

# **English in the Linguistic Landscape of Dhaka City: A Case Study**

By

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**A thesis submitted to the department of English and Humanities in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English**

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## **Acknowledgement**

All appreciation goes to Almighty Allah and then to my loving parents who have always been there in both my thick and thin. Words will always fall short no matter how hard I try to thank my elder sister for being the lightener of my life, in the shape of best possible human creation out there. I offer my heartfelt gratitude and respect to my supervisor, Dr. Al Amin without whom even this arena of research would possibly have ever been introduced to me. I have been mentored and guided with such abundant support and patience by him that I will always remain one of his grateful apprentices.

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare, this dissertation is the result of my own work and confirm this to be original. Authors are duly credited both in text and in the list of references attached at the end to the best of my knowledge. I also certify, this research has not previously been submitted to anywhere intending to serve any other purpose but this.

Nazifa Tasnim

October,2020.

## Approval

The thesis titled “English in the Linguistic Landscape of Dhaka City: A Case Study” submitted by Nazifa Tasnim (17103048) of Summer, 2020 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of BA in English on 2-10-2020.

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the linguistic landscape of selective parts of Bangladesh's capital, Dhaka, especially the use of English in various visible places. The study explores English is being exercised by a Bangladeshi society especially in its visibly written form. Linguistic landscape is an important phenomenon as it gives a visual representation of a city's language. Data for this research are collected through capturing still pictures of some of the important places of Dhaka city. This perceived notion is further being analyzed by keeping the locality of both the city and the city dwellers in mind. The findings also demonstrate the visual representation of English in various domains. Selective photos which represent linguistic landscape of the city are analyzed with the backdrop of socio-linguistic and socio-cultural aspects. Those photos were mostly clicked in person within a time-lag (2019-2020). It features the words, textual language, images, both signs and symbols exposed in public. This research with its focus on the diversified usage of the international language, English by this community people offers completely new fresh insights to the world-study of this language. It calls for the readers to take pause for a while from their busy schedules and think what this enigmatic city, Dhaka has to offer within its local language ecology.

## **Chapter: 01- Introduction**

“If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.”

- George Orwell

The most simplified definition of language found every nook and cranny is the means of communication to express one's thoughts, but language can sometimes be deceiving overshadowing its mere visible words. When a growing city wears a shawl of language upon it, what does it have to tell its viewers? This research exactly tries to answer this question. Few areas of Dhaka city are chosen to analyze their linguistic representation for conducting this study. This broader analysis is further divided into embedded socio-linguistic and socio-cultural domains under the umbrella study of linguistic landscape. A separate chapter detailing what the city dwellers have in mind regarding the extensive usage of English language within their locality is another significant focus of this research.

This paper epitomizes Dhaka city's linguistic description, how Dhaka represents itself in terms of its visual presence of language. Language is always evolving, always maturing in every corner of the world. To devote oneself into this study might result in his whole life's research yet it would possibly ever be enough to draw decent conclusions to this area of knowledge. Dhaka belongs to one of the smallest cities on globe. However, it necessarily does not lessen the importance of studying the city's day to day language usage in its public domain. Furthermore, the city itself knowingly or unknowingly offers significantly diversified area to study in its linguistic landscape. Asserting its importance, Landry and Bourhis claimed this concept to be a distinguishable marker of a geographical territory in which it prevails (Kallen,2014). This research offers a broad understanding on the city's linguistic representation and its socio-cultural dimensions within the

context of the city. Linguistic Landscape is addressed as a formidable tool here to analyze the language of this community. This study contributes to the field of language hybridization and linguistic newness within the local language ecology of Dhaka city. On top it, it also covers an array of discussion which includes the city dwellers' thoughts on the topic to whom linguistic landscape inside the city is most exposed. The reason which makes this research significantly different from the other ones conducted before in the scholarship of English in Bangladesh is, it adds completely new fresh insights to the discipline of South Asian English. No research addressing linguistic landscape of Dhaka city has previously been done in the country. The discussion and analysis of the question, 'what can Dhaka city's linguistic landscape tell the world' is the heart of this study.

### **1.1 Context of the City**

Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh is sometimes addressed as 'enigmatic', sometimes 'charismatic' and sometimes it earns the title of being the 'most polluted city to live' in the whole world. This research has solely taken place in this city. Therefore, it is important to let the readers know about the city, how it looks like in its daily basis and how the city dwellers think about their dearest city. Linguistic Landscape encircles the field of Sociology as well for which this research urges for the townies' valuable thoughts on the city's linguistic landscape. This is needed to add more credits to the research.

Photos were clicked in this chaotic city amidst crowds of people roaming around. The city wears thousands of posters when any election comes. Apart from this, in usual time also, eyes would get



dazzled with the textual language all around the city. The researcher found data even in the tiniest lanes in the city. The city perhaps does not know itself how it is paving an era of knowledge for those who want to learn from it. Dhaka is the city of slums too. People specially coming from villages take shelters in slums, as most of them remain as lower waged labors in the city. Seventy percent of these slum dwellers are illiterate or perhaps with no literacy, mostly unskillful at the beginning (Urban Research, Annual Report). They are part of the total population of Dhaka city. Therefore, this information is necessary to know whether they receive an inclusion in the city's linguistic landscape or not, whether the textual written message across the city is meant to design for them too or it is just for the affluent city dwellers on which this paper talks about later. The city might be the most polluted and populated yet this research has shown many captivating looks of it through its linguistic landscape.

Dhaka is the vernacular with a density of approximately 47,000 people per square kilometer (Al Amin, 2018). It is estimated to have around 20 million people by 2025. No doubt, it is one of the topmost densely populated cities emanating from the world. This is a growing city, be it addressed as cosmopolitan or maybe metropolitan. Leading a life with the sweet solvency is hard here. Generally, people here start their day running after public buses to reach offices on time and finishes it off doing the same for reaching home. Amidst this rush, they might barely get time to look around the city and think about its linguistic clothing. Bangladesh is mainly a mono lingual country and its first national language is Bangla which is used by almost ninety-eight percent of its people. It is clearly a non-English speaking developing country (Imam, 2005). Nonetheless, since the British colonial rule, an elite class of this country have been studying in English medium schools and colleges. Since 1990, many multinational companies and their regional offices have been built up in the country. They only encourage English to be the prime means of

communication. Also, all the private universities of Bangladesh have English to be their language of communication in their curriculum written on. Not many foreigners in number migrate here to dwell in as compare to the western world. Thus, it lessens the need to use English on the Bangladeshi's part in this regard.

Bangladesh government is more serious in promoting English language to better cope with the growing globalized world. Being nationally competent in English, it would give Bangladesh a rise on their economic growth scale. With complete focus on '*mission 2021*' by at present Bangladesh government, the national textbooks of Bangla medium schools and colleges urge for CLT (communicative language teaching) based approach in teaching English both in the urban and rural areas of the country. A great majority of Bangladeshi student study in Bangla medium schools including both government and private. This means, the primary means of communication remains Bangla unlike the English medium schools and colleges. They are bound to take English as compulsory subject and must score at least the required pass marks to get academically promoted. In the Muslim schools, named 'madrassa' in Bangladesh also offer English along with Arabic and Bangla. However, they largely depend on donations from the other Islamist countries to provide education. Therefore, it is sensible to imagine, in these schooling systems English does not enjoy as much elite status as it does in both the English and Bangla medium schools in the country.

An additional information regarding the language of Bangladesh is- Dhaka has been the city of all significant political movements within this nationality. Bangladesh has a glorious history of language which no other nation on earth has. To preserve this climbing history and Bangladeshi ethnic heritage, UNESCO has declared 21<sup>st</sup> Feb. to be the international Mother Language Day. In 1948, for the first time a Bengali, *Dhirendranath Datta* appealed to the Pakistan National

Assembly to honor Bangla as another state language of Pakistan along with Urdu. However, Pakistani Prime minister Liaqat Ali Khan opposed the appeal, and his stance was-

“Pakistan has been created because of the demand of 100 million Muslims in this subcontinent and the language of a hundred million Muslims is Urdu. Pakistan is a Muslim state, and it must have Urdu as its lingua franca, the language of the Muslim nations.”

(Government of Pakistan, Constitutional Assembly of Pakistan proceedings, Second Session, 25 Feb. (Karachi 1948, p.15- 16)).

It was this city dwellers who first said ‘NO’ to Pakistan’s government when they forcibly tried to impose their language ‘Urdu’ on the Bangladeshis. During the time-period of 1947 of partition, Dhaka was flooded with countless Muslim immigrants. Beginning with the blood shedding of 1952 for the restoration of their own mother tongue, in 1968 to 1971, the journey of waving the new Bangladeshi flag to the 1991’s making a historic end to their own dictatorial government ( Hussain Muhammad Ershad), Dhaka has been the witnessing landmark of all. Thus, language to them is more than merely a means of communication. In the next section, I will discuss the methodology of this research along with the research questions.

## **Chapter: 02- Research Methodology**

This chapter presents the methodology including the research questions, research design, data collection procedures, data analysis and the challenges experienced.

### **Research Questions**

There are two research questions which this study will try to answer-

- 1) What is the place of English in Dhaka city's linguistic landscape?

### **2.1 Research design**

This study is a predominantly qualitative study and data for this study are collected from various parts of Dhaka. The main data are collected through capturing visual images and then these are analyzed to understand the linguistic landscape of the city and particularly the presence of English in the various public places in Dhaka. To understand the phenomena fully, I have collected some more data where I try to understand the Dhaka city dwellers' personal opinions and their attitude towards English usage in their public domains. However, I had to indulge myself into a bit of psychological study as well because of the opinionated based nature of the data. It is the data that provides a hunch on developing a new arena of research (Creswell, 2012). I have been simply an observer throughout this journey starting with regulating the collected data to document the townies' opinions regarding using English on the signage. In this way, this research is acclaimed to be partially an ethnographic case study too. Ethnographic research encompasses a general idea of a certain group of people on a certain issue (e.g. how they think and why they think that way). In a nutshell, this ethnographic research means learning from people rather than studying people

(Spradley, 1979). However, I did not stay with any group of people to conduct this study unlike other ethnographic researchers.

## **2.2 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure**

As mentioned earlier, data collection is primarily done through clicking still pictures and accumulating them. Every possible street sign, bill-board written with linguistic text visible from the street level or with the naked eye were captured by means of digital cameras. Then, they are grouped and analyzed with the help of few established socio-linguistic concepts. No commercial, administrative, and residential areas were separated while collecting picture data and analyzing them in the paper. The idea was to capture a rich picture of the city and to understand the linguistic landscape of the city, especially the use of English in the public spaces. I have also collected some city dwellers' opinion regarding the visual usage of English. However, this was very challenging due to the pandemic situation. These opinions serve mainly a supplementary to the visual images.

## **2.3 Challenges Experienced**

From the very beginning, the journey has been quite challenging for me. There was no such research previously conducted on this topic in Bangladesh. Thus, I did not have any head-start to follow prior to the study. On the contrary, the flip side is, it leaves the possibilities with any researcher inaugurating a giant scope to do even better by introducing a new area of study in Bangladesh. A stockpile of researches on linguistic landscape in many countries were available to me leading necessary guidelines to conduct this study. This explains that I did not really have to

start with completely a blank head but, there have been times where I had to face hurdles in establishing a viewpoint. Again, collecting photos containing textual language and sampling them might seem very easy and straight-forward on its surface level. However, doing all these single handedly has been a bit complicated than what it initially looked like. Collecting photos was the most time consuming and sometimes hectic task throughout the journey of developing this research. However, I was unaware that even bigger challenges awaiting me, only the realization occurred after the outpouring of novel COVID-19 inside the country, Bangladesh. Initially, I had planned to interview some shop owners, restaurant owners and some general people on roadside about their views on linguistic landscape inside Dhaka city. It was supposed to be a semi-structured interview. However, it was no more possible to physically interview anyone during this outrageous pandemic situation. Then, the more convenient way available was to choose a google survey form to fulfil the quest of the research and so it was made, then shared among few known Dhaka city dwellers.

### **Chapter: 03- Review of the Literature**

In this chapter, I will review some related literature mainly from other context. This is because after a thorough search I could not locate any linguistic landscape study that specifically conducted based on Bangladesh although it is an important research issue in various parts of the world.

Every language goes through a state of adaption and deletion, a state of maturation over time (Fromkin, 2004). Language is the most powerful tool used by human beings. A certain language which is polite in a culture can be considered exactly the opposite in another culture. It entirely depends on its people and how they are accustomed to the language (Lyons,2005). However, language does not follow the great Shakespeare's concept of "Neither a borrower, nor a lender be". Language does take loans from other languages and even there are times when it makes those loaned words their own (Yule, 2002). One matter of regret is, Bangladeshis often make their minority group of people uncomfortable by asking them the very common question whether they do have their own language or not (Tripura, 2018). This study however will reveal the distinctive local usage of English, 'localizing English' within Dhaka city's public caterings (Hult, 2012).

#### **Language and its Viewers**

Bangladeshi people seem to have fashionably imbued English within their first language. Some have found this diffusion to be offensive and tagged it 'rise of imperialism' as studied by Imam in 2005. This research paper has corresponded these arenas of language study in the country. Tons of scholarly articles and papers have been published addressing this issue since years crossing the geographic borderlines across the world. One of its earliest researches was done in West Jerusalem

in Keren Kayemet Street; it included few interview questions also. Street signs, language used in transactional purpose were the main focuses of the study (Rosenbeum,1977). This research was conducted nearly 43 years ago revealed how Roman script corresponds with English and was mostly used in private sectors or institutions, but not in public signages. Rosenbeum has brilliantly presented the gap between the official English language use policy and the public tolerance towards its use in signages in his paper. This research paper also has a separate chapter to measure public tolerance towards English language on the public domains of Dhaka city, somewhat similar idea taken from Rosenbeum's study. This study focuses on Dhaka city only and thus the respondents are only Dhaka city inhabitants.

### **Earlier Studies regarding LL's Functions on Different Cities**

Earlier in 1991, there was another study conducted in Jerusalem on around 100 street signs by Spolsky and Cooper. They introduced a new criteria to the arena of linguistic landscape to differentiate among the signs- i) based on the functional purpose of the sign (e.g, is it a warning or an advertisement, or perhaps it is simply a notice), ii) based on the physical appearance or material from which the signs are hanged on, similar study based on materials on which the language is written was also conducted by Stroud in 2009 and iii) in accordance with the number of languages used in signs. Additionally, this research established three significant sign rules of linguistic landscape. In short, they are- i) To use the language in writing that is common with local people, ii) To write the language/languages for the intended audience and iii) To use the language for the symbolic condition, for its socio-cultural purpose which relates to the language loyalty. One of the major contributions in this field has been published in a major issue, International Journal of Multilingualism after a whole ten years of research. Its main attention was given to geosemiotics approach in a territory through linguistic landscape (Gorter, 2006).



Landry and Bourhis (1997) read a distinction between informative and symbolic functions of language signs. In Bangkok, another study has revealed the different uses of language in the city's public domain. The city surprisingly had Arabic, Japanese and Roman along with English in different scripts (Huebner,2006). Another research done in Tokyo has talked about the bilingual and multilingual signs (Backhaus,2006). A similar comparative study between two cities, Donostia San in Spain and Ljeuwert-Leeuwarden in Netherlands were sifted by Cenoz and Gorter (2006). All these studies conducted by different researchers in different cities, yet they had a ground in common and that is the extensive use of English language and its strategies. The bulk of these systematic investigations in the use of language have first taken place in West, based on these studies Backhaus (2006) has found the languages which hold the official usage values at present era are only Japanese, Chinese, English and Korean.

### **Language Conflict**

A completely different study apart from the stated ones has been introduced by Hicks (2002) which reflects a nation's political conflicts, named as 'language conflict'. In his study, he showed the overwriting painting by the language activists on another language in a specific minority region. It is mostly about the places' names. His study not only talks about the language on public sphere but also about the people who use it, about their power and status. A somewhat similar study to protect the minority language was conducted over Basque and Frisian where only 5% written language was present in Frisian and 55% Basque language was present in their respective regions. However, there were a decent number of Frisian speakers as compared to Basque. This clearly raises the issue of struggle over language.

### **Hidden Messages within the Written Language on Public Signs**

If we want to find out a perfect definition of linguistic landscape, there is a chance we might fall into a briny deep ocean since this concept is intertwined with thousands of more, relating to both from its own field and vaguely co-relating with few psychological fields. However, the broadly accepted definition is given by Gorter (2006) which stands, “the use of language in its written form in the public sphere”. ‘Symbolic Construction’ in these written language signages is another concept addressed by Ben Rafeal (2009) which deals with identifying systematic patterns in both presence and absence of a certain language which ends up pointing at the power relations within a nation. ‘Place’ also plays a vital role in it, having few complex definitions to get readers engage with. However, language has both its pragmatic and symbolic reasons to offer to its readers and researchers. It is a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion to create identities. As argued by Scollon and Scollon (2003), to control a public place, it is important to pay attention to its language discourses. It affects a nation more, when the state goes through a long journey of dramatic socio-political transformation (e.g. South Africa). Linguistic landscape here possibly turns into a language policy mechanism both used by the dominants and minority parties according to their will which affects the actual language policy practices (Shohamy 2006). Thankfully, Bangladesh has not yet turned into that critical of a situation, although knowingly or unknowingly minority groups in the country are dominated and sometimes humiliated by the majority parties, even when it comes to language. This research is “an interesting way of uncovering social realities” (Ben Rafael *et al* 2006). Bamyeh in 2000 has also addressed the notions of ‘exclusion’ and ‘inclusion’ in his study of linguistic landscape.

## **Chapter: 04- Data Findings and Analysis**

This chapter entails the discussion of hierarchical system, language diffusion, visibility of linguistic change and the convergence embedded within the linguistic landscape of Dhaka city. Linguistic landscape represents the social, cultural, political, and economic state of a society. In general terms, it studies the inter relationship between language and society (Yule, 2002). It is as previously defined the written form which takes place in the public sphere of a territory.

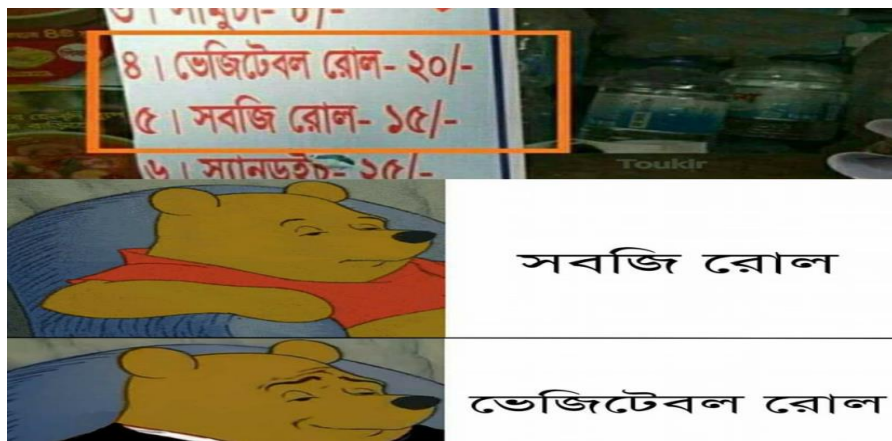
### **4.1 Inserting Hierarchical system into the Displayed Language**

Through linguistic landscape people expresses their attitude and perception towards the language. It includes the concept of ‘prestige’ by which Bangladeshis manifest their social solidarity with the modern world. The amount of using English in the public road signs, advertising billboards, commercial shop signs, even on the governmental institutions, graffiti, café menu boards, both the standard and non-standard forms of the language unveil the multi-layered hierarchy system prevailing in the society. In Bangladesh what relationship do billboards and the society share between them encounters a broad interesting chapter of studies. A question may be raised, are Bangladeshis really mandating English to be the new normal to appear on public signage along with Bangla? Bangladesh has not counted many days since she has stepped onto the lower middle-income country from the lower state. In the meantime, English, the global language has been seen gaining momentum through these semi-permanent records of public signage.



Although, in the picture, the name of the project is written in Bangla, the contact number and its holder's information are written in English on the billboard. The first reason behind this could be to show the socio-economic status of this project holder, another sublime reason could be to communicate only with those people who are able to use the language and might understand the meaning. Now the question arises, can all Bangladeshis communicate in English? The answer is a crystal clear, 'No'. As previously mentioned about a large chunk of slum dwellers residing inside the capital city are illiterate and thus, in no way they would understand this foreign language written on billboards. Then, they are clearly targeting the audience who are only able to understand this prestigious language, English. If this happens to be the case, then is the billboard implying, those who do not have a good grasp over this global language are not considered to be financially affluent to sign the project with the dealers? However, there is no such surety or guarantee if this is a jargon which can be referred as a symbolic language only meant to be used within a close group. The message being sent by this language is beyond comprehension for the outsiders who are not invited in this closed group. If the holder of this project initially had this intention to use

jargon in this billboard, then it becomes obvious that, he had attempted to exclude the group of people who do not know the communicative basics of English language. Each society has some commonality to share by its members, nevertheless as Foucault has asserted, all societies symbolize ‘rules of exclusion’ at the same time (Bamyeh, 2000). The researcher being an observer might have drawn many ubiquitous assumptions or may raise questions likewise but the blank slate to write answers on are in the readers’ hands.



This picture is taken from a roadside restaurant and then it was been photo shopped with a cartoon character to give it a more sarcastic backdrop. Bangladeshis do know the meaning of ‘vegetable’ in Bangla which is ‘*Shobji*’, but in this menu the price has been raised by *five taka* just because it would be a ‘vegetable’ roll but not a ‘*shobji*’ roll. It certainly cannot be argued as a fact that, using or knowing English in this country shows a sign of being posh. For a certain group of people for a certain aspect, it might be the case inside the country whereas it is not an appropriate applicable thought in every aspect inside the country. One very interesting study done by Joy in 2015 had showed how switching from Bangla to English more often makes a good impression in the office environment for one. Among the ten participants in his research, one shared his personal experience. He thought people around him would have perceived him as ‘uncultured’ if he did not

use certain number of English phrases in his speech especially when he used to tutor young school going students. This study also has concluded that English is marked as the sign of ‘smartness’ in some special sophisticated crowd (Joy, 2015). In short, code switching between Bangla to English in Bangladesh occurs both consciously and subconsciously, but it seems to be frequent and sometimes much appreciated. However, considering the later discussions in the paper, it is evident, how using English in day to day language usage among young Bangladeshis is sometimes addressed as a marker of ‘over-smartness’ , a so not ‘civilized’ and also being recognized as degrading the national sentiment by a certain group of elite Bangla academicians along with certain group of common people.



This research aims at analyzing the local uses of English language that circulates around the city, Dhaka. Language surely has a functional communicative purpose to start with, however, the ways in which English is being connected with the first language of the country, Bangla in the upright attached picture offers a slate with ‘localizing English’ written on (Hult, 2012). Linguistic globalization does not speak of a movement rather it talks about such local usage of languages which are seemingly foreign to the country. As seen in the picture, it is a local coffee house on a roadside of Dhaka city. Two nameplates are hooked over the café parallelly- one has its name in

Bangla alphabets and the other has it in English. The name of the coffee shop is ‘*Apon*’, it is the Bangla name, the meaning in English stands- something/someone you have a close connection with. Yet, this Bangla name is also written using English alphabets. One noticeable factor here is, when the owner of the coffee house had the Bangla nameplate atop the shop, why he needed another nameplate hooked with English language written on? In the top right nameplate, the phrase- ‘coffee house’ is written in Bangla alphabets even though, ‘house’ is completely an original English word. There are several Bangla names and meanings of this entity which are frequently used inside the country, such as- ‘*bari*’, ‘*neer*’, ‘*basha*’ and so on. As visible in the picture, these all Bangla names are set aside and the English one has been prioritized above all. This is an example of locally held beliefs and understandings of the languages. Such a connection of Bangla language with English has paved the ways of integration in which English is used as a local language by these city dwellers. This local position of English is also shown to be negotiable, Bangladeshi people are using it however they want to. This language has penetrated their first language Bangla beyond its borders. Now, Bangladeshi people as shown in the entire research are representing it as an integral part of Bangladeshi society where the daily social practices mostly take place. Such scenarios are common inside the country, especially in its capital, Dhaka. They suggest a view of the global language, English which is seemingly more specific than a lingua franca inside the community. How Bangladeshi people are using it for various purposes in different social settings are the reflections of their own self-made interpretation of the language, English which cannot be removed overnight since this is an installation of ideas over this prejudiced language which have been carried out by these countrymen across a decent time lag. Addition to this, linguistic landscape has plenty of other aspects to be paid close attention to, it is not the language alone (Stroud, 2009). For example, if the passersby look at these name cards, they might

notice the English alphabets are enclosed in barbed 3D design whereas the Bangla alphabets are written in simply 2D digital print. This shows a subtle, bit higher economic investment in the English nameplate compare to the Bangla one.

#### **4.2 Language Diffusion in the Public Catering Inside Dhaka City**

There is a set of general principles to name or rename a public place. Whether Bangladeshis follow it or not encounters completely a different area of concern, however, it is playing a continued important role to the city and its people. Signage transcends symbolic values and meaning for its viewers. Nonetheless, interpretations heavily depend on the perspective of the viewers. This research paper aims to look at it through the lens of linguistic landscape of the capital, Dhaka city. A visible signage within a locality can possibly represent different historic, social, or political dimensions of a nation. Thus, it makes linguistic landscape a formidable tool to analyze the used language of that community (Suleiman, 2017). Cultural Diffusion is a term explicitly and mostly used by Anthropologists to study the diversified cultures of human population. Dhaka also takes part in all the cultural tools exchange program over the world. By ‘cultural tool’, here in this research, language is given the utmost attention and for this I have named this section as ‘language diffusion’ similar to the concept of ‘culture diffusion’.





Cultural diffusion occurs when one cultural traits, beliefs and social activities spread through another culture in other regions. English in this country has not yet reached to the level where the semantic differences between their mother language, Bangla and English can be narrowed down. However, 'borrowing' and 'loan-translation' are the common aspects of language diffusion which are being increasingly used by Bangladeshis. 'Borrowing' refers to taking over words from a language with which the other language has a contact. Again, loan- translation does not merely include the ordinary translation but it takes one's creativity into account and few times it might not be conventional rule-governed (Lyons, 2005). It dwells under the non-native's scope of linguistic competence. For example, as the picture above shows, Bangladeshis do not have any such word which can substitute the English word, 'pizza' so they have taken a loan from the (English) language resource and transcribed it in their own language, Bangla. However, this cannot be claimed to be a literal translation since they have not made any adjustments for differences in meaning between these two languages, yet it nearly amounts to the same thing. This certainly is ushering a new dimension to the Bangladeshis' cultural vision towards the day to day language usage.



These pictures attached above shows similar examples of language diffusion on public places. Just like the food name, ‘pizza’ there is no word resource in Bangla alphabets which could replace or substitute the English words- ‘departmental’, ‘laundry’, ‘flexi’, ‘parking’, ‘limited’, ‘card’, ‘digital’ present in these pictures. Although, these words are written in Bangla alphabets as seen, they can be tagged as loan words.



Here is another example of cultural diffusion of Dhaka city on its linguistic representation. The attached photo is an official logo of an online food delivery service launched in 2013 in Bangladesh. The meaning to the word ‘hungry’ used in the logo will surely be understood by most people across every nationality since it is a widely used English word. However, anyone who is not from Bangladeshi nationality might keep on wondering what the other suffix, ‘naki’ attached to the word ‘hungry’ would possibly mean. The English meaning of this Bangla stands for an

interrogative remark- ‘are you?’. Now, the whole meaning of this hybridized company logo stands for, ‘Are you hungry?’ in English. As clearly visible in this company logo which is meant to serve common public regardless of their socio-economic status, is neither in English nor fully in Bangla rather the name is intentionally chosen to be a hybrid one by mixing them both. This surely indicates a cultural change inside Bangladeshi community. Such changes are seemingly accepted and taken as normally by this community people, nobody ever really lodged any complaint against such usage of language even though the city dwellers have quite disputed arguments over the issue as discussed later in the research paper. Such examples show the locally circulating ideas of the Dhaka city people about how English should be related to what it means to be inside one’s native cultural language practices. However, this is certain that, English has not transformed entirely into Bangladeshi language yet.

### **4.3 Transliteration on the Commercial Nameplates**

Transliteration is the process of writing words or phrases using a different language which the viewers or users easily can understand. In most cases, it is carefully chosen to have similar pronunciation with the main language of the day. It is the process of transferring a message by taking help from another language, writing it to the other language that fits into their locality, to make it easier to understand for its users. It is widely used everywhere nowadays. For example, when we, the non-native English-speaking countries text our friends over social media using messenger, Instagram, or tweeter, we tend to type using English alphabets but mostly we convey the message through our national language. The best positive reason behind doing this is, people always choose the easier and faster communicative route, be it any nationality.

Named entities are always aimed at which way its users would choose and might get interested in (Chen, 2006). It is the fundamental task in understanding one's transliteration process within its local context. By observing closely, I had not yet come across a single textual format which has any culturally offensive language written on. In fact, several times when it comes to Bangladeshis' set of beliefs and customs that they enthusiastically want to hold on to; they choose Bangla pronunciation over English while using English alphabets. It mostly happens when a society thinks, conventional or classical translation would not convey the proper message or implication to its people. At the same time, the society still is interested in attracting international customers for their commercial benefit, they choose to apply this method. For example, even though English dictionary has a plentiful resource which can be substituted the word, '*dharma*' such as, 'belief' or 'duty', words still fall short to imply the exact meaning what the practicing Hindus or Buddhists imply by the word, '*dharma*' (Lyons, 2005). This is how such words successfully take their places even in world-famous English Oxford dictionary.



The pictures are showing examples how Bangladeshis are using a Bangla word in English alphabetical order despite having sufficient amount of words available in English which could have been substituted these particular Bangla words, ‘Shwapno’ (English meaning: dream) or the phrase ‘shohoz’ (English meaning: easy) used as a logo of a ride sharing application in Bangladesh, but they chose English phonetically similar alphabets over Bangla letters.



The name entities here - ‘*somikaran*’, ‘*janata*’, ‘*indropuri*’, these all are Bangla words. Meanings of these words in English are chronologically- ‘equation’, ‘public’, ‘the king’s house’. Users must have a direct read and quick interpretation of these nameplates. Lin and Chen in 2000 have established a grapheme-based model to study translating-transliterating methods in which similarity between basic phonetic units of two languages scored highest. On public caterings of the city translation is seen less frequent rather transliteration is seen more prominent as shown in the above exemplary pictures. This shows the business owners’ comfort with the language, English and their preference over Bangla alphabets.

#### 4.4 Appearance of Linguistic Change on the Signage Realm of the City

The previous chapter has demonstrated on the phonetically similar looking English alphabets usage on Bangla commercial nameplates. In this chapter, I am going to discuss the subtle-almost invisible presence of English words in the Bangla nameplates and instructions. Humans on earth are fortunate that, language does not have an impulse flow of change as the human evolution does. Otherwise, we would have to relearn our language in every twenty years which is nearly impossible (Fromkin, 2004).

Changes have also occurred in lexical categories of language in which a word may function. For example, In English, ‘menu’ is generally used as a noun in a sentence. However, there are times when waiters of restaurants use this term as a verb. Such as, when they ask their customers what they would like to take as their lunch/dinner, they might ask them this way- “Sir/ma’am, what you like to get ‘*manued*’ as your dining?” Likewise, Bangladeshis have imbued many of the English words which they sometimes use them as ‘nouns’ and sometimes as ‘verb’. Sometimes, they also love to write those English words in Bangla alphabets as well.



In this picture, two English words are visible which have been written in Bangla. One is ‘paint’ and the other is ‘supply’. Undoubtedly, Bangladeshis know the Bangla of the English-word, ‘paint’ or ‘color’ (they identify it with the Bangla word, ‘*Rong*’) which is also included in this billboard. Yet, this shop owner thought of adding synonymous English along with their own mother language. Unlike him, there are many in the city. This linguistic representation acknowledges English being the prestigious language certainly. Also, if we focus on the word, ‘supply’ here, it is not sure whether ‘supply’ is indicating a *verb* or an *adjective*. Since it is a name entity of a shop, perhaps it could be used as a proper *noun*.

It is generally thought that using a global language on the billboard would enhance the status of a certain company since they know how to present the language confidently on a public sphere. Another noticeable fact here is the company name, “BERGER” which is being written in English. This phrase is basically ‘German’, but it is frequently used in English over years. Again, in Bangladesh, the painting company had decided to name themselves based on this German phrase using English, but not in German alphabets. It also represents their urn most interest to attract international customers and the love for English.



‘Salon’ is a place where people get a certain service regarding beautifying different physical attributes such as- hair, nails, dressing etc. In Bangladesh, people never used any Bangla word for ‘salon’ rather it has been used since years by these countrymen, many without knowing this word’s origin. It is originally an English word. As seen in the picture, it is written with Bangla letters.



This nameplate ‘classic engineering’ has a lot interesting aspects to deal with. First, let us focus on the phrase, ‘engineering’. It is originated from the Latin phrase ‘*ingeniator*’ however, ‘engineering’ is an English word. I personally have never seen any Bangladeshi using an alternate term or any Bangla term for ‘engineering’. Furthermore, it can be addressed as a linguistic change since the word, ‘engineer’ is a common noun but in this nameplate the *adjective*, ‘engineering’ has been used to name the shop. Along with this argument, it is important to note what this nameplate has tried to imply. As images of ‘fridge’, ‘air conditioner’, ‘tubes and tires’ are seen on the billboard beside the name itself, it gets easier to understand what the work is. They mainly look after the electronic devices and fix it if any discrepancy appears. Moreover, this is questionable if the workers have any academic degree on any ‘engineering’ area of study. If they do not have any



degree, then it shows these local shop workers have a misunderstanding on the concept of ‘engineering’ otherwise they would not have it on their billboard.



This is a picture of a traffic barrel with language written on. Every single letter visible here is written in Bangla language. However, a close observation would let a reader see few English words here which are written with Bangla alphabets but not in English. Such as: ‘traffic’, ‘metropolitan’, ‘lane’ ‘group’ or even the word, ‘police’ which English itself long borrowed from French. These English words subconsciously got instilled within the other Bangla words and sentences presented here. Academicians or the Dhaka city dwellers who tend to see problems in extensive usage of English in a Bangladeshi community might possibly overlook this barrel since it has neatly Bangla alphabets written on only if they do not pay close attention to it.

Similarly, thousands of English words have got mixed with Bangla language over time both in the spoken and written communicative forms in Bangladesh. It has passed through such an evolution of language, many of the Bangla words get replaced with English ones so frequently that they are

not even perceived as English anymore by many Bangladeshis. To pinpoint few examples to sharpen the edge of this statement would indicate the words: ‘hospital’, ‘chair’, ‘pressure cooker’, ‘pan’, ‘school’ and many more like these are abundantly used by Bangladeshis in their daily lives. Without noticing, some among them might adamantly oppose the idea of using English or mixing it with Bangla whereas they are doing it themselves. However, the researcher does not intend to offend any of her readers, but if this is not a linguistic change then what is it? At the same time, it shows the communicative ability of the common countrymen in English. Over time, few of this prestigious language resources have become local in this way while they are in fact global. Needless to mention, this is an ongoing process.

Addition to this argument, it also needs to be considered that such important traffic instructions should always be easily accessible to the commoners regardless of their educational basic knowledge. Therefore, the language used in such cases should be carefully designed and displayed. In a country like Bangladesh where most of the people live below poverty lines would less be interested to learn any other language beside Bangla, but not only English. Thus, it is sensible to use only Bangla language even if few English words are used on the local signage in case of such emergencies. People who do not know English but at least can read Bangla fine could easily discern the meaning of the important instruction.

#### **4.5 Extensive usage of English on a Restaurant Menu Card of Dhaka City, What Does it Tell?**

Who does not love going to restaurants and hanging out with friends and family? It is a popular public catering among people from all ages. Languages used on its menu cards reveal people’s

preference in terms of choosing a language. These menu cards are exposed in public and therefore it gets an inclusion to Dhaka city's study of linguistic landscape.

“Borrowing occurs when one language adds a word or morpheme from another language to its own lexicon” (Fromkin, 2004). If it occurs once, it remains in the mainstream of the language forever. There is no need for its return. In short, languages sometimes become the lenders and borrowers like human beings. When a word is borrowed from another language, it requires few phonological changes to fit into that language. Words can be borrowed either directly or indirectly. For instance, the word ‘*algebra*’ is widely known to be borrowed from Spanish to English. However, it was initially an Arabic word, so Spanish is just an intermediary in this regard. The language, English has itself borrowed more than 20,000 words from different languages all over the world (Fromkin,2004).



The picture is of a food menu card of one of the reputed restaurants in Dhanmondi. As it is supposedly written in English and readers can hardly find any word written in their mother language with their alphabets, it can easily be interpreted this menu to be a list of borrowed or loan words from other word resources. For example, the word, ‘salad’ offered in this menu card is not originated in English. English itself took it from French, ‘*salade*’. Again, the food name ‘*kabab*’ is

originally a Turkish or Persian food, so, this is not English as well. However, it can also not be avoided that, the menu card is mostly full of English such as- snacks, beef, beverages, soup and so on. An interesting history contends when Normans were dined with pigs on table, they called it ‘pork’ and enjoyed it, even though they were not used to having pig meats. However, they enjoyed eating ‘pork’, ‘sheep’ and ‘beef’. Likewise, Bangladeshis have received the borrowed words from English and have accustomed their daily lives with these words. In most times, people do not even think about the origin of these words.



Here is another menu card. As seen in the picture both Bangla and English names of the foods are present. However, the prices are written only in English numerical. Also, the Bangla food items are written using similar pronounced English alphabets but not the transferring method like

‘translation’ is used here. For example, ‘begun’, ‘chop’, ‘alu’, ‘machbhaja’ - in this way the food items are written in English. English word resources offer words which could be used to transfer the same meaning of these food items, yet this restaurant owner decided to keep it this way. These words are chronologically – ‘brinjal’, ‘small cutlet’, ‘potato’ and ‘fish fry’ in English. It is another example of ‘localizing English’ in refer to the example previously presented in this research.

“Language is not an abstract construction of the learned, or of dictionary makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity, and has its bases broad and low, close to the ground”

-Walt Whitman

#### **4.6 Linguistic Convergence in Dhaka City**

A language is best understood through the culture in which it operates rather than in any other culture. However, when a language is being used outside its culture the linguistic competence gets transmitted from one generation to its next by means of that society’s institutions (Lyons 2005). Institutions in its simplest elaboration are the establishments in a territory to practice the custom, norms, one group of people follow to serve educational, professional, or social purpose. In short, they are the easiest visual depiction in the society what its people see on their day-to-day lives. Language in relation to its society in which it is being used by the people, ensures a degree of that language acquisition be it lesser or higher. This is when cultural overlap occurs. English is not confined within American and British culture only. “Language is both biological and cultural phenomenon” (Lyons,2005). Since English has been able to infiltrate Bangladeshi culture, amongst their people, they had long filtered their culture with the English culture along with its

language. The terminologies they frequently use even in their spoken form of language can be a very good example of it, such as; they often use the English word, ‘sorry’ to apologize to someone though they have their own Bangla word to convey the same message. Such a convergence between their first language, Bangla with English is frequently seen in their capital, Dhaka.



In the upright signboard, the road number, the house number is written in English numerical. The use of Bangla numerical also can be seen in it but they are not marked bold as the English one. In a society where the use of English is in its public display is used in such an extent, then the language would surely be transmitted to generation to generation even when they would not put a conscious effort to learn this language.



In the left picture, the name of the restaurant is lightened up with English alphabets but the name itself is a Bangla one, '*dhansiri*'. On the right picture, the name of the restaurant is '*sakura*' as seen which neither originally an English word nor Bangla. It is a Japanese name, meaning in English is a tree full of cherry flowers newly blossoming. However, despite being a Japanese name, it is written both in English and Bangla. The common ground between these two restaurant names is both the owners have agreed on using English on their nameplates. One of them clearly has it on Bangla overlooking the fact that, the word is originated from Japanese, but it has it in English too. This is the visual representation of Bangladesh's increasing interaction with the language, English. Comparing these two pictures based on language, Bangla is seemingly seen less prominent whereas English has been acknowledged as a 'must have' as presented in both the nameplates. This is also a sign of cultural transition over time. Both the restaurant owners have chosen to use English and they surely have the liberty to put it however they want to if their actions do not breach any law regarding language usage policy of the country. However, such vibrant preference of English over their first language, Bangla concerns the group of Bangla academicians and educationists.

Any community offers a diverse set of languages by its people which are being used for different purposes. However, for the common commercial or social agreement when the diversified group of people agrees to communicate in one language, the language becomes a lingua franca. There was a time when French was being called the lingua franca of diplomacy, but now, English is known to be the lingua franca of the whole world. In most cases, lingua franca is served as a trade language. In Bangladesh, it is considered as a highly monolingual country. Since most of them are overtly comfortable with their mother tongue, Bangla, these people tend to break down the

homogeneity when it comes to both different speech and written forms of language based on different geographical regions. In this country, they also have ethnic variety of minor groups whose first language is not Bangla. Linguistic nationalism is a national sentimental issue. Thus, they are sometimes fall prawn to misconceptions and biases, such as, people here tend to look down upon those who live in the country yet do not prefer Bangla to be their first priority in terms of communicating through a language. Such linguistic biasness almost shoots their national homogeneity as a nation. However, my close observation of the 'linguistic landscape' in the capital, Dhaka city reveals, they mostly do not mind using English in public sphere that much rather on some occasions they feel good about it. The economic growth in Bangladesh has grown steadfast in recent years. Statistics show how Bangladesh had placed her position among the world's top ten remittance receiving countries which amounts to estimated 11% of the national income in the year, 2015 (BMET, 2016). Without a doubt, people in this country who migrate overseas with a view to only devote themselves to the labor works have low language proficiency in English. Knowing the host country's L1 certainly provides temporary migrants with an advantage to communicate more effectively which eventually leads to better earning with employment opportunity than others. Migrants who know English can use it effectively, they are more benefitted with higher economic status than the people who even know French. They are returned with insignificant success in their career (Seargeant et al., 2017). A research conducted by Hamid and Erling (2017) based on 33 migrant returnees' English language skill in Bangladesh has shown only 10 among them had prior basic communication skill in English and the rest did not which resulted them to face discrimination later on. However, a strong positive attitude towards English language has been seen remarkably persistent among the participants. Because, after the departure from the home country, they started learning the language through taking small steps



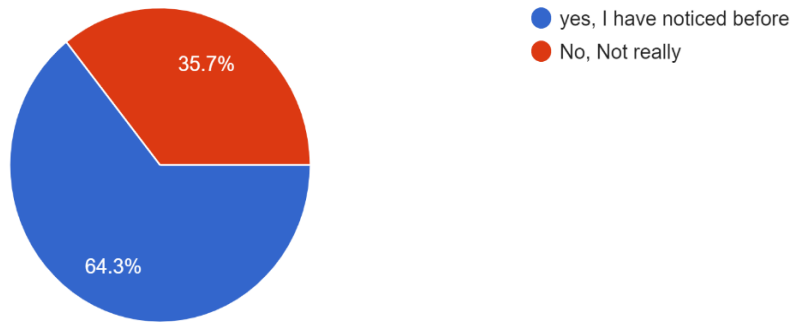
(Erling et al. 2012). One of the participants named *Badol* in fact said, “If you know English, you need not to know any other language [...]” (Sergeant et al., 2017). This research also had shown, how spoken English hold much more importance than the written one for these Bangladeshi migrants.

### **Chapter: 05- Weighing Dhaka City Dwellers’ view on the English Usage in Their Public Domains**

This entire chapter is an analysis of the survey responses exclusively done to enrich the study of linguistic landscape of Dhaka city. As already stated, there are five questions, two offer quantitative and the three offer qualitative data asked in the survey form. This is no easy task to dig deep into the participants’ psychological terms behind responding in a certain way. However, a general analysis is drawn based on the responses the researcher has received. This chapter will overall reveal the attitude of the Dhaka city inhabitants towards the foreign language, English usage on their public spheres. Before getting into the details of this chapter, one survey question is attached right below with results.

Have you ever paid any heed to the textual Language usage in the public places inside Dhaka city before this survey has urged for your valuable thoughts on this?

56 responses



The result here shows, more than half of the respondents (64.3%) had noticed the textual language on the city's linguistic landscape before. This is how it adds more value to this study. This data has reduced the fear of receiving responses without substantial knowledge on the theme itself.

The purpose of asking these questions was to measure the act of resistance towards English inside Dhaka city. To know whether its extensive usage meets any hostility inside the city which is an underlying objective of this survey questionnaire. However, there is no way the researcher can justify these responses based on any right or wrong scale. Showing due respect to each of the respondents, this section has been analyzed and categorized based on the type of words and phrases they have chosen to clarify their arguments.

### **Attitude towards English Usage**

It would seem to be a very sentimental question to the respondents since language is a significant marker of a culture in which it prevails (Kottak, 2017) and specially when it comes to the

Bangladeshi people. Initially, I had no idea about how I was going to receive numerous thought-provoking responses which can be developed as completely a different area to study. However, considering the limited time allocation for conducting this research, it is kept as brief as possible. A brief analysis will also be found along with the description of responses.

### **Positive Attitude**

There were around twenty-one responses among the fifty-six which cued the appreciation to the global language, English concerning its importance. These adult citizens of the city perceive this global language gaining momentum as an inherently needed one and thus the principal reason stated mostly is English being an international, global, prestigious language. Some have argued on the ease of communication, some responses included the practical needs and some mentioning the language evolution have justified their respective thoughts. One participant believes people are always going to choose the effective route of communication, be it Bangla or English, or be it the mixture of both, nothing can be done on that manner. However, even within these positive responses, some really do not like the idea of mixing these two languages and have stressed as long as both the language are used properly in every communicative means without mixing it, they are okay with it.

Most of the respondents who have positively approached towards code-switching in a conversation have strengthened their point by saying the main purpose of communication is to express oneself. Therefore, the discourse or arguments should be the focus but not the language. Some have said, English is an international language and thus Bangladeshis should learn it in every accessible way. Some have also argued, even if a Bangladeshi feels comfortable speaking English over Bangla, there is no way he is degrading Bangla or showing any less respect. Again,

some have simply written, they admire it, it is good, or it is okay without any specific reasoning. Approximately sixteen responses received looked alike in respond to the question of switching to English frequently from Bangla in a conversation.

Around fifteen responses are received who have agreed to use only English on sign boards or view it as an absolute fine work. Approximately four responses among these have reasoned it with the ease of understanding the language by foreigners. However, the rest are quite stand-alone responses from each other. This is seemingly okay with two other respondents if there are no spelling errors. Some see it positively and in fact as a very good initiative since they think, Bangla translation or transliteration sometimes get difficult to grasp compare to English. One response had a great argument, it said, there is extensive usage of English on billboards because people like it, it is their demand. This is again affirmed by another respondent to whom this extensive usage seems to be logical since people have got used to it. Some have argued this is a sign of development, this shows the upgrading literacy rate of the country. There are also few responses along with this who simply have assured their affirmation towards the extensive usage of English but with no explanation of their supporting viewpoints.

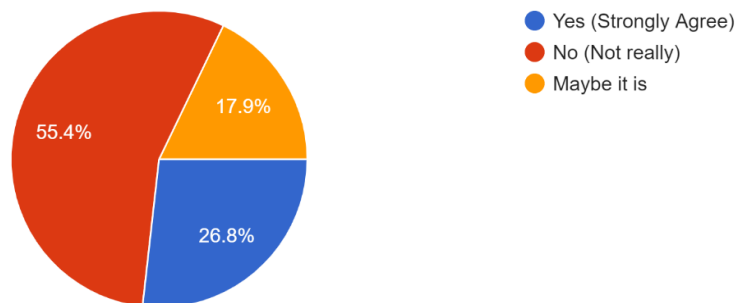
### **Negative Attitude**

Around twenty responses have demeaned the usage of English instead of Bangla, mostly reasoned with historic background related to their national language. However, having acknowledged the importance of English, most of them have urged to prioritize Bangla over English in both its spoken and written forms. Most of them also have resented on the term, 'code-switching' without having sufficient knowledge on it. Since there is a particular question related to this topic which

will be discussed next, it is not elaborated here. Some have also argued this contextual change to be a hegemony showing the negligence towards own native language. Some have tagged the young generation of 90's to be extremely disrespectful towards Bangla and consider their extensive English usage to be a bad practice. From their perspective, in this way Bangladeshis would lose their cultural heritage and eventually their mother language in the name of showing modernity by using English. One response stated, it is not really a big deal if someone is not a fluent English speaker, however they consider it a problem when people mix Bangla with English. Some even went on saying, such a momentum hurts them, hurts their pride being a Bangladeshi and consider this to be a sign of disgrace. Such responses infused with profound emotions towards their L1, Bangla reveal not every mature citizen of Bangladesh see it positively, rather they have their own arena of thought to strengthen their point of view. They fear of losing their hard-earned mother language and culture. The term, 'culture' has been noticeably used by the respondents. Having said that, where culture itself is a complex whole as referred by Edward Tylor, it is hard to confirm something to be inherently distinctive cultural item. It is shared and all encompassing (Kottak, 2017). For example, folk songs are always proudly mentioned while discussing Bangladeshi culture by its members. However, little do they know, their folk song named *Gombhira* was originated in *Malda*, India, but not in Bangladesh. Likewise, thousands of examples can be drawn upon which Bangladeshis consider to be distinctively theirs are not actually theirs. It can also be politically studied. This research is bound by its own constraints and therefore such discussions are seemingly not relatable to fulfill the original purpose of the study of linguistic landscape in Dhaka. However, such examples help to create rooms for further studies.

The first survey question was asked whether Bangladeshis think the way their sign boards are using transcribed English language in Bangla alphabets is a subtle compromise on their own mother language.

The picture is attached in order to provide an idea how Bangladeshis is using Transcribed English Language in their L1 ( Bangla Language ). Do you ... subtle compromise on their own mother language?  
56 responses



The responses show straightforward and self-explanatory data. Most of the participants (55.4 %) have agreed that transcribed English in Bangla is not a compromise on their mother language as the exemplary picture shown to them. And 26.8% strongly agree with this to be a subtle compromise. However, in the previous analysis of the qualitative question, the researcher has received twenty responses negatively portraying the usage of English replacing Bangla inside the city. This qualitative data amounts to 35.7% quantitatively which is visibly higher than 26.8% who earlier have encircled the option of 'strongly agree' with the stated question. This led the researcher think again, is it the picture showing Bangla alphabets even if each word or phrasing themselves are originally English that makes the percentile fall down a bit than what the qualitative data have represented? This no doubt is contradictory and to some extent reflect disliking towards the global language English and its usage by some of the Bangladeshi Dhaka city dwellers. People might have personal problems or issues dealing with the language, but what is that make them annoyed

with the language English, would be an interesting psychological study. Is it the job market which bluntly requires the decent knowledge on English despite being a qualified skilled but mostly comfortable with Bangla speaking candidate? Is it only those people resenting English who do not have a good grasp over this language? Or it is simply the love for one's mother language which itself has a glorious past to feel proud of being a Bangladeshi.

Additionally, another question's twenty-one responses have shown different aspects to reason their hostile attitude towards frequent code switching from Bangla to English in an informal conversation. However, some of the responses have referred to the young generation of 90's to be blamed for preferring English over Bangla. Some even have accused them trying to look smarter by using English in an informal conversation. Moreover, some responses are consisted of simple wordings showing their discontent towards code switching, such as: "I dislike it", "This is not good", "Not nice", "irritating", "not a good practice". A few respondents have argued, if someone is doing it for learning English then that is considerable, however one should complete a sentence in a language first, without switching codes. Some also have mentioned, English is associated with the social status in Bangladeshi society and thus many loves to ignore Bangla intentionally. Some of the participants seemed to be annoyed with such practices and they think it to be disrespectful towards their own mother language. On top of it, a response clearly accused private universities of Bangladesh for choosing English to be their primary means of communication over Bangla. Many participants not understanding the essence of the question likewise have tried to justify their arguments. However, keeping these data in head, anyone could simply conclude that English receives hostility by some of the Dhaka city dwellers if not all of them.

Many different aspects can be looked upon while analyzing the data. As clearly seen, a notion of social stigmatization or social status have arrived in the responses. This is certainly noteworthy. This was a survey questionnaire based on language completely, however it has successfully emerged as a social issue as well. Some resent English and at the same time cordially welcomed by some of the city-dwellers. As previously discussed in the chapter of “context of the research”, Dhaka has been mentioned as a versatile city. This qualitative question’s responses represent somewhat similar results with the history of Dhaka city dwellers living to their fullest despite all adversities. It shows, people here have their own logistic faculty of knowledge to view their city and its changes. This reinforces that, they do acknowledge the importance of learning English language but not compromising their own mother language.

Twenty-one responses categorized as seemingly not happy with the extensive usage of English on the signage realm of the city instead of Bangla. Many of the participants amidst them have repeatedly mentioned about true Bangladeshi nationalism which should be resurrected anyhow. For the sake of mother language, Bangla, the usage of English at such extent on the public realm of the city should necessarily be reduced. Surprisingly, many of the respondents have again blamed the young generation of 90s for not showing the deserving respect towards Bangla. Additionally, they also think, English usage has been extended because of them. ‘Culture’, ‘nationalism’- these two words have been the visibly recurring notions seen in the responses. Some even named it to be the ‘exact opposite of the spirit of war of 1971’. However, few respondents only resented such extensive usage of English, but they did not explain why they think so. Some have argued that English can be there on the signage realm but not as necessary as Bangla is. Most of the responses have showed up with negativity towards considerable usage of English which is seemingly L2 to Bangladeshis and thus, they think, using Bangla should be



more prominent than English inside the city. Sizeable responses under this category came with an urge to change the language from English to Bangla immediately. Two respondents strongly feel such usage of English is slandering their mother language. Some think, this shows the unnecessary exaggerated love towards another culture and language while disrespecting own mother language, Bangla, and her culture. To them, this is showing negligence and bashing one's own language.

The fact that Bangla language has long connected with a burning history of sacrifices cannot be ignored. Therefore, the researcher cannot dissect and measure such hostile attitude towards English by the Dhaka city dwellers who identify themselves first as Bangladeshis. Each respondent is carefully chosen to be above eighteen years old and therefore each of them has their own boxes to check between right and wrong. Respondents who have shown absolutely no sign of resistance towards extensive usage of English on signage realm are also Bangladeshis, dwell inside the same city, Dhaka. Leafing through the survey responses, it seemingly looked like a page full of opposing and contradicting ideas and values towards language and its usage. No matter how arguable it may look on the surface, people of Dhaka city love to lead a life without chaos and casualties, referring back to the chapter, "context of the research".

### **Indifferent Attitude**

There have been many responses which could possibly nullify the heated arguments on both the ends of previously discussed responses. These respondents either have equally signified the importance of both the languages or have written indifferent responses. Some have mentioned this is no gaining or losing matter, this is simply an evolution and therefore they do not feel it differently. One response said, preference of English is something people cannot avoid nowadays,

but Bangla is needed simultaneously too. Some again have mentioned about the cultural value of using Bangla language however have also stressed over the importance of English in the economic aspect (e.g. tourism) within the same response.

Additionally, some have mentioned, language preference should be personal choice and sometimes it depends on the situation. Code-switching does not really bother them since they look for the substantial knowledge rather than paying special heed to the language used. However, there are only six responses received which could be tagged as neutral on the question of frequent code-switching to English by a Bangladeshi. If Neutral responses of this category is to compare with the previous one regarding English prominently gaining momentum inside the capital, Dhaka, one could easily identify the huge statistical gap between these two neutral responses segments. The former one received sixteen responses whereas this only received six. This shows, the city dwellers might like the idea of using English in the city's public sphere, however, 'code-switching' or 'language mixing' is not something they much appreciate especially when it comes to the spoken form of a language.

Thirteen respondents in total among the fifty-six have mostly desired for having both the languages by each other's side. Most of the responses have strengthened their statements by exclaiming Bangla being the mother language of the country cannot be ignored. However, two of the respondents opined vice versa on one being okay with transcribed English in Bangla while other is not.

## Chapter: 06- Conclusion

English has moved across geographical location and has entered the east from west. How this language should be used and implemented continues to be peddled all over the world and perhaps will always be continuing. It is mostly reconfigured depending on the social, environmental, and contextual surroundings. English is a transcultural language since it has the flexibility to take both the global and local meanings in (Hult,2012).

This study conducted here represents the locally circulating ideas, usage and presentation of the global language, English in a non-native country, Bangladesh's capital city. Dhaka city's linguistic landscape shows how English is experimented and used locally for different purposes while this language is in fact global. This research also has unveiled how its usage varies on different social settings of the city. I have shown in the analysis how English is experiencing a prestigious status on the city's linguistic imprints. However, this research also has delved itself into measuring the hostility towards this language and has tried to briefly explain why. This is not as visible as the linguistic landscape of the city, rather it is much more internal and mental behavior towards English language,

Additionally, this research illustrates the dynamic and sometimes the distinctive processes of English language usage of Dhaka city. English has not yet transformed completely into Bangladeshi language where we can tag it as '*Banglish*' like the Singaporean English, '*Singlish*'. However, the analysis and interpretation of its local usage inside the city contributes to the contemporary work on the world study of English language. I have shown how wording on the city's linguistic landscape is sometimes a hybrid construction and how the substantial mindful

investment on it uncovers many functional purposes to gain economic profit. Since linguistic landscape is a significant study done on many cities across the world but no study on Dhaka city was conducted yet, I felt it is high time we should become the part of the lion contribution of this area of knowledge as well.

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## Appendix

Linguistic Landscape is the written form of language displayed in the public sphere through billboards, advertising commercials, both governmental and non-governmental name placards, street names and so on. In a nutshell, it is the language visible from the street level with your naked eyes.

1)The picture is attached to provide an idea how Bangladeshis is using Transcribed English Language in their L1 (Bangla Language). Do you anyhow feel this to be a subtle compromise on their own mother language?



2)For Bangladeshis, their mother language is a romantic ideological construct because of the historic sacrifices in the year, 1952 by their forefathers. In such a country where English is visibly gaining momentum and sometimes even replacing Bangla frequently in both their written and spoken forms, how do you feel about it (being a Bangladeshi yourself)?

3) Have you ever paid any heed to the textual Language usage in the public places inside Dhaka city before this survey has urged for your valuable thoughts on this?

4) How do you feel when a Bangladeshi in an informal conversation frequently switches from Bangla to English to put forth his arguments?

5) What is your thought on the extensive usage of English on the signage realm (billboards, official/non-official signs, shop names etc.) inside the city, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

