

The Importance of English in Multinational Companies in Bangladesh: Corporate Expectation vs Reality

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities Department in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
B.A. in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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of Spring,2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English on [28.05.2022].

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Ethics Statement:

This is an original work done by me for my thesis. I am solely responsible for this study. I have conducted the study while looking into scholarly sources such as articles, newspapers, journals and books. I have also identified and interviewed eligible candidates for my thesis. The candidates participated on their own will and were not forced in any way. Furthermore, the interviews were taken with the participants' consent and were also transcribed with their permission.

Abstract:

English is used for all official purposes currently which makes the importance of learning English clear when it comes to job sector. Fresh graduates who are looking for jobs are required to acquire expected level of proficiency in English in order to get through the screening process. Moreover, in some cases recruiters tend to focus on the language proficiency more than the academic grades. Recruiters look for proficient and well-articulated professionals when it comes to reviewing candidates for a job position. In that regard, the current job market is competitive and difficult for non-English speaking candidates when it comes to securing a high paying job. The fresh graduates are unaware of the required language skills in order to stand out amongst the crowd. The employment sector in Bangladesh is developing with passing time, which means that employers focus more on the candidates' acquisition of English and relevant language skills in order to maintain a good performance in the corporate scene. This study aims to examine the candidates' required language proficiency level and their mastery of the English language in contrast to the growing needs in the professional sector. Also, the difficulties and challenges perceived by candidates as well as Employers. Having said that, the candidates' and Employers' ability to cope with said challenges was looked into while conducting this study.

Dedication:

This journey was impossible without the financial, emotional, professional support from my parents. Therefore, I would like to dedicate this work to my parents for whatever it turned out to be, good or bad, doesn't matter. I completed it, and it's all that matters.

Acknowledgment

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List of Acronyms:

ESL – English as a Second Language

CLT – Communicative Language Teaching

GTM - Grammar Translation Method

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 The Level of English Proficiency of the candidates seeking jobs in Bangladesh

The job sector in Bangladesh is an ever-growing industry where corporate evaluation has taken place. In today's time the job market in Bangladesh has changed a lot and come a long way. Which inherently means that applying for jobs in the current market requires a handful of skills and professionalism. To be able to deem themselves qualified to apply, candidates must ensure that they check the most important requirements in this check list. In that regard, one of the most common and must have requirement is having good proficiency in English. English has gained an international status, which prompted many multinational organizations to make sure that their candidates are proficient in English and have a good set of language skills that are essential for their corporate infrastructure. These companies are pushing for proficiency in candidates by conducting the interviews and most of the screening process in English. Furthermore, all meetings and communicative workshops are conducted in English. In our country students learn English for 12 consecutive years, yet many students find it difficult to communicate with others as well as lack their expected level of proficiency. This lack in the proficiency comes back to haunt the students later in their professional life where they struggle to communicate in English and achieve the required fluency. This then affects their ability to secure good jobs or at least higher paying jobs than the candidates who are proficient and can communicate their thoughts in fluent English. However, for some or most of the total candidates, even after studying English for 12 consecutive years it is hard for them to communicate proficiently in the target language. In Bangladesh companies often tend to hire candidates who are more efficient and skillful than the ones who have good results which means getting good grades in exams is meaningless if the candidate is not capable of expressing their thoughts in fluent English. In the screening process companies tend to only call those candidates for interviews who have a good grasp of the English language and are well articulated.

1.1.2 The Impact of Code-Switching in Candidates' Proficiency

When a speaker or writer changes from one language to another it can be identified as code switching. Code-switching happens is common in our daily life. We can observe various examples of code switching while conversing with other people in our daily life. Students of

the tertiary level are expected to have the proper proficiency adhering to their knowledge of the language at this level. In Bangladesh's context most of the students of any level while conversing with their peers use code switching. Students often rely on various forms of code-switching in their utterances to a point where they may develop a lack of language proficiency or may be unable to reach their expected level of language proficiency. Which could in the long-term lead to language decay. Bangladesh is a bilingual country, which means people here can use two different languages to convey their message. Therefore, we often use two different languages at the same time. Now at the tertiary level, students do this more often than anyone else. Students can develop a lack of language knowledge if they code-switch more often in the classroom. Code-switching is often regarded as a negative phenomenon which affects the students' knowledge of both languages. However, some sort of code switching may occur subconsciously. Students could code-switch unknowingly or because of their habit to aid them in a conversation. Also, code-switches could be done to convey the message faster and efficiently rather than mumbling uncontrollably. It is somewhat apparent that students at the tertiary level somewhat suffer from lack of language proficiency, and they have some troubles while completely conveying their emotions through any of the two languages. Over the years switching the codes have become so normalized that the speakers now do it both consciously and subconsciously. Even the teachers at the tertiary level who follow the direct method while teaching may somewhat code-switch during lessons.

1.1.3 The Impact of Anxiety in Candidates' Proficiency

In a second language classroom, students' learning can be influenced by various kinds of variables. These variables are considered as effective filters on second language acquisition. The variables refer to non-linguistic aspects that prevent the acquisition of the second language. Anxiety is one of those affective factors. It can be categorized into facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety. In that regard, in a Bengali medium classroom the presence of debilitating anxiety is prominent. Having said that, when acquiring a second language some sort of anxiety could be helpful for the learners to give the learners the push that they need towards learning. However, in a Bengali medium classroom the anxiety leads towards negativity where the students are restricted in their attempts to learn the second language due to debilitating anxiety in the form of nervousness, fear of humiliation, boredom, lack of knowledge and other variables. In Bengali medium classrooms students are more adept in their first language and prefer to communicate with their peers in Bengali in the fear of demonstrating their lack of proficiency or nervousness in front of their classmates. This fear and nervousness restrict their

acquisition of language skills which results in long term debilitating anxiety affecting the second language acquisition and therefore results in lack of communication skills and comprehensibility of the second language. This research ventures into the possibilities of code-switching and anxiety influencing the level of proficiency of candidates seeking a job and conclusively discuss the importance of English in the Bangladeshi job market. The key factors that hinder the candidates' ability to secure a high paying job for English speakers as opposed to the non-English speakers.

1.2 Context of The Study

In recent times Linden and Muschalla (2007) discussed that students from an early age suffer from anxiety in classrooms which factors into their insufficient language learning and that carries on to the workplace in the form of workplace anxiety. This insufficiency results in their inability to communicate with their peers in the workplace, which means that these candidates are not able to ensure employment at a renowned corporate company. This hints towards the importance of English in the Bangladeshi job sector and those candidates are missing out opportunities from a very young age.

In fact, early learners suffer from classroom anxiety which restricts their ability to communicate and develop their language learning skills which reflects on their career opportunities. This anxiety is debilitating anxiety and it greatly impacts candidates' ability to express their thoughts whilst developing communicative skills as well as build up their fluency over the English language. This debilitating anxiety acts as a resistor to the students' language development because of the lack of feedback and proper care for them.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter I have mentioned sources where other scholars explained the issue regarding the recent increase in demand for English fluency and competency in the job description as well as the perceived challenges and tasks by the candidates while hunting for a job. Moreover, the various sources mentioned in this chapter, scholars discuss the issue extensively in their papers and articles.

2.1 Discrimination against English speaking and non-English speaking candidates:

The job sector has evolved throughout the years. In the current job market, there is a growing demand for English-speaking candidates as opposed to non-English speaking candidates. Pandey and Pandey (2014) discussed how speaking good English may result in the creation of good opportunities in the job sector. English speaking candidates will have precedence over non-English speaking candidates in the society. A proficient candidate who can better articulate their thoughts and expressions in English and has a good accent in English, has already met the first criteria of getting a good job. On the other hand, non-English speakers suffer in finding a good job and find it difficult to enter the corporate world.

Now in the perspective of Bangladesh, students find it even more difficult to achieve the expected level of proficiency. Jenkins (2003) categorizes the English in Bangladesh as a South Asian variety based on the region as well as an institutional variety based on functionality. English is a compulsory subject for EFL learners at secondary and higher secondary level which indicates that it is treated as a useful academic language. This urge for English to be taught from the early stages of education only indicates the importance that Bangladesh has given English language in education policies. This importance toward English and rapid spread of it can be noticed through the launch of English medium *madrashas*. Furthermore, English is treated as a symbol of status in Bangladesh. In contrast to non-English speakers, English speaking people are given a higher status in the society. This is evident through English medium education being exclusive only for the people of upper-class stature, as it is very expensive for the middle-class as well as the lower-class. (Banu & Sussex,2001). In that context, candidates from English medium background are given precedence over candidates who have Bengali medium background. Kumar (2016) mentions in his article, to what extent the English language is helpful and important in acquiring jobs. According to research, when it comes to their use of English young adults who are situated in the urban areas

are more creative and strategic as opposed to the ones in the rural areas. This further explains how the candidates that come from the rural parts of Bangladesh find it more difficult during the job interviews while candidates from the urban parts may find it easier to go through a job interview whilst speaking in English. Furthermore, when a survey was conducted on how Bengali medium students and English medium students coped up with all the instructions in the Universities to the sudden shift from Bengali to English. The study showed that English medium students were more fluent and well versed in the academic resources than the Bengali medium students who found it challenging to cope up with it as well as felt uncomfortable (Sultana 2014).

People in Bangladesh are more comfortable with Bengali, Bengali is the language that its people fought for in 1952, which led to a deep seeded desire for people to prioritize Bengali in every aspect of their life. However, nowadays, English is prioritized everywhere rather than Bengali which also includes the job sector. In that regard, people who speak English and have a good accent are prioritized over people who cannot speak English or choose not to. Again, this is the country that currently has 98% people who speak Bengali which makes it difficult for those who are pursuing English as a second language (Imam,2007). There are various forms of educational discrimination that takes place in Bangladesh where most of it takes place due to the gender of the learner. According to Tannock (2008) educational discrimination may occur due to class, gender and race. This could lead men to become more progressive than women. Again, Rahman (2018) delves deep into this topic where in a study most Bangladeshi women regardless of their occupation responded about their own proficiency as low or poor; only a handful of them considered their proficiency to be moderate. The reason for this was because most of them came from a rural or disadvantaged background. In the workplace there could also be class discrimination when it comes to language proficiency (Tannock, 2008).

2.2 Job employability for English speaking people:

Espenshade and Fu (1997) explored how U.S immigrants face difficulties in finding jobs based on their English proficiency. In the U.S. where most of the population speak English and all the official business activities are done in English. Therefore, means without expected level of proficiency in English immigrants may not even get into the U.S. let alone find work in a foreign land. This indicates that in every aspect English speaking people will find better jobs and better opportunities than the non-English speaking people. In that regard, Chiswick

and Miller (2010) stated found that in the U.S. labor market the employees who were moderately proficient in English were earning more than the employees who lacked the basic language skills. It clearly shows that the English only speakers gained in earnings where, moderately proficient employees also gained more earnings, albeit very little but in contrast to non-English speaking employees the growth seems significant.

Communication skills play a vital role when it comes to employment. Employers tend to heavily lean towards the candidates who are the most competent and can communicate fluently in English. Candidates who are incompetent find it very difficult to get well paid jobs and suffer from the lack of job security. In other words, candidates' competency in English determines the earnings and status of the job that they may secure (Roshid & Chowdhury, 2013). Masoor (2007) found that to be employed one must fill out the first requirement which was English as most of the work that was written and documented were in English. Also, adhering to the ongoing trends, there was an increase of communicating in English in the workplace. In Bangladesh's perspective, Khan and Chaudhury (2012), studied the English language requirements of the Bangladeshi employment sector, and compared candidates' English proficiency with the present market demand by researching the various business enterprises and how they use English in their daily operations. The study showed that the significance was very high, when it came to communicating in English in day-to-day activities. Having said that, the study also showed that almost 94% of the employers expect a good grasp of the productive skills which include speaking and writing. The candidates that do not possess these key productive skills are rejected during the skimming process.

In the global stage, in addition to the U.S. labor market, in China they hold a test that determines the candidates' English proficiency which then determines the candidates' promotional opportunities and other benefits that may come with it (Yong & Campbell, 1995). In Brazil, in the corporate market companies take the English proficiency test, 'Test of English for International Communication' (TOEIC) into account. Based on this test Brazilian business conglomerates review job applications as well as promotion opportunities (Fredrich, 2000). Furthermore, Lindley (2002) explores how fluency affects ethnic minorities in Britain, and it also affects their earnings. The study suggests that the earnings of the minorities depend solely on their fluency and grasp of the English language. The minorities include non-fluent and fluent ethnic male and women and the ones that get most neglected in the workplace or during the hiring process. Now, speaking of Britain, a study was conducted in England and Wales, and the results showed that in the employment market, the most important obstacle is the lack of

proficiency in the English language. The employment occurs in unexpected positions for these people that are not fluent in English or lack the expected fluency. Also, they are deprived of the proper paychecks regardless of their experience and qualifications (Schellekens, 2001).

2.3 Affective factors that lead to insufficient language proficiency for candidates in their student life

There are some affective factors that may lead to insufficient language proficiency among students from an early age of their lives. insufficient English is the main reason for the candidates who face difficulties in terms of job scenarios. In this section I will discuss the affective factors that may affect students' competency in English.

2.3.1 The role of anxiety

Mridha and Sheikh (2020) assessed the challenges that students or fresh graduates face anxiety in the early stages of language acquisition. They stated the data shows that most of the Bengali medium students have shyness in speaking English in front of a large audience. Besides, lack of confidence and their fluency has decreased in English classrooms. This shows that the negative aspects of anxiety are taxing these younglings in their second language acquisition. Hakuta, Butler and Witt (2000) explained that it takes 3-7 years to be proficient in the English Language. In our country students learn English for 12 consecutive years, yet many students find it difficult to communicate with others as well as lack their expected level of proficiency because in the advanced level teachers often use direct method instead of the grammar translation method that the students are more accustomed to, especially Bengali medium students. They also state that, Students lack the proper exposure of the targeted language in the classroom because of translating the targeted language in the native language. This harms the students' proficiency in the long term as they do not engage with their peers. Some students' language anxiety, according to Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), may be related to their perfectionist tendencies. They led to the realization that nervous students and perfectionists have several similarities, and that these similarities have the potential to make language learning difficult.

Khan and Chaudhury (2012) carefully analyzes the data from the Bangladeshi corporate scene and found that, half (50%) of the employers perceived that entry level job applicants such as fresh graduates and students who are applying for entry-level jobs are incompetent in

listening. Whereas almost 80% of the employers deemed that these applicants are incompetent in speaking, similarly 67% of the employers thought that the applicants are incompetent in writing, which indicated the incompetency of the candidates who are applying for entry-level jobs in every single one of the required language skills.

2.3.2 The role of code-switching

Firstly, according to a journal, Hughes (2006) mentioned that to code switch effectively, students must possess a high level of understanding of the 2 cultures. It suggests that the students that are using different language codes in their daily lives, need to have an expected level of proficiency to code-switch efficiently and avoid making mistakes. However, in Bangladesh students at the tertiary level may not have the necessary level of language proficiency in English or Bengali which could lead to ineffective code-switching and in the long term could affect the languages. It could ultimately lead to the decay of the language where the users of the language do not have the proper efficient knowledge of the language which passed on through future generations.

Furthermore, Nelay (2019) mentions that, in Universities or Colleges, young students are more contextualized in switching the code (p.1). This suggests that code-switching in Bangladesh is a very common phenomenon, and everyone has normalized it like having a cup of tea which means that students, teachers alike and almost everyone code-switch from time to time. Code-switching in Bangladesh has become a trend nowadays, so much so that students do it all the time, be it in social media platforms or be it classroom with their peers or teachers, be it during public conversations over a cup of tea or other beverages. Social conduct dictates that everyone may switch codes during a conversation, and it will go unnoticed. Students at the tertiary level are expected to be fluent in English. However, due to these overly normalized forms of code-switching they may lack proper language efficiency.

In a journal article Sert (2005) points out that, the teachers' use of code switching is not always performed consciously, which means that the teacher is not always aware of the functions and outcomes of the code-switching process (paras. 6-7). Which suggests that the teachers are not always aware of sudden usage of code-switching in their utterances. In Bangladesh's context teachers may often use tag switching where they may ask a tag question in another language after saying a complete sentence in the other language. In these instances, teachers are quite unaware of the code-switching. Also, because of the normalization of code-switching in our

community it can be said that these switches almost always go unnoticed and are not given much thought. However, this could indicate the lack of knowledge among the students due to the frequent use of code-switch.

In her study Tasnim (2018) observed that while communicating in class, Bangladeshi students from tertiary level switch codes just like they do in regular life (p.1). Which suggests that the students that are in the tertiary level use code-switch in the classroom just like they do in their regular life. At the tertiary level, teachers use the direct method because at this level students are expected to be fluent in their second language. However, if the students keep code-switching in the classroom just like they do in their regular life, then the purpose of direct method may be compromised, and students may find themselves not on the expected level of language proficiency.

2.4 Research Gap:

In the discussions above, it is apparent that almost all the sources confirm the necessity and importance of English competency in candidates applying for a job in the current market. The researchers pontificated about the English competency and its importance in the Job sector. However, the researchers overlook the issue as to what causes the incompetency among the candidates that are looking for a job in the current market. The researchers also overlooks that the candidates' incompetency links back to their failure to achieve the expected proficiency level as a student. Where in Bangladesh learners concentrate on English for 12 consecutive years, it is important to look into the issues and the factors that are causing the incompetency at an earlier stage of their lives. While the researcher does touch upon the issues regarding the candidates' anxiety, they do not mention the long-term effects of the said anxiety and how it leads to insufficient language learning from an early age. The researchers also somewhat neglect the fact that Bangladesh is a bilingual country and the use of code-switching in a students' daily life can also hamper the achieved level of proficiency among candidates which makes it harder for them to compete with the current demand of the job market. Thus, in the papers, researchers only perceive the insufficiency in one dimension where they do not connect the dots between the insufficiency in the second language, where it begins and how it affects the candidates in their corporate lives.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

In this chapter I have discussed the methodology of this paper including the research design, data collection procedure and data analysis. This section also includes the tools that were used to collect the necessary data for the research as well as the implications of the said data, managing the research. Here, the research and gathering of suitable data to support the claim of this paper are all done to address the research questions of the paper. To find relevant data and answer my research questions I have opted to use a specific research design.

3.1 Research Design

I have conducted my research using the ‘Qualitative method’. In that regard, for this research I believe qualitative method will help me better analyze opinion and experience of the participants. To delve deep into the reason why English speakers excel more in the corporate market as opposed to the non-English speakers. In their early stages of English learning students lack the necessary level of proficiency which is why for this paper I would need to analyze their opinion. Furthermore, I would also need the interview fresh graduates in need of a job in order to comprehend the importance of the current market requirement when it comes to English proficiency. Also, interviewing these candidates will help me understand the challenges they faced while communicating in English and what prohibited their language competency. While asking them structured questions I would acquire a collective answer to the ‘how’ and ‘why’ question of the research topic. Therefore, upon asking the interview candidates specific question I would receive an honest opinion about their experience and struggles while acquiring the competency which was not possible if the research were to be conducted using the ‘Quantitative method’. Moreover, quantitative method would refrain from giving an eloquent overview of the importance of English in the current job market as well as provide generic ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers. Hence, qualitative method is the more suitable method for this paper.

3.2 Research Questions:

To achieve the goal of this case study in the paper I came up with these research questions below –

i) How candidates are perceiving the difficulties regarding the necessity of English competency during employment process?

ii) How employers are perceiving the importance of English during the screening process?

iii) What factors are restricting fresh graduates' from securing a high paying job due language incompetency?

3.3 Participants:

To conduct the interviews required for this research I chose students from Bengali medium as well as English medium. There are 3 Bengali medium students and 3 English medium students with secondary level of proficiency. I meticulously chose students Bengali medium students who have admitted their struggle to communicate in English. Moreover, in order to understand the importance of English in the job market where they are screening of employees based on their ability to communicate in fluent English, I would also be interviewing 2 fresh graduates and 2 employees from a reputed corporate company who have first-hand experience of the said screening process.

3.4 Overview of Participants

Serial no	Name of the participants (Pseudonyms)	Highest Educational Qualification	Occupation
1	Akib	B.B.A.	Unemployed
2	Salman	M.B.A.	Job Holder
3	Asif Ali	B. Sc in C.S.E.	Unemployed
4	Anonno	Secondary	Student

5	Ifaz	Secondary	Student
6	Sameeha	Secondary	Student
7	Maliha	O Level	Student
8	Nusrat	O Level	Student
9	Radiya	O Level	Student
10	Mahinur	B.A. in English	Job Holder

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Collecting data for this research was met with challenges that were introduced by the ongoing pandemic of the time. In that regard, the key findings of this paper are related to students' personal experience in the job market. However, due to COVID-19 face to face interviews were not an option for obvious safety reasons. Which is why the researcher had to be innovative and conduct the interviews through multiple online platforms to ensure the safety of the participants and the researcher as well. Therefore, the interviews were conducted using zoom, google meet. For some participants ensuring a steady internet connection was not possible. For them, the interviews were conducted over the phone and transcribed at the same time. Moreover, to conduct the interviews, I first needed to get the participants' consent, preferable timings and setting. After that, because of the interviews being semi-structured I prepared open ended questions related to this research. In that regard, after the ice-breaking session, I asked them questions about their experience in the English classroom as well as their accessibility to courses that cater to language skill development. Furthermore, the relevant candidates were asked about their experience in the job interviews and how incompetency in English and their anxiety affected that experience. Also, relevant participants were asked questions relative to their significance in this research. For example, fresh graduates were asked questions about the job market and its structures, whereas students of the Bengali and English medium were not asked about it since they do not have any experience in that regard.

3.6 Data Analysis

Since the study is about to find out the circumstances of knowing English for the job holders in terms of Bangladesh, I had to be more watchful to select the participants. So as a researcher, firstly I followed my research questions which might help me to create more needful steps to find out the answers. According to this study, I need to explore the current situation of job condition and requirements for the people who are searching for their preferable positions in terms of Bangladesh.

First, I had to find out eligible participants who can provide me the exact information which is related to this study, therefore I searched for the people who are fresh graduates and searching for Jobs. Moreover, people who have experienced several job interviews, so that they can share their ups and downs while searching for a job and the role of English as a language for the jobs. Furthermore, I selected a few students from both Bengali and English medium background. I had to contact with some of my relatives and friends to find out the participants for the interviews. Furthermore, I took all my participants' consent about their participation. I started the interviews with a friendly ice-breaking session so that my participants can be comfortable with the topic and give proper information. I tried to avoid direct questions which could make them confusing and feed them the answer. Which is why, the questions were structured to adhere to the research questions and the answer from the participants were genuine and unaltered. After that, I inquired about their educational background so that I can get a little hint about their proficiency in English which is related to my research. This is how I continue the whole interview sessions step by step. Moreover, sometimes I need to change and modify my questions according to participants' responses.

During the interviews, I kept notifying about the stressed words and important answers from the participants while taking interviews. Also, since some of the interviews were taken in Bangla as per the participants' preference, I had to translate them into English immediately to keep notes of the important parts. From each interview, I found some similar responses from the participants and then I code those words and put them into one categorize. I carefully noted down the exact point view of each interview to find out the answers I need for my research questions. This is how this research leads to the findings part. Moreover, the 'findings' part will be showing the coding from the interviews elaborately. Next, it will relate to the scholars' opinions in the part of discussion.

3.7 Ethical Issues

For this research purpose ethical structures were strictly followed. This research is a real work, and all information is personally collected. Pseudonyms were used for participants' names. The participants were also assured that their personal details, credentials, and any potentially sensitive information will not be included. I asked each and everyone of the participants whether they take any issue for being recorded. Those who agreed to be recorded, were assured that no one would listen to the recording beside me. Collection of the raw information without any hesitation.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter the opinions of each individual participants are analyzed and carefully evaluated. The answer to the questions asked in the interviews are further discussed analyzed and recorded in this segment. Furthermore, the researcher tried to understand the interviewees' personal opinions and how it relates to the research context. The findings of the data are discussed in this section in different subsections adhering to their subject matter.

4.1 Importance of English: How Employers Perceive Language Competency

Students shared their opinions regarding the importance of English and how they are trying to meet the requirements of the future job market. Whereas fresh graduates state the very importance of English in the job sectors and how modern corporate companies are going out their ways to ensure that all their employees are able to communicate and complete day to day tasks using the globally accepted English language. Upon being asked employees who have had the experience to work at a multinational corporate setup speaks of the urgency of speaking and communicating in English. In Bangladesh students from a very young age start to acquire the English language. When asked, Akib who has completed his bachelor's in business administration and is currently in the lookouts for a job said, "Having good command in English for some companies is even more important than good grades". If we look into this statement than we can understand the gravitas of English language speaking skills in the job sectors as well as the struggles of fresh graduates regarding it. In Bangladesh, unemployment has soared through the roofs where most of the candidates seeking a job comes from Bengali medium and their level of language proficiency does not match the expected level. Like Akib, Asif Ali has also completed his bachelor's in computer engineering mentioned of his struggles regarding job hunting. Asif comes from a rural part of Bangladesh, where good grades are being prioritized more than good command of English. Thus, Asif explained his one-year long unemployment by speaking of the priority of fluency in English and how the lack of this fluency can lead to unemployment in Bangladesh. Asif stated, "In Bangladesh the people from the rural area suffer due to unemployment because of lack of language competency." This further solidifies Akib's claims about English being more important than good grades and paints a clearer picture of the importance of English in the current job market and how the candidates lack the proper competency to meet that requirement. Furthermore, Salman, an active recruiter said, "When we accept applications for a job opening and receive thousands of resumes, we first look for the language proficiency level mentioned, if any. We tend to favor candidates

who studied from a private university” This statement goes to show that employers investigate fresh graduates’ resume and look for key defining skills just to call them for interviews. English competency is one the key factors that employers and interviewers look for in a candidate.

4.1.1 English as an International language: Importance of English in Multinational Companies

Over the years English has become the key language to communicate globally. Hence, giving it an international language status. In multinational companies where they may have to communicate with clients overseas and hold important business-related meetings where the primordial language that is used is English. Salman, who has worked at a multinational company for 3 years said, “We do not need an over-achiever who cannot complete tasks and communicate with fluent English and co-operate with the team, we need a capable candidate who is able to express their thoughts through fluent English”. Now, globally English is seen as a standard of basic communication and it is important for the multinational companies to cope up with the global needs and make sure that they only hire those employees who can communicate with the team and be a team player. Which further indicates the importance of English as it is deemed as an international language. In Mahinur’s words, “It is important for recruiters to only hire candidates who have professional level of English fluency, otherwise the candidate is not even considered for interview let alone the position.” This statement further explains that multinational companies look for language competency rather than academic grades or academic achievements.

4.1.2 English as a versatile language: How it is utilized in the job market

English is a versatile language as it can be used to execute any tasks efficiently and accurately. With the growing modern technology communication has become easier than before and the use of English has spread all over the world as an industrial language. It is used in meetings; it is used in official documents. Some companies even prompt their employees to communicate in English whilst in the office premise, instead of their mother tongue so that the communicative framework can be developed further. In order to meet the global expectations companies even local companies are pushing hard to make sure that communicative skill in English is incorporated in their infrastructure. Furthermore, it also indicates how an employee who is not capable of conducting basic tasks in English may be let go because they do not take part in fulfilling company’s vision and goals. Hence, the fresh graduates or candidates who comes from Bengali medium background may struggle a lot as opposed to the candidates who

are from English medium backgrounds as the level of language exposure is higher for English medium students compared to Bengali medium students. Maliha confessed that, “We have learnt to communicate in English from an early age, so I don’t think speaking and communicating in English is difficult” This confession comes from an English medium student who states the versatility of English if EFL learners are exposed to a great deal of it from an early age. Furthermore, Mahinur explained, “In the workplace we are abruptly called on to meetings that include international clients and employees, which is why it is very important to articulate your thoughts through fluent English otherwise you are seen as a mediocre employee.” In that regard, English is utilized as a key communicative tool in multinational companies, and it is important to maintain the expected level of language proficiency.

4.2 Increasing the priority of English in Job sectors in terms of Bangladesh

In job sectors of Bangladesh English has already become the key defining factors in the screening process. In order to better incorporate the job market of Bangladesh with the global job market it is important to raise the importance of English. While speaking to the participants who are employed in multinational corporate companies, the researcher found out that to ensure lower subsidiary than international standards, companies often neglect the fluency regarding candidates’ English language. English speaking people may ensure a better salary in the global labor market as opposed to non-English speaking people in the job environment. On the other hand, multinational companies operating in Bangladesh goes out of their way to only hire employees that are competent in the second language by introducing aptitude test, adherence test, structured interviews, language test. In some cases, companies may also require a competency certificate such as IELTS score. So, it can be said that job market favors the English-speaking people more than the non-English speaking people. As Mahinur mentions, “in order to secure my position in the company I had to take a test in English as well as submit a full cover letter explaining why I am suitable for the role in English” She also added that, “during the screening process one of the interviewers was a foreigner”. This implies the growing importance companies are giving towards English competency of the candidates.

4.3 Social aspects about English in Job environment:

In Bangladesh the society plays a very important role when it comes to language learning. There are certain aspects of socio-economic factors that inhibit the students’ language

learning at an early stage of their educational lives. This segment will discuss the participants' opinions about the role social pressure and economics played in language learning and how it transpired to the job environment.

4.3.1 Mockery or Bullying in terms of English speaking

In their early stages of language learning candidates were often bullied when they spoke or communicated in English that is semantically or grammatically incorrect. This bullying came from their peers in the forms of laughter and mockery towards the person trying to speak up in front of everyone. Instead of receiving constructive criticism from their peers, students often get bullied. In his words Ifaz said, "it was hard to speak up in front of the whole class because everyone feared that others will make fun of them". This statement indicates the problem of the English classrooms in our country's students. This creates anxiety among the students from an early age. Debilitating anxiety can prohibit a student from achieving the expected level of proficiency by limiting their communicative skills development. In other words, the society can greatly impact a students' language learning and in the long term may affect a candidates' career when it comes to the job environment. The growing anxiety among students from an early age translates into a less qualified candidate in the job market who is less competent than an English-speaking candidate who can communicate fluently in English and can express their valuable thoughts in company meetings.

On the other hand, candidates applying for a job also face mockery or bullying during interviews regarding their English competency. Mahinur said, "In an interview I once accidentally spilled a Bengali word while speaking in English and the HR manager laughed and asked if I would feel comfortable if the interview was conducted in Bengali" This sort of mockery in the job market as a reaction to a subconscious code-switching by a candidate can deeply demotivate them when attempting to get a job. Therefore, with this statement it is apparent that in Bangladeshi society students and candidates are bullied and mocked because of their inherent low level of competency due to certain aspects of the society.

4.3.2 English is the smart way of communication: Employers' Perspective

Subsequently, participants also stated the smart aspects of communicating in English which is linked to their psychological beliefs. For example, Anonno said, "if we speak in English the listener subconsciously thinks that I am smart, and the smartness translates into the communication" The level of smartness associated with speaking fluent English can be traced back to the socio-economic aspects of Bangladesh where studying in English medium can be

considered as a symbol of social stature where studying in Bengali medium is a common phenomenon. Furthermore, Salman also stated, “it feels unsmart to be the only one to communicate in Bengali in front of English-speaking colleagues”. Thus, it further solidifies the association of smartness with language speaking effecting the psychological aspects of a candidate, which results in growing anxiety among students and candidates seeking a job to be ‘smart’ in front of their peers and colleagues. This growing anxiousness to present themselves as smart by taking to speak English also puts pressure on them because the communication has to be fluent and in order to be fluent in English one first needs to reach a certain level of language competency. Participants also stated that this expected level of competency is what eluded them in their language learning. Furthermore, Nusrat stated “it is also smarter to weave in some heavy English words while speaking in Bengali”. The statement also communicates the code-switching aspect in Bangladesh and how it limits the students’ language learning. In this case students contract severe lack in both languages. In other words, by frequently code switching, candidates may fulfill lack of one language with another one but in the long term they do have to face insufficient language learning. In that regard, Akib said, “because of speaking both of the language, sometimes it is easier to sneak in a Bengali word while speaking in English or vice-versa to completely get your thoughts across”. Therefore, among the participants’ responses it can be perceived that frequent code-switching does in a way effect the language learning and the effect transfers to both languages that are used to do the code-switch.

4.4 Difficulties faced in Speaking English:

To better understand the current incompetency when it comes to candidates’ language acquisition in the job market we should also investigate the difficulties and challenges that they face that inhibits the cognitive process of language learning. In this segment such difficulties faced by the aspiring students and candidates seeking a job while speaking English will be discussed.

4.4.1 Rural Dialects affects correct pronunciation:

When asked about the challenges faced by them due to their dialects, almost all Bengali medium candidates admitted that due to their dialects they did face a lot of challenges perfecting and achieving the correct pronunciations. Some of the participants said that they have their regional dialects by born, it affects their pronunciation while speaking English. For

example, Sameeha affirmed, “since I come from Sylhet, my Sylheti dialect does creep in when uttering the letter ‘k’ where it comes out as /kha/”. Sameeha’s difficulties uttering the letter ‘K’ is coded deep into her psyche because of her Sylheti inheritance. To get rid of this dialect issue students may need to practice and develop their speaking skills from an early age otherwise the dialect sticks with you all the way to your corporate life. In that regard, Asif stated, “to this day I am unable to pronounce Sh (/’Sa/) properly”, which also affects his accent while speaking English. Thus, the rural dialects may hinder the candidates’ ability to properly pronounce a word of the English dictionary. Moreover, rural dialects may also deem a candidate ‘unsmart’ in front of the interview committee, according to Mahinur. She stated that, “in an interview if a candidate lets their rural dialect out and pronounces words incorrectly then the board may reject or at least disregard the candidate altogether”. From this statement the importance of correct pronunciation can be acknowledged. One’s ability to pronounce a word correctly directly correlates to their ability to express their thoughts and ideas and improve communication among colleagues in a job environment. Consequently, students from an early age can work on their dialects otherwise it will stay with them in every stage of their educational and work life.

4.4.2 Poor base in English skill from the secondary education level:

In addition to that, when the participants were asked about their base in English language skills and what affected it, most of them replied that in their school and college life due to the educational infrastructure they were not given the opportunity to develop their skills further academically unless they worked on it on their own. For instance, Ifaz said, “in our English classroom the teacher only follows the book and reads out from it and then translates the key points in Bengali so that we can understand the subject matter”. This hints towards the use of GTM or Grammar Translation Method in the secondary level, where the teacher uses the translation method to just complete the academic syllabus and does nothing else to further develop the students’ communicative skill or any other language skill for that matter. In fact, the way our national education board has structured English language acquisition in the secondary level of the education, it is apparent that not all the language skills are the focus. Also, students are not assessed in all the language skills which also questions the washback effect of Secondary School Certificate assessment. The lack of proper exposure of the target language is the reason why participants like Ifaz and Sameeha struggled to develop their English language skills from secondary level of education.

On the other hand, Radiya stated, “in our classrooms we are encouraged to speak in English from an early age, so we communicate with our friends in English in the classroom and it is fun”. This statement comes from a student of the English medium, which indicates that the students of the English medium are exposed to the target language from an early stage of their language acquisition. Furthermore, the proper exposure to the target language also helps the students to achieve a better base in English language compared to the students of Bengali medium.

4.4.3 lack of grammar

Furthermore, when asked, participants also voiced their concerns regarding the grammatical mistakes that they made. Nusrat explained, “while writing I would make a lot of grammatical mistakes which made me afraid to write in English”. The statement indicates the students’ anxiety weaving into their grammatical skill causing them to feel unsure of themselves while speaking or writing. Also, Salman mentioned, “my biggest fear is grammar, as I make a lot of grammatical mistakes”. Lack of grammar can originate from the lack of proper language exposure from an earlier stage of their lives. Which suggests that students’ debilitating anxiety regarding grammar can be traced back to the insufficient language learning in ESL classrooms. To correct their grammatical mistakes candidates must practice the grammar and to do that, candidate need to work on it from the primary level. However, Salman’s claims of making a grammatical error being his biggest fear suggests that candidates are not given the proper opportunities to hone their grammatical skills.

4.5 Extra tuitions for speaking Course:

Afterwards, upon discussing all their challenges and difficulties as well as the affective factors regarding the lack of proper exposure to the target language, Bengali medium participants were asked for the reasons not to pursue studies in English medium. To which, Anonno answered. “Studying in English medium was pricy as the tuition fees were way higher than Bengali medium”. Anonno’s claims somewhat suggests that due to the higher tuition fees, studying in English medium where students may get proper exposure to the target language, is seen as a privilege not everyone can afford. Which is indictive of the education system where one medium of learning provides more language exposure than the other one.

Furthermore, when Akib and Asif were asked for a reason to not enroll themselves extra language teaching courses such as coaching centers that specializes in language learning such as 'Saifur's', 'Mentors', 'FM Method' etc. They both answered similarly by stating that the overbearing price tag of such courses that could have given them better grasp of the English language and helped them out of their unemployment status is the only reason why they didn't pursue that route. On the other hand, Salman stated, "I did try taking the language course offered by Saifur's but at this age it was difficult to work with this". Salman's statement proves that after the initial age of language learning the cognitive process that is responsible for acquiring new language fails to work as intended. In other words, after a certain age language learning becomes tough for the candidates which is why the fresh graduates who lack the expected level of second language proficiency struggles to get a better paying job as opposed to the candidates who have a good grasp of English language.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter is dedicated to talk about the findings and how it correlates to the resources from scholars and articles. In this section the research questions and the qualitative data will be discussed briefly to better understand the outcome of the research. Here, the participants' opinions will be discussed, and where the researcher tried to give his own views and recommendations whenever required.

5.1 Different Scenarios Between English speakers and Non-English Speakers in the Job Market:

Participants who were fresh graduates or were employed at a company shared their experience during the hiring process. In all those shared experience the scenarios were different. Candidates who had good grasp of the English language or were from English medium backgrounds were given precedence over those who had a lower proficiency in English. In the job market from the get-go the HR manager while screening through all the applicants' cv or resume immediately screens out the applicants who have lower levels of English proficiency. Furthermore, the fluency is also checked in the interview sessions where if the candidates let out some of their regional or local dialects then they are faced with mockery and humiliations. In other words, those who have perfect English fluency are considered as 'smart' candidates, whereas those who speak in regional dialects are considered 'village people' or 'unsmart'. This indicates that candidates are judged on their smartness by the level of the English fluency and proficiency in the job market. Having said that, English medium students are exempted from this horrible experience. Students from English medium are exposed to the language in early stages of learning, which is why their communicative skills are further developed than the ones that are less exposed. For example, the Bengali medium participants have testified that they learned English through Grammar Translation Method (GTM). In his article Peters (1934), urges that GTM is not the appropriate method of language teaching because of its focus on memorizing and imitating than reading and learning. On the other hand, participants from English medium informed that they learned the language through Direct Method (DM) as well as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In that regard, the proper exposure and practice of the language made English medium students more proficient and more fluent in English. That is why students who come from English medium background find it easier to secure a better paying job than students from Bengali medium background.

5.1.1 Discrimination Towards the Minorities:

Furthermore, like discussed in the previous section, non-English speakers are discriminated in the job market where every corporate organization is competing in terms of hiring better employees. Tannok (2008) mentioned that, in Bangladesh minorities may get discriminated against due to their different dialects. Furthermore, non-English speaking women may also be discriminated against as opposed to non-English speaking men. In his interview, Asif provided evidence regarding this where his dialect is the barrier that limited his capabilities to secure a job in the job market. This suggests that, with different dialects candidates may struggle to land a better paying job. However, the evidence of this occurring for the candidates who are from Bengali medium background as opposed to the candidates who are from English medium background. Again, due to their proper exposure to the target language, English medium students can get rid of their regional or local dialect and acquire proper fluency of the English language. In that regard, minorities such as students who are from tribes that reside in the hill parts of Bangladesh who have a completely different dialect may also find it very difficult to survive in the current job market where these dialects are seen as insufficient language proficiency. Tannok (2008) also mentions that employment occurs for these candidates in unexpected positions in the corporate world. Furthermore, Lindley (2002) also explores the discrimination against ethnic minorities who are not proficient in English are neglected in the job market of Britain. Similarly, according to Asif's statements the job market in Bangladesh is no different in singling out the lack of proficiency and fluency of English speakers who come from ethnic minorities.

5.1.2 Socio Economical Aspects:

In their interviews most of the participants also mentioned the smartness that is associated with English speaking. In that regard, employers also take heed to the fact that the candidate who can speak fluently in English as well as communicate their expression proficiently in English are 'smart'. In their paper Khan and Chaudhury (2012), mentions that employers want, "smart and English-speaking employees" which suggests that smartness is in fact associated with proficiency of the English language. Salman, one of the interview participants also mentioned that, in their organization they do not want candidates who present themselves as 'unsmart' and incompetent. Which indicates that without proper proficiency it is difficult for non-English speakers or English speakers to secure a good enough job in the

current market. Furthermore, Khan and Chowdhury (2012) also analyzed Bangladeshi corporate scene and found out that half (50%) of the candidates who are applying for entry level jobs and are fresh graduates and are incompetent in English language which indicates to their lack of 'smartness' and therefore, deem them unfit to be employed in those organizations. In other words, to be employed and secure a good remuneration package a candidate must also be proficient and competent enough in the English language. Otherwise, good grades or renowned institutions can only help them so much. Moreover, being a smart candidate would require them to be able to express themselves in English and better articulate their thoughts in the workplace.

In that regard, achieving the required level of proficiency is a must for the candidates. However, for Bengali medium students it is difficult to do because of the higher expenses that is associated with extra language teaching courses. When asked Akib and Asif both referred that the price that is put on extra language learning courses such as English teaching course from Mentor's, Saifur's and many more, is hefty and not everyone can afford them. Furthermore, these extra courses are also taught by using the grammar translation method. Which is why economically speaking, language competency is not accessible for a lot of candidates who are struggling to find jobs in with the current demand.

Furthermore, studying in English medium from an early age is also seen as a luxury only a small percentage of Bangladeshi families can afford. The price put on English medium schools' and colleges' tuition fee is outside of the reach of a student who comes from a middle-class family. To which Anonno, another participant did testify that English medium tuition fees are higher than Bengali medium, and it is difficult and to some extent impossible for parents who have a moderate salary to be able to bear that high price tag for their children's learning. Moreover, the lack of importance put into English learning from an early age is what that creates this cycle where parents are unable to secure a better paying job and therefore, becoming unable to pay for their children's tuition fees. Anonno expressed this concern while asked for a reason for not choosing English medium in their preliminary stages. Afterall, candidates' competency in English determines the earnings and status of the job that they may secure. (Roshid & Chowdhury, 2013). This competency is not assured by the national educational curriculum where students learn English for 12 consecutive years and still find themselves lacking the expected level of proficiency and therefore, struggle to find a better paying job in the future. Having said that, Bangladesh's economic status can also be questioned here where education is almost treated as a competition and the usage of GTM from preliminary

level up until the intermediate level is probably what limits Bengali medium student's learning capabilities while acquiring the language. In other words, CLT as well as DM should be used to teach language from an early age where students can learn to better express their thoughts in the target language and become exposed to it so that their expected level of proficiency is achieved. EFL learners who are studying in English medium are more proficient and competent in the English language than EFL learners studying in Bengali medium. In our country we need to consider that how many graduates can we employ and how many of them are proficient enough to meet the demand of the job sectors. (Billah, 2021). Therefore, the 'smart' aspect that is associated with language competency and fluency is what creates a social constraint in Bangladesh where studying in English medium is deemed as 'smart' and a symbol of social stature. Whereas, studying in Bengali medium and having a regional dialect is considered as 'unsmart'.

5.2 Insufficient Language Learning for Candidates Seeking a Job: The Responsible Factors

Upon interviewing the participants, the language learning is insufficient. Despite of learning English for 12 consecutive years, Bengali medium students lack the level of proficiency when it comes to the job sector. Khan & Chowdhury (2012) explained that 80% of the employers deemed fresh graduates or candidates that are applying for entry level jobs are incompetent in speaking English. Similarly, 67% of them are incompetent when it came to their writing skills. Also, employers estimated that the higher percentage of the applications are from students of the Bengali medium. This language insufficiency and the key factors that played a part in it from an early age of a student is something to consider when explaining the incompetency among fresh graduates or candidates seeking a job in the current market.

5.2.1 Debilitating Anxiety Making its Way Up to the Workplace

Participants were asked questions about their behaviors in the ESL classroom and almost all the Bengali medium students provided answers that supports the idea of negative anxiety affecting their second language acquisition in the long term. Furthermore, the students also expressed the shyness as well as insufficient language proficiency because of their language anxiety taking away their ability to work on the communicative skills. Negative anxiety is categorized as debilitating anxiety. Ifaz indicated that it was hard for him to speak in the classroom or take part in any communicative language learning for the fear of being made

fun of. This statement supports Mridha and Sheikh's (2020) findings about Bengali medium students being afraid of using English in front of large classroom or a large audience. This is because of their anxiety and the fear of being bullied in EFL classrooms by their peers. This suggests that anxiety in the long run can affect the students' competency level where it can also limit their learning and leave important language learning skills such as speaking and listening under-developed. Therefore, this anxiety is taxing the students from an early age where the classrooms failed to implement CLT and instead bullying and mockery fills its place, increasing the anxiety level among students. This anxiety led to insufficient language learning and therefore completes the cycle by leaving these students as incompetent candidates seeking jobs in the current job market. Researchers talk about the classroom activities and how it affects the students when acquiring English as a second language. However, they do not explain how this anxiety affects fresh graduates seeking a job with lower-than-expected level of proficiency. In that regard, when students are not proficient in second language, it leads them not to attend in such activities related to second language learning. Lacking in fluency and proficiency makes the students more nervous, this nervousness limits their language learning to a great deal and when these students are graduated and are looking for a job, it limits their language competency and ability to secure a job in the current corporate sector. However, some sort of academic anxiety is positive for the students as it pushes them to perform well in the classroom and seek knowledge but in Bangladesh the fine balance is not found in English classrooms where students can use their anxiety to push themselves toward language learning and in terms develop their language learning skills.

Furthermore, Ifaz a student of the intermediate level spoke of this anxiety in his interviews and that shows from an early stage the nervousness is deeply seeded into students' psyche. Also, Asif, a fresh graduate mentioned in his interview that the employers tend to purposefully make the candidates nervous during the job interviews to test their pressure handling skills. Those who already suffer from debilitating language anxiety does horribly in these pressure tests resulting in their rejection for that job. Moreover, in the educational curriculum there isn't many elements that could help the Bengali medium students to cope up with this anxiety and help them achieve the expected level of competency. In other words, candidates are limited by their anxiety in the current job market. The anxiety is the sole reason for language incompetency among fresh graduates which leads to their unemployment because it does not cater to the requirements of the current job market.

5.2.2 Code-Switching Becoming a Regular Phenomenon

Bangladesh is a bilingual country and that means that its citizen speaks two different languages. English and Bengali are the languages that are spoken in the country. From an early age children acquire L1 or the mother-tongue Bengali. On the other hand, English is taught in the educational curriculum. However, in Bangladesh students tend to do code-switching while uttering a complete sentence. This code-switching is done to fill in the gaps in the candidate's language proficiency. In the job market where interviews are held in complete English, code switching can provide the opportunity of mockery which can demotivate the candidates to a great deal. In Mahinur's case that is exactly what happened when she subconsciously code-switched and uttered a Bengali word to complete the sentence, which lead to mockery from the side of the interviewer. Now, to further look into this subconscious code-switching by students and job candidates, we may need to look in the issue of what prompts code-switching. Hughes (2006) suggested that students must possess high level of proficiency in of the two languages to proficiently code-switch between the two. When this expected level of proficiency is not met, the outcome is incompetency in both the languages where the code-switching is not a choice but a subconscious effort to fill in the gaps in the user's language proficiency. Incomplete language proficiency can occur due to various reasons from an early stage of a student's academic career. Nelay (2019) compares code-switching as a fashion like drinking a cup of tea in Bangladesh, which suggest the normalization of this habit and how it subconsciously becomes the right thing to do for students of the EFL classrooms while communicating with each other in English. In social media platforms students often use code-switching to better convey their expression, this also translates into their EFL classroom. Therefore, this code-switching habit from an early age that was made normal by the society effects candidates as they appear for job interviews that are conducted completely in English and 'accidentally' using Bengali to fill in the vocabulary gap in a sentence is frowned upon.

In that regard, in EFL classrooms of Bangladesh it is not only the students who code-switch subconsciously but also the teachers who take part in this activity unknowingly and because of the extended effect of society normalizing this phenomenon without giving it an ounce of thought. Sert (2005) pointed out, that the code-switching done by the teachers is not always performed consciously. Which suggests that like students and all other members of the society, teachers also use code-switching. Hence, further condoning the act of using two languages in a single utterance. Furthermore, due to the normalization of code-switching these random switches go unnoticed and therefore, in the long run led to insufficient language

learning. This insufficiency can translate into underdeveloped language skills such as speaking, writing and reading, it can also affect candidates' ability to fluently speak in English during a job interview. However, it is not to say that code-switching is a bad thing or is always have a negative impact, proper usage of it can lead to sufficient language learning for both languages, as well as increase language competency. Although, over-normalization of code-switching does affect candidates seeking a job and employees that are required to fluently communicate with international clients in the workplace.

Therefore, acknowledgement of code-switching in early stages of EFL classroom could help mitigate the frequent subconscious code-switching as well as learning efficient ways to completely use it to personal benefit and achieve language competency, teachers must also play their parts in educating the students about the impacts of frequent code-switching.

5.3 National Educational Curriculum's Role Translating to the Job Environment:

Researchers say that it requires 3-7 years to achieve complete language competency. Where in Bangladesh students learn English for 12 consecutive years and yet they lack the expected level of proficiency which affects their job life as they are marked as incompetent when it comes to English. The educational curriculum in Bangladesh teaches English through notebooks provided by the board where students are assessed based on their reading and writing skills. However, students are assessed on their listening or speaking skills. For 12 years students under the Bangladeshi national educational curriculum do not practice or try to communicate with their peers in English. This begs the question; how students will learn and in terms develop their core language learning skills if the curriculum does not provide a platform for them. These students are expected to graduate with this lack in their language development and then find a job on their own merit where in the job sector they are screened by their ability to speak fluent English. When asked, Sameeha, one of the participants replied that, she learned English mostly through TV shows, cartoons, and movies. She also admitted that she enacted her favorite scenes from popular shows and movies with her cousins and that's how she learned and practiced speaking English. This statement provides a picture as to how the educational curriculum and EFL classrooms are not equipped to develop the EFL learners' core language learning skills. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are intricately connected to each other (Pellegrino, 2010). In Bangladesh's context the curriculum is not designed to stress on all four skills. Instead, the curriculum focuses on reading and writing skills. The autonomy of the teachers is

not ensured through our national educational curriculum. Teachers do not get the necessary freedom in order to incorporate the teaching method of their choosing. Students also do not want to stray from the traditional ways which leads them to follow the footsteps of their predecessors. Which means students are not being assessed on all four skills, teachers are not being concerned about the students' acquisition of the second language. Which in the long-term lead to the students' lack in proficiency. These are the students that later suffer in the tertiary level because of the less exposure to the English language from early levels of proficiency, where teachers use mixed teaching including direct method, task-based language learning, project-based language teaching etc. instead of the traditional GTM method that the students are so accustomed to. The teachers are not focused on the students' language learning instead they treat the assessment as an achievement test where achieving the highest grade would entitle the student to be proficient which later prohibits students from achieving expected level of proficiency. Furthermore, this insufficiency only occurs for the Bengali medium students. On the other hand, English medium students are exposed to the target language from an early age which helps them to develop their language skills better as opposed to Bengali medium students.

Chapter 6: Limitations

This research was conducted in the time of the pandemic where conducting face to face interviews were a big challenge. Moreover, the interviews took almost 3 months to complete. Also, due to COVID-19 schools and educational institutions were closed which means the participants had to be found through different channels such as, friends, relatives, area familiarity etc. To better educate the participants about the topic several times to ensure that they understand the purpose of the research. Furthermore, since there were 10 interviews, scheduling them and when needed rescheduling them took the most time out the allocated research timeline. Also, since the pandemic restricted face to face interviews, I had to conduct the interviews remotely. However, due to unsteady network issues caused delays and unclear data which required a re do. Moreover, participants were nonchalant during the interviews due to the familiarity of the participants which meant that collecting meaningful information was difficult. In addition to that, an extended ice breaking session was needed to ease the participants into the interview.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The job sector in Bangladesh has evolved a lot throughout the years. In that regard, the job market has caught up to the rest of the world, which means that qualification only is not indicative of a good job. Now a days, fresher graduates go through a long phase of unemployment due to the thorough recruitment process the company follows. Although academic achievements do give a candidate an edge over the other applicants, it is apparent from this study that the necessity of English language fluency cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, due to the thematic analysis of the data provided by the learners and fresh graduates it can be said that the current job market is very demanding in terms of language competency and are reluctant to hire applicants who do not meet their expected level of competency. Job seekers tend to struggle with the screening process that is conducted completely in English. There are socio economical aspects attached to this incompetency. Moreover, candidates that do want to work on their competency level are discouraged because of the current educational curriculum's structure and how it is handled. This study showed that even if candidates are determined to improve their language competency it is hard to do so for some as Language courses are overpriced and out of limits for many who cannot afford them. In that regard, it is conclusive that where the job market has changed and caught up to the world, the education sector has failed to catch up to the western world in terms of language teaching.

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