

# **The Effect of Culture on Productive Skills**

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# **The Effect of Culture on Productive Skills**

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## **Abstract**

This research helps to discover some of the interesting findings of a survey conducted to determine how culture of students affects in learning their second language. This research attempts to determine, how culture of students affect in learning productive skills of the second language. Culture and language are interrelated to each other in a numerous way. Many researches have been done on this topic to find out the relationship between culture and language in developed countries. As vary rare research has been done on this topic in Bangladesh, I just felt curious to see how our culture is affecting learning second language. This study is aimed at finding out the interrelationship between culture and language on the context of Bangladesh. Though this research has been done with a small group of teachers, it revealed so many interesting and influential findings that reflect the overall dependence of language learning and culture.



## **Chapter-1: Introduction**

**1.1 Introduction:** Claire Kramsch says, 'Language is a guide to social reality.' Human beings cannot live alone in the world, they cannot even understand social activity when they are alone, and they are very much at the mercy of the particular language as it is the medium of expression for their society (Claire Kramsch, 1998). Every society has their own culture, where they follow some rules, norms, beliefs, values and so on. These aspects of culture shape the language of a particular society. Over the decade in developed countries, sociolinguists and anthropologists are conducting research on the interrelationship between language and culture; I felt interest to conduct research on this topic to determine in Bangladesh how our culture influences in the learning processes of learning productive skills and to see which factors are affecting most.

**1.2 Purpose of study:** Culture and Language is interrelated to each other. The research has been undertaken to find out, in the context of Bangladesh, how culture of students affect in learning productive skills of a second language

**1.3 Rationale of the study:** Language is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways. Although plenty of research have been done in this field of the interrelationship of culture and language, in Bangladesh research in this area is rare. Research conducted in this area will help to know how the culture of students is influencing in learning their writing and speaking skills. Culture has both good and bad effect on language, so, by conducting this research we can also signify both good and bad influential findings of this research. We can also take preventions from those findings.



**1.4 Limitation of the study:** Due to time constraint the study was conducted involving a small group of teachers teaching in the Department Of English of BRAC University. Because of time constrain, interview had been taken from only a small group of teachers. Culture is a vast area; people can have various experience and opinion on this topic. If I could have more time, I could have found out more appealing and influential findings in this research. In fact before drawing any conclusion, a research of large scale needs to be conducted involving participants of not only English teachers but also many other departments and professions.



## **Chapter-2: Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In the last few decades, the interrelationship between culture and language (productive skill) is being recognized to be important. It has been receiving more attention in the linguistics research. (Brown, 1994, Byram and Morgan, 1994, Hinkel, 1999, Jiang, 2000). Culture and language are inextricably related. They do not exist separately from each other. Language is the product of culture, culture effects productive skills in many ways. Language is the only aspect through which people communicate and express their own ideas, facts, norms, values, experiences and even the power of imagination. They select a medium to convey their words. This medium can be face-to-face discussion or talking on the telephone. This medium can also be writing letters or sending e-mails or other forms of written texts. The use of written language is socialized through language. Who to address, in which situation and also which genre (such as application form, business letter, political pamphlet) should be better, everything is decided by social conventions. In these ways culture imposes interpretation on language users through language itself. (Claire Kramsch, 1998)

To signify the relationship between culture and productive skills, it is necessary to define language and its varieties, culture, productive skill.

### **2.2 Approach to Language**

There is no hard and fast definition of language. Over the decades, linguists, anthropologists and sociolinguists have provided various kinds of definition. According to an article in Britannica encyclopedia, "Language is a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate." Roger describes "language is both highly structured and abstract system shared by all the members of community- yet observable as individual behavior and at same



time seemingly prone to capricious sync racy.” On the other hand, Argyle (1967. P.85) affirms that it is mysterious and inexpressible to define language. There is no word to describe it or to handle it. But Maxim Y. Belau (Tombov, Russia) has suggested some characteristics of the language from English dictionary. These are:

1. A particular nation.
2. A particular culture.
3. Way of expression (very often an individual way).
4. A style.

[Hornby, 1998; Longman, 1992; COBUILD, 1990; BBC English Dictionary, 1992]

### **2.3 Relationship between Language and Culture**

Culture has been analyzed in many ways. Maxim Y. Belau (Tambov, Russia) points out “The culture is a spirit of the nation, a set of traditions, and an inner world of a person. Language is also part of a culture, which, among other things, is the bridge between cultures of different countries. Language expresses cultural property of the nation and serves as a way of intercultural dialogue.” We can even find a national or social group’s cultural identity in prose, poetry, theater, rituals, jokes, sayings, songs, music, dance, food, costume, handicrafts etc. According to Allwood (Cf 1985), “A culture can be defined as a collection of traits connected with a community of an individual which is: 1) common to the individuals in the community and 2) not given by natural (i.e. biological or physical) necessity.” Maxim Y. Belau also points out some characteristics of the culture such as-

1. Art: literature, music.
2. History of a country.
3. Intellectual expressions of a particular society or time.
4. Customs and Traditions.



5. Development of a country or a nation.

6. Norms, values and ideas of social groups.

[Hornby, 1998; Longman, 1992; COBUILD, 1990; BBC English Dictionary, 1992]

The following characteristics which have been described by English dictionary was expressed by Maxim Y. Belau (Tombov, Russia) so that we can see that in a person's mental field, culture and language are conceptualized similarly. Speaking about culture, a man connects his ideas with the language of a particular nation or society. From Trudgil's point of view, On the context of British, when two passengers sit side by side in a bus, they do not remain quite as environment becomes strained. Somehow they start to talk on some basic topics, for instance-atmosphere because in British, atmosphere often keeps on change. So, to start talk on this topic is a common thing in their culture. In a bus, if first person says "the weather is not well today' then the next one can automatically reply, 'the driver should keep speed low". Most of the time in this way conversation goes on. But if we notice carefully, we can find out that through this sort of conversation, two speakers come to know, in which culture they belong to? Both speaker and listener unconsciously give clues about what kind of person they are. Their accent and speech also indicates of ideas and attitudes of their culture. Trudgil identified two aspects of language behavior.1) the function of language in establishing social relationships and 2) the role played by language in conveying information about the speaker. These linguistics behaviors are important as they are the reflection of the fact that there is an intimate inter- relationship between language and society.

#### **2.4 Productive skill**

Both speaking and writing skills are called productive skill.

Writing is the productive skill in the written mode. It is more complicated than speaking and often seems to be the hardest of the skills. R.V. White (1998: 14-15) has suggested a useful



two-way distinction of writing- institutional and personal writing. Institutional includes- business correspondence, textbooks, regulations, reports, whereas personal writing covers personal letters and creative writings.

Speaking is the oral production of written language. Jo McDonough mentions speaking involves expressing ideas and opinions; expressing a wish or desire to do something, negotiating or solving problems; or establishing and maintaining social relationship.

Social structure is constructed through the two very different media; speech and writing. Written and spoken languages serve different functions in society. Scholars have differentiated some basic characteristics of speech and writing.

1. Claire Kramsch mentioned that speech is transient because speaker has no permanent record of what he has said earlier. According to the author, a writer, in contrast, can look over what he has already written. He can take time in choosing a particular word; he can even look up a dictionary if necessary. He can check his progress; he can even change his mind about what he wants to say.

1. We use speech in our daily life for the establishment and maintenance of human relationship, whereas we use writing language largely for the working out and transference of information....

2. Claire Kramsch mentioned that speech is transient because speaker has no permanent record of what he has said earlier. According to G.Yule and G.Brown, the writer, in contrast, can look over what he has already written. He can take time in choosing a particular word; he can even look up in dictionary if necessary. He can check his progress he can also change his mind about what he wants to say.



3. Speech tends to be people-centered, says Kramsch, because a speaker not only focuses on his topic; he also tries to attract attention of listeners and appeal to their senses and emotions. Writing is topic-centered. A writer tries to make his topic clear, unambiguous, coherent as he will not always be available to explain and defend it.

4. Claire Kramsch also points out that speech is redundant or 'copious' because a speaker is not sure whether listeners are listening to him, whether they are paying attention, comprehending, remembering what he is saying or not. That is why he makes frequent use of repetition, paraphrase, and restatement. By contrast, written language does not have to make such demands on short-term memory. So, it tends to avoid redundancy.

5. G. Yule and G. Brown mentioned that a speaker can monitor his listeners through their facial expression; he can modify what he is saying and he can make his speech more accessible or acceptable to his hearers. The writer has no access to be given immediate feedback. He has to imagine the readers' reactions and adjust his topic accordingly.

6. According to Kramsch, speech is loosely structured in terms of grammar and tends to use a simplified register. It is because a speaker remains under pressure to keep on talking for the entire duration of a period or time allotted for him. He cannot take much time to think and speak, so he tries to explain his words in a simple and short cut manner. By doing this, his speech is characterized by false starts, filled and unfilled pauses, hesitations, parenthetical remarks and unfinished sentences. In contrast, written language has time to be packed with as much information as he wants. A writer can rewrite and recheck in the privacy of his study.

In any culture or region language is much more than semantics, much more than what the written page or the spoken word can contain. This specially becomes clear when studying a second language and learning the ways of a particular culture. For example- the use of introductions, salutations, and everyday sayings etc. Language does not end at the meaning or



the use of words associated to a culture. Words represent beliefs, history and the culture of their origin and people not only use these, they also keep these alive through written texts.

### **2.5(a) Dialect**

There are no universally accepted criteria for distinguishing languages from dialects, in fact number of contradictory results exist. Haugen (1966a) has considered that language and dialect are ambiguous terms. People use them quite freely in speech. Haugen also said that for people a dialect is a local non-prestigious variety of a real language. Hudson suggests two separate ways of distinguishing between language and dialect. Firstly, he said language is larger than dialect because it contains more items than a dialect. In reference to English as a language, Hudson says it encompasses all terms present in all its dialects, where 'standard English' is simply one dialect among many others. The other difference is language has more prestige than dialect. Hudson also mentions that whether some variety is called language or a dialect depends on how much prestige one thinks it has.

### **2.6 Context, Register and Style**

Language varies not only according to social characteristics but also according to social context. Janet Holmes confirms that people link their ideas, beliefs and set their minds according to the context of culture. So, the context affects our choice of code and varieties, whether it would be language or dialects.

The field of finding out the relationship between culture and productive skills is vast. Many varieties and codes are related

to a particular kind of social context. Among them we cannot avoid to discuss about registers and style.



According to Janet Holmes, "The term register more narrowly to describe the specific vocabularies associated with different occupational groups".

Trudgil has also suggested that registers are characterized by vocabularies, either the use of particular words or the use of words in a particular sense. If someone goes to a hospital he will notice that the doctors are using some specific vocabularies such as- clavicle instead of collarbone, pediatric instead of the doctor of children, nasal instead of nose and thousands of other words are available like this. These are the registers of medical science. When a computer user masters the register of computer science he will use words such as- output, windows, input, internet, browse and so on. Based on context and occupation people tend to use some basic vocabularies. So we can define registers as being associated with particular groups of people with common interests or occupations or sometimes situation of use. (Janet Holmes, 1947)

Trudgil affirms that the registers are independent. There is no connection between using registers and dialects, if someone uses registers of a particular subject, it does not mean he cannot use non-standard dialects.

Trudgil confirms that style can be analyzed along a scale of formality. Ronald Wardhaugh suggests that based on age, social background, situation people adopt different types of speaking styles and that is why the study of dialect becomes complicated.

## **2.7 Choosing a code- diglossia and code switching**

Besides registers and styles, there are also some varieties or code which are necessary to be discussed, such as- diglossia and code switching. But it is necessary to know, in which social



context people make code choices. Janet Holmes suggests three social factors – who you are talking to, the social context of the talks, the function and topic of the discussion, which are very important for language choice in many speech communities. Diglossia and code switching take place based on these factors.

“Diglossia is a particular kind of language standardization here two distinct varieties of a language exists side by side throughout the speech community (not only in the case of a particular group of speakers, such as working class Scots), and where each of the two varieties is assigned a definite social function.” (Trudgil:2000)

From Trudgil’s point of view, in a society, one will find a diglossic situation when it has two distinct varieties or codes. Two varieties are – high variety and low variety. Both varieties perform distinct functions. For instance- high variety can be used in writing poetry, delivering sermons, literature, broadcasting the news in radio or television, editorial in newspaper, parliament and so on, and the low variety is used in giving instruction to the workers in factory, popular programs on radio, folk literature, in conversation with family, political cartoons etc.

To make sense of the term ‘Diglossia’, Janet Holmes discusses three essential features:

1. Two distinct varieties of the same language are used in the community, with one regarded as a high or H variety and the other a low or L variety.
2. Each variety is used for quite distinct functions; H and L complement each other.
3. No one uses the H variety in everyday conversation.

## **2.8 Cross Linguistics influences:**

According to Catherine and H.Long, Cross linguistics influence have several phrases including- Language transfer, Linguistic interference, the role of the mother tongue, native



language influence and language mixing. These are the aspects which commonly employed in target language. Cook gave importance to transfer and cross- Linguistic influence mostly. Cook also confirmed that second language learners learn language by engaging in different conversation and they also transfer many aspects of conversation from first language.

For transfer, it is hard to give an accurate and specific definition but there is one characterized definition such as ' Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language previously (perhaps imperfectly acquired) acquired. (Odlin, 1989, p.27). Catherine and H. Long suggested that cross linguistics influence are given importance by the researchers in fields where transfer is not the primary object of the study but where it constitutes an important topic such as language contacts, second language phonetics and phonology, language universal and language typology and second language writing. They also said that language transfer can be positive or negative; one can find similarities and differences between languages. They affirmed "similarities are judged to help learners learn language and differences hinder them". This language transfer affects all linguistic subsystems including pragmatics and rhetoric, semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology, phonetics and orthography. According to Catherine and H. Long "Much of what is called cross- linguistics depends on the individual judgments of language learners and bilinguals that there exist certain cross linguistics similarities".

Judgments are accurate then the transfer is positive and these judgments are also subjective. Kellerman (1977, 1978) in his observation said, learners should take an advantage of what is in fact a bona fide similarity between the native and target language. Kellerman results also mentioned about the importance of subjectivity in any assessment of cross linguistics similarities. Subjectivities are related to background factors, age, motivation, literacy and social class (Odlin, 1989) these factors make the learning situations unique.



Catherine and H. Long suggested that language learning take place in social atmosphere. So, social factors are relevant to transfer. According to them though all background factors do not play a role in cross linguistic influence, some do make a difference. For instance- focusing on the research of semantic influences from the target as well as native, Pavlenko(1999) pointed out that use of words of Russian-English bilinguals differs according to living in Russia or in United States. Schmidt (1987) focused on differences correlated with social class and he confirmed that variation in Arabic consonant affects the consonants used by learners of English.

### **2.9 First language influence:**

First or mother language influence is a part of cross linguistics influence (Catherine and H. Long, 2006). According to Schmitt, Learners with their knowledge of other language try to learn a new one. Schmitt pointed out that First language influence is an evolving aspect of second language development. First language influences in the development sequences ( Wode, 1981; Zohl, 1980) Schmitt added that it also varies from one learner to another as well as one background of first language to another. For example; some first language learner uses pre-verbal negation longer than other first language learner from another background.

Schmitt also suggested that Second language can be influence by first language development sequences within a particular stage, For example; An advance level learner who already know the subject verb inversion failed to use it because it will consistent with their language in a way that full nouns subjects cannot be inverted with the verb to form questions.



## **Chapter-3: Research and Methodology**

**3.1. Research Design:** This chapter deals with the research methodology. A qualitative questionnaire (semi-structured interview) has been used, as culture is a very complex issue, and the results are usually not quantifiable.

**3.2 Participants:** For my research, I decided to interview the language teachers, who have first-hand experience of dealing with the students and discovering the interrelationship between language and culture. Ten language teachers teaching at BRAC University participated in the survey. There were both male and female teachers, who completed their M.A. in English and have 5-6 years of teaching experience on an average.

**3.3. Instruments:** I have formed some questions exploring the relationship between culture and language. There were no rights or wrong responses because my topic is such that people can choose to interpret it in various ways. The participants are very co-operative, and enthusiastically participated in the survey. My questions were:

1. Do you believe that the culture of your students has any effect on learning their second language? Would you please explain how?
2. How culture affects the writing skills of your students? What about the speaking skills?
4. Do you think social status, educational, and economic backgrounds have any role to play in learning English? Please give examples.



**3.4 Procedure:** After framing the questions, I decided to make an appointment with the teachers so that they can give me sufficient time. I personally contacted the teachers and asked for their convenient time, and fixed a couple of dates and times to see them. At first I introduced myself to them, and started the interview very informally as if we were just casually talking. I assured them about their privacy that I will not mention their name in my paper. Every teacher had a different schedule, so I had to meet them when they were free. It did not take more than 15 minutes to finish my interview with each of the teachers. Two of the teachers just gave 7 mins and I had to finish my interview within that time. I carried voice recorder with me to record their voice. Upon their permission, I recorded their interview. A few of the participants objected to the idea of recording their answers. But all of them were very helpful. Some of them even requested me to show them my research after it has been completed.

**3.5. Data Analysis:** In a week, I finished the interviews. Then I listened to those interviews from the voice recorder, and transcribed the recorded interview. I went through the interview transcripts. I read and underlined the important points and analyzed their interview under certain broad themes so that the points are well-organized.



## **Chapter-4: Results and Discussion**

This chapter presents the results of my research. A discussion follows the presentation of the results. Different teachers shed light on the inter-relationship between language and culture differently, but All the teachers unanimously agreed that 'Language and culture are interconnected' and that the Socio-economic background of a learner affects his/her productive skills. Culture is a vast concept and language is an integral part of it. One thing I noticed was that while talking about the relationship between language learning and culture, almost all the teachers talked about different learning environments existing in Bangla and English medium schools, and how that affect the learning of English. Each and every teacher mentioned one common thing, ie. first language interference in learning the second language is a common scenario, especially among Bangla medium students. First language interference takes place in terms of pronunciation, choice of words, modality and reaction to culture of the second language. They emphasized the role of socio-economic background, exposure to the target language, bicultural identity and school culture in learning the second language. The discussion of their answers is given below:

**2. Cross Linguistics influence/ Mother tongue interference:** This is a common problem among the learners that they think in their first language and then translate the thoughts into their second language, which hardly makes any sense in the latter language, for instance-One of the teachers said that once one of her students wrote in his essay 'sky fell over the head". The teacher was confused what she meant, then after a while, the teacher suddenly realized the odd literal translation from Bangla to English. In fact, it was an idiomatic expression in Bangla 'Akash venge porlo mathar upor', which means something like 'a bolt from the blue' in English and the literal translation of this sentence does not make any sense in English. It is of utmost importance to the language users to know the proper translation of sentences. They



have to know that the idiomatic expressions are coined based on certain cultural contexts, where the language is used. While using that expression in a different cultural context, the users have to be careful about the appropriateness of the expression.

The teachers I interviewed agreed upon this commenting that provided that students are allowed enough exposure to the target language in the target language culture (which is not one but many), they can pick it up naturally and will not try to translate without taking into account the fact that the languages are different. Different aspects of the cross-linguistic interference are discussed below:

**2.1. Pronunciation/Accent:** Besides translation, a few teachers mentioned that Bengali medium students' pronunciation of the L2 words are heavily influenced by the sounds of Bangla. One teacher said that each and every language has sounds, which are not present in other languages. What happens then is the first language's sound patterns heavily affect the verbal production of the words of the second language. Even if the students are taught the correct sound, or the pronunciation of words, they at times cannot overcome this problem of their first language's sound interfering the second language's ones. Their limited classroom exposure to the correct sounds does not help much to teach them the right way of pronouncing the words one teacher said that it happens due to lack of practice. So, Bangla phonology interferes with the English one. Dialectal influence is another major problem that can be discussed with it. Different dialects have different accents and thereby have sounds which might not be in the standard variety. So, there is again an interference, for example one teacher shared her experience of hearing her students putting the stress on 'ing' in the word 'going'. She added that some of her students pronounce /v/ as /b/ and fail to correct it even after repeated correction of their pronunciation.



**2.2. Use of words:** Another interesting aspect of cross-linguistic interference is the use of words. In Bangla, we have certain derivational morphemes, which change the grammatical category of the words, and add new meaning to the existing words, but English has an altogether different word for the second or new meaning, for example- in Bangla we have verbal-noun construction called *khawa*, which takes on a new meaning, if a derivational morpheme *no* is attached to *khaowa* and makes it *khaowano*. But in English we have two different words for *khawa*, which is 'eat' and *khawanu*, which is *feed*. Students are often confused with this. One of the students wrote, a teacher said, 'My mother was sick, so I have to eat her' instead of 'I have to feed her'. The teacher also said that in the process of distinguishing between two sexes, students often get confused. In Bangla we use 'shey' for both girl and boy but in English we have 'she' for girl and 'he' for boy. Our students fail to maintain this difference and use 'he' for both boys and girls. One teacher said another interesting thing that nowadays students are adding Bangla words in the sentence of target language. For example- Arrey! don't worry it will be ok, It was joss!, I m doing na?, Ish! why i made this mistake etc. Though in the target language there are hurray! wow, hey, etc to express joy and grief, even then their L1 interferes with the use of word of L2.

**2.3. Expression of modality:** Difference in the expression of modality gives rise to other interesting examples of cross-linguistic interference. While talking to the teachers, I found the participants pointing out this issue that most of students are not familiar with the difference in the expression of modality. One teacher said that the way of exchanging greetings, expressing anger, seeking apology, making request etc of our culture is different from the western culture. In the classroom, the teacher found a couple of students who are not used to saying 'sorry' when they accidentally push another student, but in the western culture, people



usually say 'sorry' if they do any such thing. As per the cultural norm, not saying sorry is extremely impolite. Our students often fail to understand it as it stems from the culture English is associated with. Another teacher pointed out an interesting cultural practice, ie, when we visit somebody's house, we often iterate the fact that we have caused a lot of trouble to him/her but this cultural practice cannot be translated into English.

**3. Reaction to Foreign culture:** Most of the teachers talked about students' reaction to foreign materials. Students try to associate themselves with the type of materials used in classroom. The reaction of Bangla medium students is more intense than that of English medium. In an ESL classroom, one of the participants used a foreign material dealing with the drinking habit of a nun. One student was very shocked at this and asked 'How come a nun drinks? In our religion, an imam ( the head of a mosque) never drinks.' They relate their culture to foreign culture. Another teacher added "Other day I was showing students an English movie 'Pride and Prejudice'. There was a dancing scene, and students started laughing when they saw them dancing that way, I noticed them saying, 'What are they doing? Is it called a dance?' It proves that the L1 culture interferes with the L2 culture, and the learning is never successful if this cultural difference is not addressed.

**4. Socio-economic Background:** Socio-economic background decides whether a student will have access to cable TV, internet, dvd player etc and thereby will get exposed to the language at home. Family background plays a vital role as well. Students coming from a family where English is practiced/spoken regularly, better pick up the language. One of the teachers said that the atmosphere English medium students grow up in is quite different from that of Bengali medium students. This upbringing has a direct effect on their choice of songs, radio programs and language use. There is a belief that western culture and values are more modern,



and people from the upper social background tend to fall for western songs, and movies, and thereby allow themselves enough linguistic input that helps them learn the language.

**5. Exposure to a Target Language:** Exposure to the target language is another big factor that helps the students to pick up the language. One teacher said that it is true that cultural Background does affect students learning of second language. But I think it is only one factor. There are many other factors, for example-even if somebody from a lower social background is weak in English but that person reads a lot he/she might have better English words and he will also be able to pick up good English. She added that English medium students learn a language faster than Bangla medium students more exposure to English than Bengali medium students. So it is all about exposure. A number of other teachers also mentioned that the Learners who are exposed to the culture of target language learn the language faster. Since these schools are usually modeled after British or American schools, Teacher- student relationship is friendlier and students are more relaxed. Students feel free to talk to and to even challenge their teachers regarding things related to language learning. . Students don't hesitate to express their personal views and opinions in the class; they also freely talk about their emotions and feeling and are not hesitant about discussing certain things which might be traditionally considered as taboos in our culture.

**6. Bicultural Identity:** It should be mentioned that English is no longer associated only with the British or American culture, rather with the " global culture" (Dorneyei, 1995). Arnet concludes in his article "The Psychology of Globalization" that most people today possess 'Bicultural identities' It is an identity that reflects an integration of the global culture and the local culture. Bicultural identities develop a global identity that gives them a sense of belonging to a global culture.(Lamb, 2004) A study conducted (Husain,2007) in Bangladesh



among urban, secondary school learners shows that the same is the case in our country. Therefore, we can say that access to internet, international songs, movies and English programmes on satellites, TV enables the English medium students to get exposed to this global culture.

**7. School Culture:** Several teachers also mentioned about the schools culture. Bengali medium students who belong to the lower strata (e.g. lower middle class) are hesitant most of the time in expressing themselves in the English language class. They often remain silent in the class and do not ask questions, as it is not considered proper in a Bengali medium classroom. We can see that not only socio-economic Background but the classroom culture makes a big difference. These students are not exposed to the global culture from an early age. Therefore, they react negatively to materials that reflect foreign culture; they cannot relate to it or understand it. for instance – One of the teachers brought a topic on dating in a classroom and she says,” students reactions was different, even they were not eager to open up because they think if they will express their opinion then the teacher might not like it, so this a cultural limitation of social barriers.”



## Chapter 5: Conclusion

**5.1 Summary of the findings:** This research study assisted me a lot to explore very interesting but influential findings of the interrelationship between language and culture. Culture plays a key role to affect language that is why over the decade, this area has been receiving more attention in the linguistics research. We know that different cultures exist in all over the world, and the way culture affects on different languages also varies from culture to culture. This research helped me to find out the interrelationships between culture and language in the context of Bangladesh.

By conducting research on qualitative method, I came to know different types of findings, which the experienced teachers have been observing in their on going teaching career. In this research, number of teachers mentioned different learning environments existing in Bangla and English medium schools, and how that affects the learning of English. The most common problem, which they have found, is the first language interference in learning the second language, for instance students think in Bangla and translate the thoughts into English. Many other aspects also came out from this cross linguistics influences. Such as- it interferes in terms of pronunciation, choice of words, modality and reaction to culture of the second language.

It is believed that socio-economic background of students has a crucial role in learning second language. The students who belongs to well off family have access to internet, DVD player, TV etc, thereby they are getting much more exposure to the English language at home. As English schools are expensive, so students of upper economic level are getting opportunity to study there, where they are exposed to the second language from primary level.



The teachers also mentioned that besides the socio-economic background, if a student gets exposure to second and/or target language, s/he could learn the language efficiently. Therefore this is a very essential factor in learning a second language. Students from middle or low social strata can also get benefits from this effective exposure. Nonetheless, if someone is weak in English, by reading a lot of books s/he can pick up good English.

Bicultural identity and school culture are also important as these factors make a big difference in learning the second language. Bicultural identity helps an individual to blend into the global and local culture. It also gives that individual a global identity. English medium students get the opportunity to get more exposure on internet, satellite televisions shows and international song and movie culture than the Bangla medium students do. These attribute them to get the essence of bicultural identity.

English medium students and Bangla medium students grow up in quite different atmosphere. In English medium schools, the relationship between teacher and student are much friendly, students don't feel shy to express personal opinion, and even in some extent they use certain words, which are considered to be taboo in our culture. We cannot find this classroom culture in Bangla medium schools. However, this study is conclusive enough that culture affects the productive skills of the learners.

### **5.3. Recommendation**

Based on the research findings, there are also certain recommendations suggested by the Teachers whom I interviewed:

One teacher stated that, it is a fact that we are acquiring language but it is not necessary to adopt the culture that the language belongs to. But consciously or unconsciously students are actually adopting some parts of the culture without having an understanding of right or wrong.



In the case of reaction to materials, another teacher recommended that if a new material is introduced to the student, it is better to give them a briefing of that particular culture from where the language comes from. By doing so, students will be well acquainted of that particular culture and thus it will help to make a compare and contrast of that particular language.

Before introducing materials created by any foreign writers to the class, teachers can change or modify some elements that help the student learn the language from the local or their own perspective. So the students will be able to adjust with that particular material.

However, after this research study it is conclusive enough that culture has a key role to play in language learning and culture affects language learning as well.

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## **Appendix:**

### **Interview for Research (Transcription of the recorded interview)**

#### **Interview 1**

**Question:** Do u believe that culture of your students affects their learning Second Language?

**Teacher:** Yes, of course I do believe that culture plays an effective role when

Students learn L2.

**Question:** would you please explain me how it is affecting in both their writing and speaking?

**Teacher;** well, there are several examples. I found my student translating

Their 1<sup>st</sup> language same to same in English, for example- Once a student wrote in his essay 'sky fell over the head" I was confused what was she trying to imply here, then after some moments, I understood she thought in bangla 'Akash venge porlo mathar upor' and put it into English which actually doesn't give any sense in English language. Other day I was showing students an English movie which was 'Pride and Prejudice'. There was a dancing scene. Students were laughing when they saw them dancing in that way, I noticed them saying, 'What they are doing? is it called a dance? So, you know things go like this if students find something different from their culture. I even noticed they were translating phrases which are not a proper way to learn a second language because it doesn't give the exact meaning of the words. The usage of words and their meanings work differently from culture to culture. So, we try to make them understand not to write or translate the way they are thinking.

**Question;** What about social background, status, educational or economic background are they playing any role?

**Teacher:** Yes of course, If you observe both English and Bengali medium schools, You will see how these things affect in students learning second language, Most of the students from



affluent families are reading English school and in Bengali schools, you will see few students are from high class, most of them from middle to low class. In English they are reading all subjects in English except Bangla, they focus on communication more than learning grammar. In this way they can speak English very fluently and accurately. They are always confident. In contrast to them students of Bengali medium schools are less confident. They think in Bangla and translate it into English which is a problematic. But positive thing is they are serious than English medium schools students. They are good writer. They can bring up with different idea.

### **Interview 2**

**Question:** hello Miss

**Teacher2:** Hi

**Question:** How are you?

**Teacher2:** I am ok.

**Teacher:** so what kind of question do you want to ask?

**Question:** I just want to know, do you think that culture of your students affects when they learn second language?

**Teacher:** Yes, I do believe that culture of students affect their learning second language.

You know the way of expressing greetings, anger, apology etc of our culture are different from the culture of English speaker. You can see, In Bangladesh, if one people pushes other people then they don't use to say 'sorry' But in another culture, for say, English people must convey that he/she is 'sorry' if an Bengali person will push an English man and he doesn't say sorry then he thinks they are rude people, but actually the matter is not like, it happens because of miscommunication.



**Question:** would you please explain how did you find that because of culture their writing or speaking is affecting?

**Teacher2:** In the classroom I always notice student's reaction when I teach them English story, poem, their social expression and so on. For example-once I was explaining a story of a nun drinks. Students got shocked because how can a nun drink? In our religion an imam of mosque will never drink. See, how they are relating their culture with English culture? For that reason, I personally think we should also focus on their culture. So that after knowing their culture they can compare and contrast of both cultures and they will be able to differ them. In the debate class, I always notice my students become aggressive. Both of the groups try to establish their points very wildly. One is saying 'no' means no. With the posture, gesture and facial expression students fight with each other. At the end of the debate they even don't try to convince each other. Compare to them English speaker are very polite, they express their point of view in a calm mood. They also try to convince the opposite group. From this kind of situations, we can signify how social expression is different from culture to culture. In writing, the most problematic thing I noticed is they think in Bangla and translate it into English in this way meaning comes later on.

**Question:** So, do you think social status, educational, economic backgrounds are also playing role ?

**Teacher:** Yes sure! Just take the example of English medium and Bengali medium schools, all we know that the students who are from high class they are studying in English school because they can afford that. They learn English there from their childhood. Except Bangla subject, everything they are reading in English as a result, they are becoming very good in English. They also get chance to read so many books of English writers. So they become very familiar with their culture and at the certain level they think they are from their culture. It is because of language.



We know language is coming through the culture, through the language we express culture. So, same thing is happening with them. They are watching English movies, following their dress up; it is because of language they are getting acquainted with their culture.

On the other hand, most of students from Bengali medium belong to Middle and low class family. They struggle with their study. They are accepting whatever the school is providing them concerning education. They are not widely exposed to English language.

In our culture, we respect our teacher. We do not talk to him with a high voice because it is kind of showing disrespect to our teacher. So the students of Bengali school never feel to ask extra questions, as they think it will be showing disrespect to the teacher.

Whereas in English schools, students are confident and never feel shy to ask any question. So, did you see, how status, educational and economic Background affect when they learn second language? Even gender wise you will find differentiation in using words between boys and girls.

### **Interview 3**

**Question:** good morning Mam!

**Teacher:** Good morning!

**Question:** Mam, do you think cultural Background, such as status, educational Background of your students affects their writing and speaking of second language?

**Teacher:** Yes, The cultural Background of an English learner affects his or her learning in a number of ways.

**Question:** How? Please explain it with examples.

**Teacher:** Listen, In Bangladesh we are every body Bangladeshi, in this sense we all have only one culture, but this culture has also sub cultures. For example- In Bangladesh we follow different religions, some are Muslims, some are Hindi and some are christen. So in



this manner you will find different value and beliefs are following people in their religion. Religion is a part of culture, then again based on social status; people are also divided in different level; high, middle, low. These all sub cultures affect students learning process. Although we are used to saying that the learner first language interferes with his/her language learning, it is actually the learners own culture which interferes because language and culture are inseparable. For Example- when we are greeting in Bangladesh we often tell about our health condition but if we translate this practice in English, it's not always appropriate. When we visit somebody's house, we often say that we have caused a lot of trouble to him/her but this practice is not translatable when saying good bye in English.

According to me its first language that interferes with second language, but when I want to say how it interferes, I have to say that since a language is shaped by the culture in which it is spoken, it is not always appropriate to do literal translation in second language.

#### **Interview 4**

**Question:** Do u believe that culture of your students affect learning Second Language?

Teacher: Yes, I believe culture affects when student learn second language. I notice students react when I teach them poems, stories, or any piece of writing from western culture as English is their second language, this is because these stories, playwrights, poems are written from different period. They are from Victorian age; Elizabethans age and some are from modern age, even the genre also differs. These poets and writers were also from different background. Even the writing style or condition of women writers are also affected because of culture. So, we get to know their different thoughts and opinion even their social expression from their writing. As our culture is different from their culture, I have to make them understand their culture before going through any piece of writing or else they get confused. For example-if I let them to write their opinion about a poem, they sometimes



bring up their own but different opinion. When I think deeply “why he or she gave this type of opinion?” then I get to understand, it is because of culture which insisting him to compare between his and their culture.

**Question:** would you like to explain some examples which you have noticed in your class?

**Teacher:** One is like I told you about the poem but exactly what happened, I could not remember now.

**Question:** it's ok. What else do you notice from your students writing and speaking skills?

**Teacher:** well, there are also other factors, such as pronunciation problem and translating laterally. They are very much used to think in Bangla, and then translate it exactly into English. For that reason it is get to hard to understand what he or she is trying to say in her writing? It happens basically with the students who come from Bengali medium. You better know, in Bengali medium school, they emphasize on grammar more then communication, they let the students to memorize rules of grammar and vocabularies, But it is too much obvious that language cannot be learnt by memorizing.

Students are also too much obedient with the teachers that they do not feel to ask question openly because they think if they ask much questions, teacher will not like it, it will be disrespect to him. As a result they struggle with their writing and speaking. They also feel hesitation to speak, as they do not expose to speak, we do not listen them to speaking in a proper pronunciation and accent. In compare to them, the students of English schools learn second language very quickly. From the primary level they are widely exposed to second language. They give priority to communication.

**Question:** What about social status, educational, economic backgrounds?

**Teacher:** Of course these things also do affect in learning second language. You know, what Napoleon says, 'give me a good mother; I will give you a good nation'. So, Background matters how it will go with him? I mean with students. I said before about students of English



and Bengali medium. Now think, who is reading in English school and who is in Bengali schools? Of course, the students whose social background is high, who can afford, he is going for English school because English schools are very expensive. Students of those schools are getting exposed with technology and English language. The students who belong to middle or lower social background, they are going to Bengali schools, where they do not get enough exposure of language and technology. So, you can guess, even students want to go English school, he cannot go there because of thinking his/her economic condition and status.

### **Interview 5**

**Question:** Hello miss

**Teacher:** Hi! At last we managed time to talk.

**Question:** Yes miss!

**Teacher:** So, what is your question?

**Question:** Well Miss, I want to know, do u believe that culture of your students affect learning Second Language?

**Teacher:** Yes, it is true that cultural Background does affects students learning of second language. But I think it is only one factor. There are many other factors, for example-even if somebody from a lower social background is weak in English but that person reads a lot he/she might have better English words and he can also able to pick up good English. If you focus on social background, then it is also true that grammatical exposure vary groups of social background, so in this sense you can say that social background does affect, but I think it is only one way factor.

**Question:** Could you tell me some examples where you notice that because of culture, your students writing and speaking skills are affecting?



**Teacher:** Well, a lot of the time, I find students are translating Bangla into English which sometimes doesn't give appropriate meanings; you might think and say something in certain way in Bangla. But in English, you cannot think and say something the way you are thinking and saying in Bangla. You have to present it differently in English, but I find students are doing it, which is a very common problem here.

I also find their pronunciation problem. Well, every country has different types of pronunciation style, such as Indian pronunciation, Bangladeshi pronunciation and so on. But this is not the fact; I think it depends from where they interpret the words. For the

Standard English, Oxford dictionary is the best source to find the appropriate pronunciation of the words. But it is seen that everywhere, people publish their own dictionary and not following properly the accurate dictionary. So, you can say besides cultural influence, not following the proper dictionary is one of the problems.

**Question:** What about social status, educational, economic backgrounds?

**Teacher:** Then again I will say it is not about culture, it is about exposure. Take the example of Bengali medium and English medium students, Students of English medium read everything in English, every subject, such as- English, math, science etc, except Bangla. So, in this way they are having much more exposure from their primary level. But the students of Bengali medium read everything in Bangla, except English. They don't practice English widely; as a result they are getting less exposure.

**Question:** But Mam, there is also one thing remarkable, getting the opportunity to read in English medium. It is expensive and also western culture is also has affect here as they read most of the books written by western writers. So, you know everybody cannot afford to read in English medium and also to accept easily that modern culture. So don't you think status, educational and economic backgrounds are playing role here?

**Teacher:** Ya, I agree with your point. But as I said before it is one factor.



**Question:** that's all Mam. Thank you

**Teacher:** you welcome.

### **Interview 6**

**Teacher:** Sorry I got late.

**Question:** it's ok Mam. Shall we start our discussion Mam?

**Teacher:** Sure!

**Question:** My first question is do you believe that social background of your students affects their learning speaking and writing?

**Teacher:** Yes, of course, culture influences on students speaking and writing skills. If you notice very carefully then you will see in the subcontinent we have Pakistani culture, Indian culture, Bangladeshi culture, they all somehow relate but then again we have very different kind of accent and different kind of usage of words, the words are actually coming from the culture. So, it is influencing in speaking skills, definitely writing skills as well. With the writing, we always focus on particular standardized writing. Such as in the school, we follow British style but there're also some institutions which follows American styles. .

**Question:** Could you tell me some examples?

**Teacher:** Well I can mention about cultural inhibition.

**Question:** What is cultural inhibition?

**Teacher:** For instance; lets we talk about dating. Considering western culture, parents are free with there children. Both children and parents share their experience with each other. Going for a dating, it's not a big deal for them. Even if their children do not go for a date at the age of 16/17, parents will get worried. It is very natural for them. But when you bring up this topic in Bangladesh, you will not find this kind of scenario in our country. Children feel hesitate to share their experience with their parents. Once I have brought this topic to the



class, students reactions was different, even they were not eager to open up because they think if they will express their opinion then the teacher might not like it, so this a cultural limitation of social barriers. There are certain words which are not expected in a way which is expected to another culture. It is just because of how our social pattern is?

**Question:** What about social status, educational, economic backgrounds?

**Teacher:** Well, the usage of word also varies from status to status, middle class to high middle class, high middle class to upper class, them again upper class to super high upper class. So based on classification, their thoughts and usage of words are different.

Another thing which I have noticed nowadays in our country, it is not the social level all the time, nowadays most of the people are exposed to internet, they are exposed to mobile phone culture, they are exposed to different usage of language, and for that, the common use of language is big distorted. Student generations of every level of society are using it, in that sense they reduce the differences. It is making differences.

**Question:** What kind of differences did you find between English medium schools and Bengali medium schools?

**Teacher:** I am from English medium schools. I basically find major differences between them. Students of Bengali mediums are very good in Grammar.

**Question:** Do you meant in writing?

**Teacher:** No, not in writing they are good in Grammar, if you let them to write sentences of verb- subject agreement, they will do it perfectly. But if you tell them to apply this grammar in a piece of creative writing, they can not do it. Why they can't? Because the system of education in Bengali medium is such they focus more on learning grammatical rules and memorization and they will teach them to apply grammar in a sentence not in a creative writing. As a result, they don't develop their knowledge of rules in creative skills. So, they



are very much focused on structural grammar. Every time when they write, they are so much worried about their grammatical structure that, their creative minds don't work.

And in the English school, as I said I was in English medium school, if you ask me any grammatical rules, I can answer you but not from my memorization but from my intuition whatever is sound right is right. But I will never explain you the rule, we were never taught in that way. So, if you think about grammar structure all the time and try to incorporate that with your writing it will not work properly. You think well in your writing when you are not worried about your structure.

**Question:** So how culture is affecting here?

**Teacher:** Well, culture is bit different here. The mediums raise their students in different ways. Bengali medium students are very shy. Why they shy? because all through their day, they look up to the teacher in such a way that the teacher is the boss. They don't go beyond the topic, they think teacher may mind it, he is offended. In the English medium school, as they have tendency to communicate with their teacher, when they come to the university they talk a lot. I will say it is also a very school culture that we have.

### Interview 7

**Question:** Do u believe that culture affects your students learning Second Language?

**Teacher:** Yes. It does. First of all, I will say that first language interferes in learning second language. That is why when they write something, they first think in Bangla then they directly translate it Bangla to English. That causes a problem. There are some other certain things come out because of this mother language interference. Especially when I teach Beginner level students, in the process of learning they often get confused of gender. In Bangla we use 'shay' for both girl and boy but in English we have 'she' for girl and 'he' for boy. They would often confused with this, because in Bangla we don't have particular word



for girl or boy for that reason I find them writing or saying 'he' for girl and 'she' for boy, that is really one common thing I notice often.

Secondly, the other structural problem is, in the writing specially, as they have time to write, they first used to think in Bangla, then translate it into English. For instance I found one of my students wrote 'The streets are full of crying' actually he was supposed to write something on 'A rainy day'. I was confused what was he trying to say? After I talk to him, I found he actually translated 'kada' into 'the streets are full of crying'

Another example is- in Bangla we have 'khawa' and 'khawanu' both root words are same. But in English we have two different word for khawa 'eat' and 'feed' is for khawanu. Students often confused with this. One of my students wrote 'My mother was sick so I have to eat her' instead of 'I have to feed her'. These things are very common. I think first language interferes a lot especially when they write. Besides mother language interference the other thing is the way they accept material. They often don't respond properly the western materials- especially students of Bengali medium schools. In our culture it is not easy to openly express their opinion for instance- about love. ""This is because of cultural thoughts.

**Question:** What kind of differences did you find between English medium schools and Bengali medium schools?

**Teacher:** The social environment of both medium schools raising their students in quite different way. So there is lots of different you will find in both mediums.

English medium students are very open they are more expressive, at least to some extent they are bit westernized because they are open to globalization.

**Question:** Do you think this is only because of language they think they are westernized and feel comfortable in every field?



**Teacher:** Not only for language. Language and culture are interrelated. English is an international language so if you are international minded then it would be easy to learn this language faster.

**Question:** What about social status, educational, economic backgrounds?

**Teacher:** Yes status does affect, I think the students who belongs to higher social background they are more exposed to globalization than the people from lower social background. They learn to accept different culture. Even so many students of Bengali medium schools are also from higher social background are similar to English medium school's students; it is because of the way they go up with the environment. Because of social status, they learn language very fast.

### **Interview 8**

**Question:** My first question is do you believe that social background of your students affects their learning speaking and writing?

**Teacher:** Yes, I strongly believe culture of students affect in learning process. Native language I mean the First language of students affect when they learn second language. It does in many ways, especially with materials, whether it would be writing or speaking. We teach them different kinds of English books written by English writers. These pieces of writings affect students learning process, For instance- 'Headway' possibly you heard of this name. You know there are lots of things which strike our mind, like the nun character. Students are not used to hear of it. So you will find this type of many examples which affect learning process

**Question:** Could you explain it more elaborately?

**Teacher:** Well, it has both positive and negative impacts. Positive impacts are like –you come to know about other cultures, you can pick up good things from them. Negative impacts



are why are you adopting that culture, we don't need to, right? we have our own culture. Learning a language is a very good thing. English is an international language so we have to learn and use this language not other elements.

**Question:** But sir we are not adopting their culture, we are just accepting the way they are.

**Teacher:** Yes, but I think consciously or unconsciously we are following them in many ways. For example- In the university how do you greet your teacher? by saying good 'morning' or saying 'hello sir' but whenever you come out from university, how do you convey regards to your relatives or parents? by saying 'assalamualaikum'. So, don't you think it is because, with their language, we are also trying to adjust with their culture?

**Question:** Yes, that is true.

**Teacher:** See! How it affects? At a time you can say, 'it is ok. We should learn in this way' But then again you have to think where it is going? Ok? In this way we will see we forget our own culture and usage of words. So, both cultures either own or their affect tremendously during learning process.

**Question:** What about social status, does it affect?

**Teacher:** Again it does affect. Students from higher social background, they adopt easily language and they influence by western culture as well. Nowadays, many of them are thinking 'Our children should globalize, they should also learn other factors of western culture' the students who are from middle or lower class, they don't show that much interest to adopt them. As a result, the students from high social background are learning the language in a faster mode but forgetting some their own cultural words or value. Ok! the students of middle social background do not accepting their cultural factors But with the same time not being able to change their mind, which is I called 'Bangladeshi mind' such as- we should not do this, teacher might not like it, what will other people say? etc.



In this manner what is happening? of course they are feeling hesitation and not being able to accept material properly. So, see! How language and culture are interconnected?

### **Interview 9**

**Question:** Do u believe that culture affects your students learning Second Language?

**Teacher:** Well, language and culture are interrelated, so in this sense I have to believe that culture of students affects when they learn second language.

**Question:** How? Give me some examples.

**Teacher:** If you tell me to show some examples, then at this moment, I can tell you that nowadays students are listening FM radio Furti. Nowadays if students don't listen to FM radio Furti you will understand that their speaking pattern, behavior is different.

**Question:** Who's speaking style will be different?

**Teacher:** Both Fm listener and not listener, they are different. If you consider the educational background, you will see, in English medium school, they have certain atmosphere; they have certain community which Bengali medium doesn't have. So, Bengali medium students are not habituated with this type of fast track. Not only that, if you notice, you will see the song selection between English medium students and Bengali medium students also differs.

**Question:** Why it is happening?

**Teacher:** Because of background, culture, community, language, technology. Everything depends, even sometimes family.

**Question:** Why did you mention about technology?

**Teacher:** If you consider from Bangladesh point of view, you will find that student of middle class family do not want to go to English medium school; they are accustomed with the kind of environment. That means rich people have their access, they have technology, they are going to the private university, spending lots of money. They are coming in contact with



modern technology which is most of the time impossible for middle class family. So if you compare between English medium students background and Bengali medium students background, you will find lots of technological matter are affecting here. I am talking about technology as a part of culture.

In the case of speaking English medium students are very good and if you talk about writing then it differs. I find many students from Bengali medium are very good in writing than English medium students. You are reading in English medium, it doesn't mean you are very good in writing.

Well, I could also like to tell you one another example of how language and culture related; I hope you have heard of Ethiopia. It is a poor country. They speak an Arabic language and Ethiopian. Some months back a group of American army volunteers went there to help them. Every year many people die for starving and lacking of pure water.

They were used to drink water of well. So, people caused disease. There was a problem. Volunteers did not understand Ethiopian language and Ethiopian did not understand volunteer's language. The volunteers tried a lot to make them understand that water of well is not pure, you should drink water from tube-well. But it didn't work. At last, they drew a picture of a tube-well and two faces, one was gloomy face the other one was smiley face. In the picture, Tube-well was in the middle and the gloomy face was right side and happy face was in the left side. It means before drinking water of tube-well your face was gloomy but after drinking water from tube-well you are happy because you did not cause a disease. Then volunteers put this board everywhere beside the tube-wells. After some days, they observed the situation was same. Nobody was drinking water from tube well. Later on they discover that Ethiopian people speaks Arabic language, if you write Arabic then it will start from left



side, so people thought before drinking water from tube-well, you were happy. After drinking water you got disease so your face became gloomy. Like-

If you read from right side-

Gloomy face ----- tube well----- smiley face

If you read from left side

Smiley face -----tube well----- gloomy face

So, see! How they are thoughts and language are interconnected?

### **Interview 10**

**Question:** Hi Madam!

**Teacher:** Hello! How is going on your interview?

**Question:** Quite well.

**Teacher:** So, tell me what do you want to know for your research?

**Question:** Well! First of all my first question is do you believe that social background of your students affects their learning speaking and writing?

**Teacher:** Obviously! No doubt. Culture of first language speaker does affects a lot during learning their second language.

**Question:** For example-

**Teacher:** I always notice some things happen consistently, especially with the speaking case. One thing is very common, their accent. They don't want to change their accent or tone. Even if they try, it remains. I think it is because they come to school, they stay here for some hours then the whole day and night they stay at home and speak Bangla. I am not saying they should not speak Bangla, I think it is because of lacking practice. Another thing I notice, if you raise any religious topic you will must them coming to the argument.



In this subcontinent, people are very conscious to protect his or her religion, culture, family status; even you will find them to be aggressive when argument goes on. But in

The western culture, people are not like that, whatever you give opinion about the religion they are always indifferent because religion doesn't matter for them. Even you find the writers of western country making fun of religion in their writing. So, when students of our country read those pieces of writing, they will not digest it easily. But in writing I didn't find much different.

**Question:** So, how culture is affecting here?

**Teacher:** I think with the case of social background, student's mentality work much. Because when they come to learn second language, we let them to read different kind of English writers writing. They have lots of thing, which are weird from the student's point of view, so they don't want to accept them. If they want, they can easily accept them, but they will not because these things are not available in their culture. So do you notice how their mentality is working here? Once I noticed students were learning 'rape of the lock', I just laughed it out when I saw their reaction. They were saying, Is it a topic to write on? The writer didn't find any topic? Why he wrote such a vast epic based on this lock? How weird? This will happen if you compare your culture with their culture?

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