative model" which refers to the native model for teaching and learning, "endo-normative model" which refers to the local model for emulation and teaching (p.21). However, these two models can co-exist and are not easy to divide. Besides, the dynamic model of the evolution of postcolonial Englishes given by Schneider (2007) proposes that the postcolonial Englishes go through a fixed developmental process that causes their formation, explains their similarities, and is found to operate when a language is transferred. The model includes five phases from two perspectives, the colonisers' perspective

(which is the settler or STL strand) and the perspective of the colonised perspective (which is the indigenous or IDG strand). STL strand and IDG strand become more closely intertwined, their identity constructions converge, and their languages grow closer to each other over time which merge them into a single speech community eventually.

"Foundation" (Schneider, 2007, p. 33) is the first phase of the dynamic model where native English speakers introduce English into a non-native territory. In the second phase of the dynamic model "Exonormative stabilisation" (Schneider, 2007, p. 37) contact with IDG expands as the colony stabilises under foreign political dominance. "Nativisation" (Schneider, 2007, p. 40) is the third phase of the dynamic model where both cultural and linguistic transformation between the two strands takes place. The two groups start to intertwin and new identity constructions forms. Also, a new variety of English emerges with phonological innovations and structural nativisation (Schneider, 2003). Moreover, the fourth phase of the dynamic model "Endonormative stabilisation" (Schneider, 2007, p. 48) which mainly takes place in the independent state which causes the STL strand to converge with the IDG strand into a single, shared, local linguistic identity. Differentiation (Schneider, 2007, p. 52) is the final phase of the dynamic model where linguistic homogeneity decreases in the newfound nations. New ethnic, social and regional varieties of former new variety emerge (dialect birth) having different phonological, lexical and structural features (Schneider, 2003).

2.4 Role of English in Bangladesh

According to Jenkins (2003) English in Bangladesh can be categorised regionally as a South Asian variety and functionally as an institutionalised variety. In contrast to India, after independence English use was mainly restricted to functional purposes (Jenkins, 2003). Despite losing its official second language status after liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, English is a useful academic language which is compulsory subject at secondary and higher secondary level. Also, Universities have English department that offer B.A. Honours, M.A.,

M. Phill, and Ph. D courses and degrees in English language, literature and ELT (Dutta, 2001). Kamol (2009) narrated that the three branches of education in Bangladesh include, Bangla medium education, English medium education, Madrasha education. According to Basu (2016), Bangladesh has given an important role of English language in education policies and regular social interactions among people. People are interested to take private English lessons in coaching centres to increase their proficiency levels to suit the job market. Besides, ESP courses have contributed to the importance of English. The private universities operate their academic programmes largely in English with little or no focus on Bangla, the national language. A parallel curriculum in the English medium are being offered in traditionally Bangla mediums schools for people who want and afford it. The rapid spread of English in the education sector of Bangladesh is evident through the recently launched English medium *madrashas* (Islamic religious schools). Here, the English medium schools in Bangladesh promote English medium education and western culture undermining Bangladeshi culture and traditions which foster cultural imperialism (Haque, 2009). Ahmed & Tinny (2013) in their questionnaire survey found that 70.5% public university students and 80% private university students are being consciously or unconsciously influenced by the FM style English (p.14). Sultana (2014) views that young adults in urban areas are very creative, strategical and pragmatical in their use of both English and Bangla where diversity to Bangla is caused different genre of discourses aside from English.

Moreover, English language is also dominant in media and newspapers as more news, talk shows and other programmes are now being broadcasted and more dailies, periodicals, magazines are being published using English (Basu, 2016). Al-Quaderi (2001) in his survey found that reading English newspaper is associated with status symbol where most of the respondents came from middle class background. Basu (2009) added that English writings of Bangladeshi authors show evidence of nativisation of English. Here, Englishisation is noticed

in Bangladesh in speech using mixture of English and Bangla. The Englishisation in media involving lexical borrowings is heavily criticised (Basu, 2016). Englishisation, or otherwise termed as Anglicisation of Bangla is observed in FM Banglish by Basu. FM Banglish includes large degree of code switching between English and Bangla and Anglicisation of the pronunciation of Bangla words affected by English pronunciation (Basu, 2009). Banu and Sussex (2001) adds that English and Bangla code switching is natural, unpredictable, and spontaneous in the spoken language in Bangladesh.

Basu (2016) further noted that although 98% of the population of Bangladesh use Bangla as a mother tongue, there is a view that in some domains English is gradually displacing Bangla. Alam (2012) expressed that no language can extend or mature or mutate into something more than it is without exposing itself from other languages, nations and cultures. Some people in Bangladesh their best to demote English education during the seventies and eighties and the early nineties of the last century and the language made to look responsible for all sorts of evils. Bengali is the established state language of Bangladesh, but the supremacy of this language should not blind people to the other languages of the world and there is a growing need of declaring English as the second language of the country. Thus, Bangla can keep its prestige in the national curriculum and English proficiency can be cultivated assiduously at all levels of education as the second language.

Askari (2018) mentioned that the government of Bangladesh is advocating for Bangla's right to be an official language of the UN as a recognition of the large number of Bangla speaking population and Bangla literature and its heritage. However, the United Nations has so far shown no steps to materialise this dream. Haque (2015) also added that the mixture of Bangla and English, or otherwise known as Banglish has been outlawed by Bangladesh Supreme Court on February 16, 2012 blaming it for the distortion of Bangla language instructing government efforts to protect 1000-year-old Bangla heritage. Also, the court also

instructed the government to ensure the usage of Bangla in all advertisements of electronic media, signboards, personal name plates and registration plates of vehicles within April 1 of 2014. The constitution of Bangladesh compels courts, government offices, semi government and autonomous institutions to use Bangla except in foreign relations. Thus, there is apprehension and ambivalence regarding use of English in Bangladesh despite its role in the national curriculum, media and newspapers, official sectors and substantial interest to be proficient in the language (Basu, 2016). He added that in an atmosphere of wariness and apprehension due to the perceived detrimental role English in the deterioration of Bangla the desire to gain proficiency in English continues to increase.

2.5 Language of power

Phillipson (1992) gave the theory of linguistic and cultural imperialism. He asserted that the dominance of one language over others can be viewed as linguistic imperialism. The power of English is marked by the domains of its use, the roles played by its users, and how others view its importance; where English outperforms all other languages. During colonisation by the British English was used as an instrument of power to create a culturally distinct group who identified with the cultural, social, linguistic norms of the ruling elites. However, English was later used against the colonisers when it served as the language of resurgence of nationalism and political awakening (Kachru, 1986).

Choudhury (2001) created distinction between functional and cultural Englishes. Functional English is used as an instrument for communication and contact. English language was exported by East India Company with the sole purpose of "material advancement". It was an effective cultural measure taken through English education to cultivate a class of willing collaborators to assist the British. Here, the language education was more cultural than functional with the motive to conquer the native's minds. Phillipson (1992) viewed that the idea that English language and culture are superior, where other languages and cultures are

viewed as inferior and need to be measured following the standards of English language and culture raised the concept of anglocentricity. Modiano (2001) had extreme belief that learning a foreign language results into cultural intrusion. He viewed that English language "Anglo-Americanizes" (p.2) the non-native speakers of language. Ironically, English became the pan-national medium of communication for the resurgence after nationalist movements for cultural and linguistic reasons. It became the language of political, international, administrative, legal and liberal discourse. Thus, English maintained its power over local languages even after the end of colonial period (Kachru, 1986).

In Bangladesh, a mono lingual country where another language is not needed for internal communication, there is a huge demand for English. Acquisition for English is an instrument to gain both power and prestige (Choudhury, 2001). Choudhury (2001) mentioned that 95% of the necessary texts and reference books are written in English. Also, English medium education is only exclusive for the upper-class people as they are very expensive (Banu & Sussex, 2001). These schools follow books and curriculum offered by British council which do not include Bangladeshi books which can portray Bangladeshi culture (Kamol, 2009). These books provide ideas, attitudes, activities following the English cultural elements which is viewed as centre and model education for countries in the periphery (Phillipson, 1992). Tickoo (2006) highlighted that English medium education is preferred by parents as English education is a sign of higher status and prestige. Milroy (2001) explained that varieties of language do not hold the prestige, rather the people using them determine their prestige (as cited in Jenkins, 2003, p. 33). Jenkins (2003) added that many cultures put higher status for proficiency in English.

2.6 Language and identity

According to Woodward (1997), a person's identity is constructed through the marking of difference through both symbolic systems of representation and forms of social exclusion.

Binary oppositions (for example, us versus them, self versus other) are the most common form of marking these differences. Piller (2001) elaborated that identity constitute of shared markers such as, characteristics, aspirations, language, ethnicity etc. Her study highlighted identity theories based on similarities and differences. Blomquist (2009) asserted that identities are constructed in relation to other identities. Language use is viewed as both a social practice and a symbolic system for identity construction. Here, it can construct and define one's identity, and at the same time can separate one's identity from that of others.

Use of language is one of the most primary ways of construct one's identity (Thomas & Wareing, 2000). Blomquist (2009) mentioned that the meanings produced by language uses and choices (such as, code switching) guides to build one's identity. Wardhaugh (2006) showed the clear relation between usage of code switching and identity construction. People use language to create a diverse range of identities for themselves (Thomas & Wareing, 2000). Jenkins (2003) also added that accents closely plays a role to create self as well as group identity. Leung (2010) pointed that people's identities are not fixed, but rather are constantly being built and negotiated. Jenkins (2003) identified that language and identity are closely related, and the main legacy of colonisation is the loss of ethnic identity. Here, Kachru (1986) raises the question on whether one will lose one's cultural identity by using a non-native second language or one can preserve one's cultural identity and continue to use a second language. He believed that English is gaining various international identities and obtaining multiple ownerships. In second language varieties, acquisition of a new identity occurs by design, but it is subconscious in foreign language varieties. However, the distinction between conscious and subconscious is not always clear. Language can blend with its functions and create an entirely new linguistic ecology. Amin (2001) viewed that English language has gone through some stages before it penetrated the subcontinent. The route involves nostalgia and knowledge of a

pre-colonial past, usurpation which deals with shame of subjugation and quest for liberation, and dismantled identity with the dislocation of the decolonised subjects.

2.7 Research gap

The following section will provide relevant research regarding English use in Bangladesh and identify the gap in the existing research that this research seeks to fill. In his study, Basu (2016) investigated the spread of English in the educational and professional sector of Bangladesh. He concluded that despite Bangla being a leading language in educational institutions mainly in lower levels and in poorer neighbourhoods, both private and government agencies are causing a higher demand for English, English language is perceived, learned, used, promoted, commodified, sold and taught outrageously with exceptional optimism. Al-Quaderi's (2001) study has also looked into the association of status with English language use. Meanwhile, Basu (2009) noticed the spread of Englishisation in media discourse in his research. Basu (2016) added that the perceived deformation of Bangla is believed to be due to the spread and increasing use of English in the media. Furthermore, relationship between English and power in society was discussed in Choudhury's (2001) work.

Despite many researchers exploring the use of English in Bangladesh, very few researches have actually identified the range of functions of English language from a sociolinguistic point of view. There is no significant research that aligns English use in Bangladesh with the discourse of world Englishes. Moreover, there is lack of in-depth exploration of the attitude towards English language and its relationship with the formation of identity in Bangladeshi society. Therefore, this study aims to fill a noteworthy rift in the current research regrading Bangladeshi English in the realm of World Englishes.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter will discuss the research methodology of this paper. It explores the design of this study, theoretical framework, participants, and instrumentation. It will elaborately discuss the procedure of data collection, transcription and data analysis. Furthermore, the ethical considerations considered while conducting this research and obstacles encountered during this research will be described in depth in this chapter.

3.2 Research design

The research design for this study will follow qualitative method. The procedures in particular for collecting, analysing data follow "grounded theory design" (Creswell, 2005). Creswell (2015) elaborated that systematic, qualitative procedures used to create a general explanation of a process, action, or interaction among people is known as grounded theory design. This research design includes primarily collecting data from interview, developing and relating findings and information, and producing a model that portrays the explanation.

This particular research has been designed to investigate the role and attitude towards English in Bangladesh and its interaction with self-identity. It aims to answer the following research questions,

1. What is the distinctive role of English in the urban socio-cultural context of Bangladesh? Does it have any role in forming people's self-identity?

2. What is the attitude towards the use of English in the urban context of Bangladesh?

The data for this research has been collected from 10 participants from Dhaka city through open ended interview session. The data has been transcribed and coded to analyse them to finally propose certain themes to answer the central research questions.

3.3 Participants

This study has collected data from different sources. On a broader scale, the researcher has look into language use in personal documents (such as, e-mails, blogs, Facebook posts,

reflections, journals etc.) and various artefacts (such as, flyers, posters, agendas, handbooks, other materials). Also, the research has drawn her own experiences of English use in interaction with others in urban social context in this study. However, the primary source of data for this study has been in-depth interviews with a group of people from different sociocultural context.

There are 10 participants all together in this research. All the participants are from different areas in Dhaka city. The following table (Table 1) will give an overview regarding the participants.

Pseudonym	Occupation	Highest educational qualification
Sunehra	Student	B. A. in English
Mizan	Retired govt. officer	B. Sc.
Sabab	High school Bangla teacher	M. Ed.
Mahin	Digital marketing executive	B. Sc in C.S.E.
Atif	Doctor	M.B.B.S.
Anaf	Businessman	H.S.C,
Mariha	Housewife	S.S.C.
Sami	Banker, M.B.A. Student	B.B.A.
Esha	Student	S.S.C. candidate
Araya	Lecturer	M. Sc.

Table 1. Overview of the participants.

To ensure the privacy of the participants, their identity will not be disclosed in this research. The researcher audio recorded the face to face interview session with 8 of the participants. 2 of the participants participated in the research through phone interview session. The participants differ from each other in terms of age, sex, educational qualification, occupation and socio-cultural background so that the study can get diverse range of data. Therefore, "purposeful sampling" (Creswell, 2005, p. 206) has been chosen where the

researcher has selected individuals of the study intentionally to understand the central phenomenon. Moreover, "maximal variation sampling" (Creswell, 2005, p.207) has also been employed where the individuals differ on some characteristics, such as, age, occupation and education etc. In this research, the sample size is relatively smaller than other studies in this field due to the limited time given to complete the research.

3.4 Instrumentation

During the research, the research has gone through different types of personal documents and artefacts for this research. Moreover, the researcher has spent plenty of her time with each of the participants before the actual interview session. The researcher uses a set of premeditated questions to direct the interview to elicit responses that would answer the central research question of this study. However, the interview session is not limited to the pre-set questions as the researcher asks follow-up questions and provides probes. Whenever necessary the researcher has asked the participants to elaborate and provide examples and justifications. The interview session has been audio recorded using voice recorder android application for 8 of the participants. The rest two participants took part in phone interview, and the researcher has taken written notes. Each interview session lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. The researcher has remained unbiased to the participant's responses and tried to encourage them to speak their mind by creating a comfortable and unthreatening situation by providing neutral verbal cues and body language.

Comfortable places such as, the participants' residences and a coffee shop have been the setting of the face to face interview. Also, the researcher has made sure that the setting is quiet so that the audio recording will be clear for the research. Great care has been taken so that the participants would not be disturbed during the interview session. For the two phone interviews, a time of the day has been chosen when the participants will be relaxed and can

participate without any interruption. The researcher has tried her best to provide similar environmental setting to all the participants to maintain reliability and validity in the research.

It is important for the researcher to familiarise with the participant to minimise "observer effect" (Gordon, 2013). The participants have been sent a consent form before that actual interview session started, and they were explained the need and the importance of their participation. Also, the research has made her familiar with all the participants and answered all their questions before staring the actual interview session.

3.5 Procedures for data collection

In this research, the researcher has primarily collected data from participants who are permanent residence of the Dhaka city. Moreover, researcher has collected further data by going through personal documents and artefacts. Triangulation is a very important process as it authenticates evidences from different individuals (such as, teachers and students), types of data (such as, fieldnotes and interview recordings), or methods of data collection (such as, documents and survey) (Creswell, 2005). Here, date collection from different sources is of utmost as it is important to validate the credibility of the findings.

The participants of the interview session are either born in Dhaka city or has migrated to the city for permanent residence. In some cases, the participants have dwelled outside the city for educational or occupation purposes. However, at the time of this study all of the participants have settled down in different areas of the metropolitan. Therefore, the data collected from them would reflect the general population in the metropolitan Dhaka city. Moreover, permission has been taken from each and every participants of the research by the researcher. The participants have signed a consent form where they have agreed to provide data to be recorded and used for this study without disclosing their personal identities and personal information. The critical research questions worked as a guide for the researcher to create a set of open-ended questions to steer the interview session. However, it has been considered that

the questions would not restrict the scope of the interview to the premeditated questions only. The researcher has been allowed room for making alterations, asking follow-up questions, and skipping questions whenever necessary. The existing research materials in the literature review, the researcher's own personal judgement has been used to outline the interview questions. For this study, open ended interview session has been chosen as a primary data collection method. According to Creswell (2005), an open-ended interview is a qualitative interview where an interviewer asks questions without response options to record comments of the participants. Therefore, open ended questions enable the researcher to ask questions and record comments that can go beyond the initial questions. Here, "probes" (Creswell, 2005, p.221) which are subsequent questions will be used to elicit more information. The interview sessions are "one-on-one" (Creswell, 2005) interviews where the researcher interviews only one participant in the study at a time. The data collection process for this study has taken 14 days as the researcher has to visit the participant in their preferred place (either their residence or a coffee shop). As participants are from different regions of Dhaka city and due to practical reasons, it has not been possible for the researcher to collect the data in one day. Besides, 2 of the participants have participated in the research through phone interview as they have full time work and other responsibilities. Instead of excluding them from this study, the researcher kept them as they both have interesting data to offer to the study. In all the other cases, interview session has been recorded through voice recorder in mobile phone. Therefore, the researcher has followed the five stages of qualitative data collection advised by Creswell (2005), namely; participants identification, getting permission, selection of types of information to be collected, designing data collecting and recording instruments, and practically administering the study. However, even after the official interview session, the researcher has kept in touch with the participants as she has needed them to clear up confusion or provide explanation while analysing the data.

3.6 Transcription

According to Creswell (2005) the process of transforming the audiotape recordings or fieldnotes into written date of text is called transcription. The interview session has taken place in Bangla for most the participants. For this research, the researcher has translated the responses of the participants and compiled them as writer data. Also, the notes of the 2 phone interviewed participants were transcribes as written data. Instead of listening to the recorded interviews or reading notes of the interview, the researcher has chosen to transcribe them for further analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

The analysis will follow a "simultaneous" (Creswell, 2005, p.238) and "iterative" (Creswell, 2005, p.238) process of analysing data where data collection does not end when the analysis has started. The researcher has the freedom to go back and collect more data whenever necessary to assist herself during the data analysis procedure. Besides, the analysis will follow "interpretive" (Creswell, 2005, p.238) data analysis method where the researcher has used her own judgement interpret the data collected in the study. Also, findings from the personal documents and artefacts analysis existing literature has been used to interpret the data for this study.

To analyse the data the researcher has organised the transcriptions of the recorded participants and the notes of the unrecorded participants according to the questions of the interview. Then, finding of the interviews has been coded by dividing them into separate segments. These segments have helped to create themes from the findings which answer the central research questions. Moreover, the researcher has interpreted the findings of the research by following her own judgement. She has also used existing research to come up with these interpretations. Besides, the researcher has gone back to collect further data to back up her interpretations from time to time to validate the results of this study. Again, the researcher has followed the six stages of qualitative data analysis instructed by Creswell (2005), specifically; preparing and organising the data, coding them, developing themes and descriptions,

representing findings with narratives and visuals, interpreting the impact of the results through personal reflection and existing literature, and validating the accuracy of the result. However, these steps of data analysis do not taken place in sequence in all cases (Creswell, 2005). Sometimes, they merge or lack sequence while analysing the data.

3.8 Ethical considerations

All the participants take part in this research willingly after given essential information regarding the study, its needs and the impact. They sign a consent form to provide official right to the researcher to use their data without using their personal identity or personal information. The participants take part in the research voluntarily without any compensation. The participants are also made comfortable while conducting the research and the researcher has not tried to manipulate the responses of the participants in any form.

3.9 Obstacles encountered

There are some minor struggles faced by the researcher while conducting the study. First of all, it has not been possible to make the participants come to a certain place to take part in this research. The researcher has to visit the place preferred the participants and create a quiet environment for the interview session to happen. Second of all, the researcher has to visit different regions of Dhaka city bearing her own transportation cost. Since the research is funded by the researcher herself, it has not been possible for the researcher to go to other metropolitan cities of Bangladesh to collect data. Third of all, the participants have different working hours than the researcher. Therefore, the researcher has met the participants only when they have been free to participate in the research. However, these obstacles are tackled by the researcher by making compromises in certain sectors.

Chapter 4

Role of English in urban socio-cultural context of Bangladesh

4.1 Overview

This chapter will portray the function of English in different contextual situations based on the findings of this study. This chapter is related to the first central research question. Although, Bangla is the native tongue of the people of Bangladesh, English has some important functions in various contexts reported by the participants in this study. This chapter will highlight on each of the contexts and discuss them elaborately.

4.2 Education

From the interview data it has been found that in education sectors in Bangladesh the use of English is prevalent in all levels. Six participants of this study from the Bangla medium educational background point out that they needed to learn the rules of English language and had learned reading texts and write structured items (such as, letter, paragraph, essays etc.). They did not need to speak in English in class. The youngest participant in this research, Esha who is studying in class 10 at present confirm that in her school the teachers explain the grammatical rules of English, teaches her to read from the text books, and provide written paragraphs, letters, essays etc to her to memorise. She mentions that, "I do not use English to talk to my teachers or with my friends in school". Chowdhury & Kabir (2014) regarding the importance of English in the education policy stated that Bangladesh's most recent education policy- the National Education Policy 2010, gives upmost importance towards English education in order to create a powerful and innovative knowledge-based and information technology-oriented society.

However, all the participants who studied in Bangla medium schools agreed that their English classes did not teach to communicate in English in real life situations. The four English medium students learned English as a separate subject along with using it as the medium of communication in the other subject classes. They were bound to use English in school to communicate with teachers and friends in school. Sunehra is very vocal about this issue as she

says, "My school has a strict punishment policy for the students who used to speak in Bangla. We were forced to use English as they teachers used to believe that it would make us proficient in the language". Haque & Akter (2012) also in their survey found that English medium schools of Bangladesh prohibit the usage of Bangla language and give punishment when students use Bangla aiming to create an English atmosphere so that the learners are forced to become fluent users of English.

Seven of the participants are studying or have studied in universities. According to them, in university level the use of English has been restricted to making presentations, talking to teachers, reading books and journals, writing papers, communicating in workshops and conferences. Although, the universities have been different for the participants, all of them agree that in university English is not forced on the participant as a medium of communication, rather different types of needs to use English emerges in university level out of necessity. One of the participants (Atif) explains,

> All the medical books are written in English, and there is not Bangla medical book to read for the students. Although, I came from a Bangla medium background and was not an avid reader, I needed to grow my reading skills to pursue my reading skill to read those medical books.

Here, Naik (2018) added that English is the primary language for a large pool of scientific and technical knowledge. All of the participants agreed that English use comes out of necessity in university level than school level. Interestingly, participants who are from English medium schooling admit that their proficiency in Bangla is lower than that of English. For example, Sunehra admits that she cannot read or write in Bangla at all.

Thus, it is apparent that English as a subject is given priority in the Education system of Bangladesh as all the participants have had English as a separate subject in their schooling. It can also be assumed that knowledge of English language is necessary in the university level

in Bangladesh. Therefore, English language has functional necessity in educational field in Bangladesh.

4.3 Work and business

English in the business sectors in Bangladesh is considered as very important. This is because of the necessity to communicate with various foreign companies and organisations and also to expand local businesses to the global market. All of the participants agreed that companies in Bangladesh seek for good command in English, but English is not always needed in their professional life as it was needed in their educational life. Six of the participants work in different professions and one of them owns a business. Mizan, a retired government customs officer mentions that he needed English when he talked with foreigners visiting Bangladesh and his boss in his work. He informs that his English proficiency improved after he joined his work and started his duty in the airport. Although, he did not need to use English with his colleagues, they helped them to better his English as he had poor proficiency before entering his job. During his work life, he also needed to read tax related books in English.

Sabab, however mentions that he does not need English at all in his work life as he is a Bangla teacher. In his academic life, he needed to use English for different types of purposes. When he started his professional life with an English medium school, he needed to use English to communicate with the students as this was mandatory for the school. Also, he needed to write the lesson plan in English even though he was there to teach Bangla. After he switched his workplace and started to teach in a Bangla medium government school, he does not face any such restriction and has not need to use English at all.

Mahin, on the other hand works in an IT company that outsources for an American based technology company. Although, his colleagues are all Bangladeshi, he needs to use English a lot. He communicates with his clients and supervisors in English through skype to deal with different types of issue. He needs to use English to make presentation, hold meeting

and make digital advertisement content. In his work life, English serves a lot of purpose. However, he feels that,

> Unlike school and university, I do not need to worry about grammar and correct word choice for communication unless I am making an advertisement content to put up in the internet for the whole world to see. When I make those advertisements, I must be very careful as I am making them targeted for the audience of the American audience. I have to research about their culture and find out persuasive words and expressions to attract customers. If I cannot do that, clients will not be interested to work with me and my review from the clients will be less attractive to get further clients.

The importance of English in the business sector is also discussed in previous research in other contexts. For example, Seppälä (2011) added that in the modern age of internet, English provides the basic skills to cope with technology.

Atif, a doctor in a private medical explains that he does not need to English while communicating with his colleagues, boss or patients. However, he writes his prescriptions in English, reads medical journals and description of medicines from different pharmaceutical companies in English. Also, when he gives presentation in the hospital he has to present in English even when the audience are all native Bangla speakers. Also, he uses different medical jargons that are mostly in English in his work while speaking in Bangla all the time.

Anaf, who owns a merchandising business mentions that he rarely uses English in his work life. However, his company deals with foreign merchandisers and he uses chunks such as, "How are you?", "I am fine", "How is the business going?" etc. He has separate group of people in his business who deal with foreign investors in English and give him the report. So far, he has not faced any problem due to his lack of proficiency in English.

Sami is both working as a M.T.O. in a renowned private bank as well as perusing his M.B.A. His job includes training entry level workers. He needs to use English for training

purposes. He also needs to give presentations, hold meetings, exchange greetings in English. He explains that he needs to look corporate and tries to maintain corporate attitude, and English helps him to do so.

Finally, Araya is a lecturer who needs English to write articles, read subject related books, converse with superiors, and give lectures in classes and conferences. Although, she uses English for giving lecture, she does not use it for informal conversations in her work life.

Here, the participants English use in their professional life depends on instrumental need. According to Kabir (2015), there is a high instrumental motivation among people to use English to improve their professional prospects. All of the participants use it as a means to an end where English uses fulfil their diverse range of professional purposes. Although, English is second language for all the participants, they rely on it for its need in their work life. When they cannot use it themselves, they need to rely on others who can use English.

The researcher views that the importance of English in professional sector of Bangladesh depends on the nature of profession exclusively. However, it can be assumed from the study that the range of English use in professional sector of Bangladesh is increasing. The researcher believes that it is due to the growing interaction with other countries and the spread of internet and technology where English is the lingua franca.

4.4 Home and personal use

Five of the participants in this research admits that in their childhood they were encouraged to use English in their home. Interestingly, four of these participants have English medium schooling and the other participant (Esha) is the youngest participant in this study. In Esha's case, she explains that, "My parents fear that I will fall behind than others if I cannot communicate in English". Her parents use English mostly to communicate and explain something to her, giving her orders, or talking about uncomfortable matter (such as, menstrual

hygiene, guy talk etc.). She also adds that her parents only use English to chat with her in social media platforms, even though they talk about the same subject in Bangla in every day situation.

In Sunehra's case, her parents do not know English to use it with her. However, her paternal grandfather has always used English with her from her early childhood and continues to do so. He does not use Bangla with her at all. Also, she also uses English sometimes with her friends, relatives, cousins etc. She mentions that, "Now, that I have passed my O-level and have entered university, I can actually use the language that I want, and I am not always forced to use English. I can use it when I want, it is just it is does not feel restricted as before."

Mahin, Sabab and Araya also adds that their family encouraged English in their home. However, they were never restricted to using English only. As they have grown up, they use English in their home when they want. Here, Araya informs that,

> I speak in English when I am angry at her house. Using English language, I can talk about my negative emotions more clearly than using Bangla. Also, my children pay more attention when I ask them to do something in English. I feel stricter and in command when I need to order something if I use English.

Furthermore, with friends and other relative they use English whenever they feel comfortable using it. There is no restriction, and they feel quite flexible to use the language they prefer. The rest of the participants includes that they do not use English in home or for personal use. Only Mizan gives one instance of English use. His son studies in an English version school. When he teaches his son, he has to use English to make him understand. Other than that, these participants do not provide any instances of English use. On the contrary, all of the participants point out that "code switching" or mixing Bangla with English occurs for all of them and it takes place mainly in their home and personal use of English.

The researcher concludes that in personal domain English is used to project power and dominance. In some cases, usage of English has direct relation with confidence. Although using

English in personal domain is quite restricted, family members view it as a scope to practice their English for the outside educational and professional communication

4.5 Media and entertainment

English is quite common in the media and entertainment sectors in Bangladesh. Data from the interviews confirm that majority of the participants watch or listen English programs, movies or news. Seven of the participants stated that they watch English movies and TV series. Two of them, Mizan and Esha watch movies both in Bangla and English. The rest five of them rarely watch any Bangla movies and TV series. Moreover, all of the participants admit watching YouTube content in English. Even, Mariha, a housewife with S.S.C. level education admits that, "I watch YouTube to learn new recipes and see decoration videos". She reveals that she does not have any problem understanding as she can read the subtitle and the language is very clear for to understand on YouTube. All of the participants reveal that they listen to English music. Mariha again explains that her daughter likes to listen to English music and she has started to like them as well. However, Mizan, Sabab, Anaf and Araya report that they listen to Bangla music more than English ones. 6 participants admit reading English books more than Bangla ones. Furthermore, amongst 6 of the participants who read newspaper daily, 3 claim reading English ones.

In conclusion, it is apparent that English use for entertainment purposes is very popular in Bangladeshi setting. English culture is entering in Bangladesh directly through consumption of English media items.

4.6 Other social contexts

Despite the given context, the participants have noticed the use of English is other situations as well. Sunera mentions that sometimes when she is calling a C.N.G or rickshaw she has mistakenly uses "Hey there" many times. Also, while paying she has noticed herself saying, "Here, take this". Moreover, Sabab gives an example from his previous workplace which used

to be an English medium school and teacher used to use English with the guard, peon and caretakers who could not understand English but pretended that they do. They (guard, peon and caretakers) used to act like they could not speak in Bangla in front of the parents and ignored them when they used to call them in Bangla.

The researcher believes that these instances are directly linked with "Englishisation" (Kachru, 1994) where English language has direct influence on the local language. English language is seen to influence the Bangla language use, substituting many words with English words. Moreover, there is a growing comfort for using English in different domains in urban Bangladesh.

Chapter 5

Attitude towards the use of English urban socio-cultural context of Bangladesh

5.1 Overview

This chapter will discuss the participants' attitude towards the use of English in Dhaka city. This chapter will break down the reasons for the participants to learn and use English. Also, it will highlight their perception of English use by finding out their preference for language use. Moreover, it will examine the importance and status of English among the urban city dwellers of Bangladesh. The findings and discussion of this chapter is related to the second research question.

5.2 Reasons for learning English

Parental desire and school restriction are most common reason for learning English for the participants. According to the participants of this research, the school system in Bangladesh gives important to learning English from a very early age and they were taught English from primary level. The four participants who had English medium schooling explained that they

were not allowed to use Bangla for communication in school and needed to use English to communicate. This triggered them to learn English from a young age. For the other participants, in order to get a good grade in the English subject they needed to study the rules of English. Although, they were not required to learn to speak in English, school system put pressure on them to learn the grammatical knowledge of English. According to Kabir (2015), parents and teachers motivate the learners to use English in classroom to learn it properly. All of the participants agree that they were not given any choice on learning English. Parents of the participants gave importance to learning English as they felt knowing English is important to get a good job and it is a marker of education. Anaf and Mariha both agree that their parents rebuked them in childhood for not doing good in English in school. Esha also adds that her parents give importance on learning English.

Furthermore, learning English is important for maintaining a good academic result and getting a good job which is shared by six of the participants. Mizan stated that he struggled a lot in his work life at first as he could not communicate in English with foreigners. He mentions that, "Sometimes I used to feel very humiliated for not being fluent in the early years of my work life. I used to practice in front of the mirror to be proficient in English". Mahin also views that without knowing English he could not have survived in his job field. These participants think that whether or not a job would require English in future, a person needs to learn English so that he or she is better prepared. Hussain & Masum (2016) pointed out that practical reasons such as, achieving a good score, securing a good job, getting opportunities for higher education and so on are the main reasons for learning English.

Anaf, however, feels that learning English for work purpose in unnecessary. He says that, "I do not know English and I am still a successful businessman. I can hire anyone to communicate with the clients at any time. I can perfectly handle my business without knowing English". Meanwhile, Atif feels that learning English is helpful for maintain a good academic

result. In his view, "All the books for higher studies are written in English. You need to learn the language to know the content. If you do not know the language, a lot of important education stuff will not be available to you". Sami who is planning to go abroad for higher studies explain that he needs to continuously better his English and sit for IELTS or TOFEL to get entrance and scholarship for foreign universities. Learning English is important to pursue higher studies in a foreign county and good universities do not allow students who cannot show the proof that he or she has learned English. Hamid & Honan (2012) also felt that students do not get access for higher education if they have poor grades in English even though they have extremely good functional competence. Although, not all the participants agree but, learning English is given importance for work and educational purposes.

Most of the participants also view that as an international language everyone should learn English. Sabab feels that Bangla is the native language of Bangladesh, but it cannot be used of the county to communicate with others. Atif adds that if he goes to another country to pursue higher education he will need English for communication. Even in countries where English is not the native tongue, English is the medium of communication since this is the lingua franca. Therefore, to communicate with others learning English is a necessity.

The researcher believes that the desire to learn English is generated due to functional importance of English language in recent times. Interestingly, none of the participants did not have any choice regarding the issue of learning English. The education of Bangladesh and the sociocultural circumstances have obliged all of them to start learning English in the first place.

5.3 Reasons for using English

Mostly, half of the participants point out that they actively use English. First of all, they use it for educational purpose. English is needed to read and learn educational contents, such as, notes, books, journals, blogposts, websites etc. Sunehra point out, "I need to read a lot of online articles for my university studies. All of them are in English. So far, in my experience I have

not come across a good Journal website which is not in English". Also, it is needed to give presentations, present conference papers, communicate with teachers, write papers and articles etc. Besides, they need to use English for professional purposes in their work life. Mahin admits, "my company priorities employers who are good at using English so that the clients from abroad can easily communicate with them regarding details of the work." Naik (2008) highlighted the point that using English is important for the Bangladeshi citizens to attract international and domestic corporations for professional purposes. The participants also use English for communicative purposes as found in this study. Sunehra goes on to explain that "English is a global language. I have many friends from around the world and I need to use English to talk to them". Poggensee (2016) here, explained that English has risen to be the dominant language for commination as people from different region of the world interact with each other for different purposes. The participants not only use English to communicate with people who cannot speak Bangla, but also with people whose native tongue is Bangla. Sunehra, Mahin, Sami, Esha, and Araya inform that they use it to communicate with their friends and relatives. Here, they admit that they make sure that they use the language with people who feels comfortable with using English. Otherwise, they do not use English with them. All of the participants agree on using English words and phrases consciously and unconsciously when they speak. Even when they are using Bangla, English words come automatically out of their mouth.

The researcher observes that the degree of English use, or otherwise known as "depth" (Kachru, 1983b) of English use is dependent on the participants' individual choice and professional circumstances. The participants are conscious in their choice depending on their attitude towards English.

5.4 Preference for English

The participants in this research do not show any particular preference for English language. Rather, most of the participants admit that the need to use English comes from the situation itself. They mention that in situations, such as, job interview, meeting with boss, dealing with other company etc., where they need to prove themselves English is preferred. Also, in any competitive tasks English is preferred over Bangla. For example, Mahin explains that he prefers English to communicate with his supervisor at work as everyone in his position wants to get a good review for promotion and more deals. Sunehra adds that she prefers to use English than Bangla when she is having group discussion with her classmates, she understands the contents better in English than Bangla. Moreover, majority of the participants prefer English for serious conversations. Araya points out that,

> Sometimes, I feel that when I use English people give me more attention and listens to me more carefully. Therefore, when I have something important to say I prefer English….. I normally use Bangla to post status in Facebook, but when I want to say something about serious issue, such as rape and harassment of women of Bangladesh I find it easier to talk about this in English…. I have not given it much of a though until now, but I find that I feel more assertive and I feel like I have a voice to protest against such matter using English, whereas I could not find the right words to say in Bangla regarding such manner.

Here, English language is found to serve the purpose of "attitudinal neutrality" (Kachru, 1986) by neutralising or unburdening the unwanted seriousness of an item from its cultural, traditional, and affective attributes. The participants also prefer English when they need to show that they are smart and capable. Esha mentions that with her cousins from English medium she prefers using English, otherwise they would treat her as dumb and stupid. Sami also mentions that in family gatherings he prefers English with relatives to act smart and confident. It has been found, most of the participants agree that they prefer English whenever

they need to seem confident. Finally, the participants admit that they prefer English in situation when they want to avoid someone or want to cut out someone from the conversation at all.

The researcher can relate the imperialistic role of English with the preference of English, although the preference of using English can be result of domain specific demand of English, or otherwise known as "range" (Kachru 1983b).

5.5 Importance of English

The participants in this research give importance to English for its needs and necessity mainly, rather than for the fascination for western culture. The participant agree that English is important to progress in life. English provides opportunities in Bangladesh as well as in other countries. Although, Bangla is the native tongue in Bangladesh, the needs and importance of English of Bangladesh is much higher than Bangla is certain situation. For example, in job interviews, proficiency of English is prioritised over the proficiency of Bangla language. Besides, knowing language is a marker of education, class and prestige according to the participants of Bangladesh. Mariha gives an interesting example, in some functions that she had attended with his husband, she was left of the conversation by the wives of his husband's friends as she did not try to use English words unnecessarily while speaking in Bangla to sound "posh". Sunhera adds that English has become the marker of class in Dhaka city and the more one has a foreign accent, the more prestige and importance he/she is given. Also, the participants feel that people can live without knowing to read and write properly in Bangla, but not in English. Here, Hamid & Honan (2012) drew the gruesome reality of Bangladeshi context where the ability to use English is found highly desirable socially. The participants from English medium schooling explain that they have not face any struggle for not knowing how to read and write in Bangla as long they could converse in Bangla. Atif, on the other hand faced problems for not being used to read in English during the first year of Medical college. He needed to better his reading skills in English to learn. Sabab here points out that the society has

been conditioned in a way where one needs good proficiency in English to climb up though the social ladder. Thus, English is given importance in the urban social structure in Bangladesh, especially that of Dhaka city.

The researcher can conclude that English language is given up most importance in the urban society of Bangladesh. Although participants do not seem to associate themselves with English culture, the researcher has felt that English language has helped with the intrusion of Western culture in Bangladesh although the language is highly sought after for its functional needs.

5.6 Status of English

Interestingly, this research shows that the status of English is perceived to be higher than Bangla in Bangladesh. Although, the participants do not seem to be happy or proud about this, but they agree that people in Bangladesh put more effort, time and energy in learning English and they feel proud if they can use it. Although, people have sentimental attachment towards Bangla language, English has high status whether everyone agrees or not.

Here, the researcher agrees with Jenkins (2003) that many cultures around the globe associate higher status with proficiency in English. Therefore, social ranking and prestige is directly associated with English language proficiency in Bangladesh.

Chapter 6

English and self-identity

6.1 Overview

This chapter will deal with the interaction between English and self-identity. Role of English has some implications on people's self-identity. Also, self-identity influences people's attitude towards English usage.

6.2 English and self-identity

English language has important role to play in the formation of an individual's self-identity. At first the findings from the data collected will be presented in this section. After that, the researcher will elaborate her own understanding regarding the issue.

Mizan reflects based on his usage of English that he feels comfortable with the identity of a Bangla speaker more than a bilingual. He adds that his proficiency of English has receded after his retirement as his need for using English has diminished. He feels that his identity has gone through a shift after his retirement. While he was on duty, usage of English has some impact on his identity of course. However, that was due to his need for using the language to communicate.

Usage of English has not influence on Sabab's case as he does not actively use the language and prefers to use Bangla. Also, when he used to use English in his previous school he used to feel like an outsider. Although, his education provided him with the ability to use English he feels that it has no part in his identity.

In case of Sunehra, using English from an early childhood and being encouraged to using it has allowed her interaction with the language to play a major role creating her own self-identity. She has decided to pursue higher education in the subject as she feels comfortable with the language and is interested to know more about it. However, she mentions that using English and studying this subject is completely her own decision and she does not feel obligated to the English culture as all. Based on her own personal usage of English, she identifies as a bilingual where English language dominates as she cannot read and write it Bangla. Also, sometimes she fails translating some English words and phrases in Bangla. Besides, she heavily code switches between Bangla and English.

Mahin's usage of English plays an important role to shape his identity. His usage of English not only shapes his linguistic identity rather, it provides him emotional and occupational support. He needs English to feel confident in his work and attract clients. He

identifies himself as a bilingual. He asserts that Bangla and English both are equally important to form his identity. However, the researcher feels that he is dependent on English more than Bangla, which is not only due to occupational needs, but also for his emotional needs.

Atif points out that without the usage of English, he could not have become a doctor. Despite, the fact that he struggled with the language it assisted him to form his identity today. He also identifies himself as a bilingual, but for him Bangla dominates. He struggles to communicate in English, and he does not feel ashamed of it as it is not his mother tongue.

Anaf and Mariha both denies any association of English with their identity. Anaf strongly denies the need for English saying that "I could have gone to an English language learning course if I wanted, but I do not see any need to learn another language where I am doing fine with just knowing Bangla." He also rejects English as a marker of social class and prestige in uber context of Bangladesh.

Sami and Araya both view that usage of English has impact on their identity. It shapes their personality as well. They both feel confident and assertive while using English. Both of them claims to be bilingual where English dominates. They point out that their identities changes whenever they are using English. For Araya, using English language allows her to feel authoritative which she cannot feel while using Bangla all the time. When she gives order and command, she makes use of English language. Not only them, but during this research other participants also report that they feel confident when they use English.

Esha is in not sure about the role using English in creating her identity. She identifies herself as a Bangla speaker, though reports that she uses English in some cases. However, she does feel that while using English she is more talkative. She views herself as a shy person, but while using English she is a lot less shy and can talk more calmly.

Fishman (1991) viewed that the mother tongue plays an intimate and emotional role is people's identity, whereas majority and imposed language such as English play a public role.

This research has also showed that English does not play any sentimental role in the participants' identity construction at all. None of the participants are consciously sentimental towards use of English language. Mahin claims,

I am not emotionally attached towards English language at all. I only need it to communicate in my day to day life because the work context demands me to use English. If it had been possible to learn knowledge, earn money, and live a better life with only using Bangla, then I would have never learned English in my life. Unfortunately, Bangladesh is not a self-sufficient country like China or France. That is why, we need to rely on English to communicate with others around the globe for economic reasons and others.

In this research it has been found that, people who identify themselves as bilingual are more prone to use English, and code switches more than others. Also, they are more positive about the use of English in Bangladesh. They do not view English as a threat to Bangladeshi culture and Bangladesh. Also, they are not easily offended when someone starts the conversation in English, mixes English with Bangla and speaks with an accent. Most of the participants who identify themselves as Bangla users do not have such positive attitude towards use of English in Bangladesh. Only, Mizan and Esha in this case appear to have positive leniency towards English use in Bangladesh. Sabab, Anaf and Mariha does not approve of the intrusion of English in Bangla and they view it as a threat. Also, they get offended when someone starts the conversation with them in English where they both can have the conversation in Bangla. They report that they try to speak proper Bangla without using English words unless they cannot find a proper Bangla substitute. They highlight that it is not entirely possible to avoid English words, but they try it as much as they can. Interestingly, none of the participants think that "Banglish" is a creative or cool term, rather they find is derogatory. Chowdhury & Kabir (2014) believed that English needs to be treated as a global language

without any nationalistic and elitist view towards the language and the education policy of Bangladesh needs to reflect it.

The researcher concludes that English language also do not play a role to create an ethnic or national identity for the participants. She agrees with Pavlenko & Blackledge's (2004) view that languages do not always relate with construction of ethnic or national identities. In the study, all of the participants admit they their identity as a Bangladesh is not influenced by use of English language at all. Rather, it has a role to create the participants "hybrid identity" of bilinguals in a global world where English functions as a lingua franca. Pavlenko & Norton (2007) mentioned that English not only shapes individuals' present perception of themselves and who they want to be in the future as well as controls their impulses to belong to imagined English-centric communities, but also constructs the identities of the community and nation. The researcher concludes that English creates the identity of global citizens for the majority of the participants of this research. Also, this type of identity constructions is seen nationwide in Bangladesh where people want to be part of the global identity though English education and use. Finally, the researchers draws the conclusion that English usage in the urban context of Bangladesh reflects the "Nativisation" (p. 40) stage of the Schneider's dynamic model (2007) as there is an ongoing transformation in both cultural and linguistic spheres of Bangla and English language use which the findings in this research confirm. Although, Bangladesh has not gone through settlement by the British colonisers, large scale English acquisition as a second language is seen which can in future lead towards a language shift for Bangla. Finally, the researcher feels that a new variety of Bangladeshi English with its own distinct feature is to emerge from this phase in near future.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This research has addressed the following questions and has intended to answer them through this study:

1. What is the distinctive role of English in the urban socio-cultural context of Bangladesh? Does it have any role in forming people's self-identity?

2. What is the attitude towards the use of English in the urban context of Bangladesh?

7.1 Summary of the findings

This research investigates role of English use and people's perception towards English use in the urban context of Bangladesh. In addition, it builds a sociolinguistic profile regarding role of English to construct self-identity. Major findings include that the use of English amongst the participants is derived out of functional need rather than sentimental desire, mixed attitude of the participants regarding the use of English and so on. In addition, a relationship between identity and language has been observed.

7.2 Recommendations for further research

The researcher has portrayed a sociolinguistic profile of usage and attitude towards English language in urban Bangladesh from the perspectives of world Englishes. However, in future other researchers can incorporate the following recommendations for further research:

a. Further research can include more participants from other urban cities in Bangladesh.

b. Researchers can investigate language policy and language planning in Bangladesh in relation with the spread of English in Bangladesh.

c. Studies can be done to find out the specific characteristics of English in Bangladesh that distinguishes it from other world Englishes.

7.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher has done a qualitative study to establish a sociolinguistic context of English in Bangladesh and its role on identity construction. 10 participants have been interviewed to generate data, and the findings have been qualitative analysed and

presented under separate themes. The study highlights that English language has significant functions in urban context of Bangladesh. Although, the participants of the research are not many, but the qualitative nature of the data collection and analysis have ensured that the findings have been examined quite rigorously. Thus, further research can be based on the data found in this study. With more time and funding, a complete sociolinguistic profile of English use in Bangladesh can be created for further research.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

☐ What is your age range? (20-25, 25-30, 30-35, 35-40, 40-50, 50-60)

☐ What was the first language you learned?

☐ What was the first language of your mother and father learned?

☐ What are your educational qualifications?

☐ What was the main language of instruction in your primary school, secondary school and higher education (if applicable)?

☐ What is your current occupation?

☐ Where have you lived during your life?

• How would you rate your English proficiency for each of the four skills (speaking, writing, listening, reading-high, low or medium)?

• What are the mains contributors of to your current proficiency level of English? Or lack of it?

• Whom do you use English with? Give example of your domain specific language use.

• Which language do you prefer using in most situations whenever possible? Bangla or English? give reasons.

• Can you give some instances of your English use?

• How would you identify yourself?

• Do you think the language you use is a part of your self identity? Please, elaborate.

• How do you think that learning or/and using English can have a role to create your own identity?

• What are your motivations for learning or/and using English?

• Why do you think you need to learn English when you do not need to rely on it in the everyday spheres in the Bangladeshi society. Please explain

- Sometimes people use English words or phrases when they are speaking in Bangla. How does that make you feel? Do you ever do this when speaking with others? If so, who do you do this with, and how often? Can you give me some instances? Why do you do that?

- Is learning English important to you?

- Do you think that knowing English offers advantages such as academic progress, good job opportunities etc. in Bangladesh? Why and why not?

- Does English is important for only gaining for academic and profession progress? Or, there are some other reasons for learning English.

- Will lack of proficiency in Bangla would make it hard for someone to get a job in Bangladesh? Is that true as well for English?

- Do you want to achieve native like English proficiency? Why or why not?

- How would you describe yourself when you are using English? How do you feel? Do you like using English? Do you feel ashamed of my English skills and resent it? Or, do you feel proud? Please, elaborate.

- How do you feel when someone uses English with you in a conversation when you two could have easily talked in Bangla? Why do you think they have done it? Have you ever done it? Why and why not.

- What is your opinion regarding the term- 'Banglish'? Is this a cool term or derogatory to Bangla language?

- Which type of programs do you enjoy mostly? What is the language of these programs? What do you think about the English use in TV programs, radio, YouTube contents, newspaper, advertisement etc.

- Which language has higher status than Bangla in the Bangladesh? Bangla or English?

- Are you threatened that English language use in Bangladesh? Why or why not?

- Which language is important for you more, Bangla or English? Why?

- What is you view on this statement- "Speaking both Bangla and English are an advantage"?

- Can you elaborate some effects of using English in our Bangla language and culture in Bangladesh?