

**A Comparative Study on Learning Styles of Bengali and English Medium Schools of  
Bangladesh**

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**Inspiring Excellence**

**BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

**A Comparative Study on Learning Styles of Bengali and English Medium Schools of  
Bangladesh**

**A Thesis**

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**Of**

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation. Other contributions are included in my thesis paper with the references. I declare that this paper has not published or submitted before in any university or in any other institutions.

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## **Abstract**

Every student has his/her a distinguished and unique learning style. Also the capacity of learning is different from each other. The core objective of this paper is to find out the differences between the learning style of students from English and Bengali medium schools. This research aims at exploring learning styles, effects and the practice of learning styles among the students. Around 73 students and 5 teachers participated in the survey. Data was collected through the observation of some classes. The result analyses the role of the teacher and learner, their interpersonal issue, classroom environment, classroom participation and teachers' attitude towards the student. Along with the study also includes teachers' opinion about the learning style by giving interview. The observation also aligns the classroom environment, communication system between the students and the teachers and their teaching techniques to understand the perspectives of learners.



## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This paper addresses the issue of learning style for the effective learners. The classroom environment, interaction between student to student and student to teacher also focused here. In order to ensure the effectiveness of teaching environments, it is important to take account of characteristics, abilities and experience of learners as individuals or as a group when beginning to plan a learning environment (Kemp, Morrison, Ross, 1998, p. 56). It is important for the effectiveness of teaching environments to take account of group or individual learners 'characteristics, competence and experiences (pre-learning) throughout the process of planning learning environments (Kemp, Morrison, Ross, 1998, p. 56). Teachers are not aware about learning style of a student which is necessary for a teacher to know that. Without knowing the learning style a teacher will not be able to teach properly and it is obvious that the student will not get the proper point. Already mentioned that every student prefers different learning style and it is by born. Sometime they do not understand the point because the teacher does not teach them according to their learning style. For example, a student is good at writing and another one is good at listening. The one who is good at writing, he/she is able to memorize by writing and the other is used to memorize by listening carefully. If the teacher does not give time to take notes or if he/she does not get to know what type of learner he/she is then there is no point of teaching.

Learning strategies are the specific mental and communicative procedures that learners employ in order to learn and use language (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 145). Weinstein and Mayer stated that the goal of learning strategies is to "affect the learner's motivational or affective state, or the way in which the learner selects, acquires, organizes, or integrates new knowledge" (p.

315). This research will compare learning styles of students from English and Bengali medium schools in Bangladesh.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter presents the theoretical aspects of learning style and strategy which includes the definition of learning style, its characteristics, effects and, importance.

#### **2.1 What Is Learning Style?**

Style refers to a pervasive quality in the learning strategies or the learning behavior of an individual, “a quality that persists though the content may change” (Fischer & Fischer, 1979, p. 245). In addition he mentioned learning style is a quality which remains in everyone in different perspective. It exposes through behavior. Through learning style one may easily embrace and it is easy to recollect what he or she is learning. It helps them to evoke or inspire what he or she has learned. According to Buell, learning styles depend on learning behavior and learning behavior depends on its nature. On the other hand, Keefe (1982) offers a commonly accepted definition of learning styles: “Learning styles are characteristically cognitive, affective and physiological behaviors that serves as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment” (as cited in Reid, 1987, p. 87). He also mentioned that students can learn more effectively through learning styles being addressed by the teachers. There are individual learning styles and each learning style has its different characteristics and they are operated by the teachers. Cornett similarly mentioned that a student picks their preferred learning style. In other words, “Learning styles are the general approaches- for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual- that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. These styles are the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior (Cornett, 1983, p. 9)

## 2.2 What Is Learning Strategy?

“Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p.8). As a result he mentioned that strategies are work as instruction which help students to make understand about the topic. Strategies make the learning process easier. Through strategies student are able to understand the content effectively.

Mayer described “the teaching of learning strategies involves decisions concerning what to teach, how to teach, where to teach, and when to teach. The teaching of learning strategies also depends on the teacher’s conception of learners as response strengtheners, information processors or sense makers” (Mayer, 1996, P.357). However he mentioned that strategies depend on a teacher’s basic generalization, how a teacher is going to teach, which method he or she is going to follow. Likewise Hsiao and Rebecca said that learning strategies enhance self-determination, engage the student to think or investigate and it helps to increase learners thinking ability (Hsiao & Rebecca, 2002, p.368). Karabanic and Collins assumed that learning strategies motivate students to learn something and they can give their best performance through learning strategy and most of they are successful to achieve their goals (Karabanic & Collins, 1997, p.332). On the other hand, Scarcella and Oxford referred as “Learning strategies are defined as specific action, behaviors, step or techniques- such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement tackle a difficult language task-used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p.63).

### 2.3 Types of Learning Styles:

Learning style is a kind of method by which student can learn or they can gain knowledge in different style. Learning style is different from each other. It varies from learners to learners. It is an ability to express the knowledge in a specific manner. There are four leading learning style- Visual learning style, Auditory learning style, tactile learning style and kinesthetic learning style.

**Visual Learners:** Visual learning is that learning process by which learners can learn through seeing, Observing or visualizing. Visual learners are those who are familiar to learn by observing with their own eyes. Through the observation they can recollect or memorize it. They can learn easily through diagrams, flowchart, pictures, cartoons and any kind of significant symbols. These help them to remember and they love different types of visual aids. They love to draw pictures portray their characters and they love to in field trips for being experience.

**Auditory Learners:** Auditory learners are good at listening. They learn or gather information creatively through sounds, lecture, group discussion and they can also even record the whole activities. They appreciate loud reading instead of writing because by reading loudly they can hear it. They are good at oral presentation rather than wiring assignment. Sometimes they teach others because by teaching they can listen more and more.

**Kinesthetic Learners:** Kinesthetic learners learn by doing, moving, acting, touching, smelling or participating. They are good at body or physical movement. They are good at making projects or anything which can be made by hands. They love different kinds of mysterious activities like-experimenting, exploring or investigating.

According to Reid there are four types of learning styles- visual learning style, auditory learning style, kinesthetic learning style and tactile learning (Reid, 1987, p. 89). Another author

named Simpson and Du he mentioned that there are four types of learning style- Diverging (concrete, reflective), assimilating (abstract, reflective), converging (abstract, active) and accommodating (concrete, active) (Simpson & Du, 2004, p. 123). There are four types learning styles also mentioned by Healey, Pauline and Bradbeer and - Concrete, reflective, abstract and active (Healey, Pauline & Bradbeer, 2005, p. 31).

**Diverging Learners** (Concrete): Diverging is also known as concrete. Diverging learners are preferred to watch or see instead of doing something. They are keen to gather or collect information and they love to talk with people openly and love to work with the group of people. “This experience is for those who enjoy being involved in a new experience and who might feel most comfortable with practical laboratory analysis, field work, working from observations and other visual stimuli including art and film” (Healey, Pauline & Bradbeer, 2005, p.31).

**Assimilating Learners** (Reflective): Assimilating learners depend on logic in every sector. They love to watch and think. Assimilating learners want clear and explanations, concepts or ideas. They want to connect everything logically and on the basis of theories. “Reflective observation is preferred by those who are comfortable watching others or developing observations about their own experience” (Healey, Pauline & Bradbeer, 2005, p.31).

**Converging Learners** (Abstract): Converging learners love to think technically and they prefer to solve their problem practically or by themselves. They can take their own decisions and choose practical theories or ideas. “Abstract conceptualization is about creating theories to explain observations and for these participants’ lectures; papers and arguments by analogy are appreciated” (Healey, Pauline & Bradbeer, 2005, p. 31).

**Accommodating Learners** (Active): They prefer to work with people and they believe on experience rather than logic. They always want to accept new challenges and experience. “Active experimentation involves activities such as using theories to solve problems and to make decisions and may include simulation exercises, case study and opportunity to work on projects” (Healey, Pauline & Bradbeer, 2005 p.31).

According to Matthews there are nine types of learning styles- social, independent, applied, conceptual, social/applied, social/conceptual, independent/applied, independent/conceptual and neutral preference (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Social:** Prefers extensive opportunities to interact with peers and instructors; has no strong preference for either applied or conceptual approaches; instruction involving small groups and team work will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Independent:** Prefers to work alone toward individual goal; has no strong preference for either applied or conceptual approaches; instructional techniques such as analysis of case studies or self-selected and self-paced programs will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Applied:** Prefers to work in activities directly related to real-world experience; has no strong preference for either social or independent approaches; instruction involving practicums; site visits, and team labs will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Conceptual:** Prefers to work with highly organized language-oriented materials; has no preference for either social or independent approaches; instructions involving lectures and reading will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Social/Applied:** Prefers to have opportunities to interact with students and instructors in activities closely approximating real-world experience; instruction involving role playing, group problem solving and supervised practicums will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p. 257).

**Social/Conceptual:** Prefers to have opportunities to interact with students and instructors using highly organized language-oriented materials; instruction involving a balance of lecture and discussion will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Independent/Applied:** Prefers to work alone toward individual goals in activities closely approximating real-world experience; instruction involving individual labs or unsupervised technical practicums will provide the closest match (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

**Independent/Conceptual:** Prefers to work alone toward individual goals with highly organized language-oriented materials; instruction allowing for independent reading, literature searches, and reviews will create the closest match (Matthews, 1991, P.257). Neutral preference: Tends to have no clear areas of strong preference; may find adequate match in any other type, but may also at times find it difficult to become entirely involved (Matthews, 1991, p.257).

According Charkins, O'Toole and Wetzel mentioned that there are three types of learning styles- dependent, collaborative and independent(Charkins, O'Toole &Wetzel, 1985, p.112).

**Dependent Learners:** A dependent learner is completely opposite of independent learners. A dependent learner is always dependent on someone else on his or her task. A dependent learner is quite introvert. Generally they do not want to get close to the people. They do not even think practically or logically. They are used to remember everything through memorization.

**Independent Learners:**An independent learner is one who is curious about knowing everything. They are able to work collaboratively as an active member. They learn from every side and corner.

Generally, independent learners are extrovert. They prefer to talk with various people and want to learn from them. They are self-motivated. Their motive is to achieve the goal. An independent learner is a critical thinker. They try to connect everything logically and if they face any problem they can come up with new solutions. They are hard workers. They do not give up easily. They try to handle all the situations and can play the role of leadership at any situation.

**Collaborative Learners:** In collaborative learning style a group of students work together to complete any task or project. If they face any problem everyone tries to find out the solution. Therefore, student can gather new information through collaborative learning.

## 2.4 Types of Learning Strategy:

According to O'Malley, Chamot and Kupper there are three types of learning strategies- Metacognitive strategy, Cognitive strategy and Social/affective strategy (O'Malley et al 1985, p.22).

**Metacognitive Strategy:** Metacognitive strategy is something which helps student to think. It increases students' thinking capacity. It helps student to learn or acquire something effectively. Metacognitive skills include the ability to identify and characterize the problem at hand, the ability to plan and schedule appropriate problem solving strategies, the ability to monitor and supervise the effectiveness the strategy and the ability to dynamically evaluate these operations in the face of success or failure so that termination of activities can be strategically timed" (O'Malley et al 1985, p.22). He tried to mention that metacognitive strategy helps student try to find out the problem.

**Cognitive Strategy:** According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), cognitive strategies are strategies that "reflect mental manipulation of tasks", such as practicing and analyzing, enable learners to

understand and produce new language by many different ways (p. 144). “Cognitive processing activities are those thinking activities that people use to process learning content. They lead directly to learning results in terms of knowledge, understanding, skill and so on” (Vermunt, 1996, p. 26).

**Social/Affective Strategy:** Social or affective strategy is something that how learners feel when they are learning. It is about how they are gaining or eliciting knowledge and the way they are responding. According to Vermunt, “Affective learning activities are directed at copying with the feelings that arise during learning, and lead to an emotional state that may positively, neutrally or negatively affect the progression of a learning process” (Vermunt, 1996, P.26).

Learning styles helps students to learn and also help teachers to know how students are learning or gathering information. Every student has his/her own learning style. Kazu referred that, “as learning style related to individual characteristics and preferences, learning style reflect the students’ preferences on how they perceive the environment, interact with this environment, react and learning experience in this process” (Kazu, 2010, p. 3265). He tries to say that learning style helps to show the image of student and it also helps the student to observe the environment. Learning style involves learners’ preferred ways to receive, process, and recall information during instruction which is related to learners’ motivation and information-processing habits” (Aragon, Johnson, and Shaik, 2002, p. 227). He claimed that learning style depends on students’ environment. How they perceive the knowledge and the way they are responding.

## **2.5 Effect of Learning Styles:**

Learning environment is the most important factor to know the learners learning style. In order to ensure the effectiveness of teaching environments, it is important to take account of

characteristics, abilities and experience of learners as individuals or as a group when beginning to plan a learning environment (Kemp, Morrison & Ross, 1998, p. 56). Students learn in different ways. A student can have more than one learning style. Some students are visual learners, while others are auditory or kinesthetic learners. According to Cuaresna, because of these learning styles, it is important for teachers to incorporate in their curriculum activities related to each of these learning styles so that all students are able to succeed in their classes. In order to help all students learn, we need to teach to as many of these preferences as possible (as cited in Gilakjani, 2011, p. 106). Learning style helps teacher to know the learning quality of his/her student. It is important for the effectiveness of teaching environments to take account of group or individual learners' characteristics, competence and experiences (pre-learning) throughout the process of planning learning environments (Kemp, Morrison & Ross, 1998, p. 56). After knowing the quality he/she will be able to follow the action to make understand of his/her student. It also helps a student to concentrate on his/her study. They will focus on their study based on their learning style.

## **2.6 Importance of Learning Style:**

It is an effective problem solver. It gives a basic idea of a person's learning style. They can recognize their own learning preferences. If a teacher gets to know the learning style of a student he/she will be able to connect with them very deeply and will be able to teach them very effectively. Without knowing a student's learning style a teacher can not give the best idea or can not motivate them to do their best. Learning style is essential in our everyday life especially for students' to success in their life which helps them to connect with the world or communicate with various people.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology. It is discussed about the nature of the research, participants, instruments, techniques and also the data collection procedure. The chapter will provide the survey question by which the researcher took the interview of students and teachers.

#### **3.1 Objective of the Study:**

The main purpose of the study is to examine compare the current practices of learning styles in the primary level of English medium and Bengali medium schools of Bangladeshi classrooms. In this regard, the study explores the teaching technique and learning style of students and teachers. It will also discuss about classroom environment, teachers opinion about learning style.

#### **3.2 Central Research Questions:**

The central research questions are the main focus area of this study. The aim of this research is to find out the possible answers of the following questions:

- a) Is there any difference between the overall the learning style of good learners and bad learners in English and Bengali medium schools?
- b) What are the differences between the good learners and poor learners while practicing English outside the classroom?

c) To what extent the principles of learning styles are practiced in the English medium and Bengali medium schools?

### 3.3 Significance of the Research:

The current study will be helpful for the students because they will be able to know their learning style and will be effective for them to learn and the teacher will realize its importance on classroom while teaching.

### 3.4 Participants

For classroom observation, the researcher observed five classes in four different schools of Bangladesh. All of the schools were situated in Dhaka city. The researcher observed two classes from one school and other three classes from another three schools. The level of class was suitable for study. Table 1 lists the total numbers and the average ages of the students of the classes.

Level of class	Number of students	Average age of students
I	5	7-8
III	12	9-10
IV	20	12-13
V	18	13-14
V	18	13-14

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

The data was collected from English medium and Bengali medium schools in Bangladesh. The researcher contacted with three English medium schools for the data collection procedure. The permission of the authority was found before the data collection process started. To observe the classes, the Principal of schools gave the researcher a fixed schedule. The researcher attended all the classes in the specific time period.

Before taking the interview the researcher observed the English class which was permitted by the principle. The interviews were conducted after the classes. Sometimes it was difficult to get the teachers' time as they were busy with their works.

### **3.6 Instruments:**

The following questionnaires were used as instruments (Appendix A and Appendix B) for the purpose of the study.

#### **Questionnaire for the Students:**

In students' questionnaire there are 12 questions. The students will have to make sure that they are agreed or disagree. By pointing out the question answer the researcher will find out the students learning style. It will show individual opinion of students' and how the students like to teach.

#### **Questionnaire for the Teachers:**

Teachers' questionnaire consisted of 11 questions. It will show how the teacher likes to teach in the class and their opinion towards the learning style.

### **3.7 Sampling of the Research:**

For the survey the researcher took interview of 73 students of English and Bengali medium schools and 5 teachers from 5 different schools in Dhaka. There were males and females also. All of the classes were English. The schools are:

- i) Australian International School
- ii) Singapore International School
- iii) Mount Harman School
- iv) Agrani International School
- v) Uttar Kafrul High School

For collecting data, the researcher had to choose five different English and Bengali medium schools from Dhaka. The researcher had to take permission from the principles. After that she had to take permission from the teacher whose class she observed for conducting the survey. The classes were held for 45 to 60 minutes. The researcher took 10-15 minutes from the class for providing the questionnaire to the participants and the teachers.

### **3.8 Limitation of the Study:**

The researcher did not face any obstacle while seeking permission from the Bengali medium schools whereas the researcher had to face some problem while seeking permission from the English medium schools. They did not allow to observe their class at first but later on they agreed and the researcher went to their school. This was the only obstacle faced by the researcher otherwise everyone was quite cooperative and respectful to the researcher.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings and Analysis**

The chapter is designed to analyse the findings of the research. The data were collected through the observation of some classes and the teachers' interview from different English and Bengali medium schools.

#### **4.1 Findings from Classroom Observation**

For classroom observation, the researcher chooses to observe junior classes from I- V. At first, the researcher observed class I and II of Bengali medium school which is located at Dhaka. Then, the researcher went to another three Bengali and English medium schools, and observed class IV and V. During the period of observation, the researcher noted down some important points and they are as follows while taking interview:

#### **4.2 Selection of Materials**

From the classroom observation, the researcher found that the material was only book in the Bengali medium school. There was no usage of slides or pictures. On the other hand, in the English medium schools there was usage of projector, computer, audio recording and physical movements beside books.

#### **4.3 Method of Learning**

In the Bengali medium there was no specific method of learning. The teacher as usual talking about the lecture and the students were listening but they were not so attentive. On the other hand though the teacher of English medium school did not completely follow the rules of learning style but they tried to take care of each and every student.

#### **4.4 Purpose of Reading and Learning**

In the Bengali medium class, since they were not so attentive so their only goal is to pass in the examination. Their purpose was not to learn or gain something because they were not reluctant to read or learn. On the other hand, the students of English medium were very aggressive about their task. They would love to do physically instead of listening their teachers' lecture. Their goal was to learn and apply those in practical situation.

#### **4.5 Effective Learners**

Most of the effective learners claimed that they would love to communicate in English fluently in the classroom and also outside the classroom. Their knowledge of vocabulary is vast. Whatever they learn they try to use or apply it. There is a reason behind being an effective learner. To be an effective learner classroom environment is always important. If the classroom is comfortable for the students then it will be easy to learn appropriately. They try to connect everything logically.

#### **4.6 Teachers' Role**

The teacher of English medium school is like an orchestra leader, directing and controlling the language behavior of her students. The teacher is also liable for providing students with a good model for imitation. Teacher only creates an environment for interconnecting with target language group. Therefore, the role of the teacher is as demonstrator because the teacher demonstrates the meaning of words through the use of pictures; they never transform it into the students' native language. The teacher is the partner of the students. Teachers interact with the students a lot, asking them questions about relevant topics and trying to use the grammatical structure of the day in the conversation. The teacher can be also the monitor of the students.

#### 4.7 The Teachers' Responses Based On the Research Questions (Interview Responses)

First question of the interview with the five teachers from three different institutions revealed that all the teachers were not considered learning style as an effective method to increase the students' learning capability. One of them commented that because of short time and the lengthy syllabus it is quite impossible for the teachers to know each and every student's learning style but they agreed that it will be a very helpful process to learn effectively. The students should read how they love to learn and as well parents also should help them. Moreover, a teacher mentioned that "parents need to help students to know their learning style as they spent their most of the time at home and they should encourage them to know how they love to learn". However, the teachers of Bengali medium claimed that most of the students read just for pass in the exams.

#### 4.8 Findings from Teachers:

1. I prefer where there is something to look at:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	2	40
No	3	60

The teachers were asked if they like to show pictures, cartoons or movies while teaching in the class. The data shows that, 60% teachers do not like to show something on board while teaching and 40% teachers like to show while teaching.

2. I prefer where students can do something practical:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	3	60
No	2	40

The data shows that teachers were asked whether they like to do something practically which is related to their lectures. In that case, 60% teachers like to teach practically and 40% teachers do not like it.

3. I prefer someone to explain it:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	4	80
No	1	20

The groups of teachers were asked when learning a new skill do they prefer someone to explain how to do it. The data reflects that 80% teachers like to hear the explanation by the students and 20% teachers do not do that while teaching.

4. I prefer to watch how to do it:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	4	80
No	1	20

The data shows that teachers were asked do they prefer to watch how to do it by the students. In that situation 80% teachers like to see practically from the students whether they learning or not and 20% teachers do not want to see it.

5. I provide very clear guidelines:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	5	100
No	0	0

The given data reveals that teacher was asked do they provide clear guidelines or not. In that case 100% teachers always like to provide clear guidelines.

6. I give written instruction:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	3	60
No	2	40

When the teachers were asked if they give written instruction to the students or not 60% teachers said that they like to give written instructions and 40% teachers responded negatively on the subject of written instructions.

## 7. Give time to take notes:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	3	60
No	2	40

In the table survey we can see that, teachers were asked whether they give enough time to students to take notes or not. In this situation 60% teachers like to give time to take notes and 40% teachers did not agree that they do not want to give time.

## 8. Give concrete examples:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	3	60
No	2	40

Through the study the teachers were asked whether they give real life examples to make the lecture easy or not. The data reveals that 60% teachers like to give practical examples when they try to make it understand and 40% teachers responded negatively that they do not give examples while teaching.

## 9. Ask students to make posters, cartoons:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	4	80

No	1	20
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In the survey we can see that teachers were asked do they allow students to make posters or cartoons to make them creative. In that case 80% teachers like to make variety of materials by the students and 20% do not like to do that.

10. Ask student to repeat or paraphrase:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	5	100
No	0	0

The table demonstrates that teachers were always use oral explanations and ask students to repeat or paraphrase. The data reflects that 100% teachers like to listen from the students what have they understood.

11. Engage students in active learning:

Responses	Number of teachers	%
Yes	2	40
No	3	60

The table shows that the teachers were asked if they engage students in active learning or not. 40% teachers do not like to engage students in learning activity and 60% teachers like to engage students in learning activity.

#### **4.9 Analysis of Open Ended Questions from Teachers' Questionnaire**

##### **1. Lack of Communication**

In Bangla medium schools there was lack of proper communication between the teachers and the students. The teacher was always busy about the lecture and the teachers did not give any collaborative task to the students by which he/she can keep students busy or engage but there was no such activities to keep them engage. However, the classroom was completely teacher centered.

##### **2. Lack of Proper Training**

The teacher of Bengali medium was not so trained. Due to improper training they do not have that much knowledge of learning style. They even do not try understand whether they are able to make them understand or not.

##### **3. Unfriendliness**

From the research the researcher found that, the teacher of Bengali medium was not so friendly with the student. Due to unfriendly behavior the environment become very boring and monotonous to students. The students feel demotivated due to unfriendliness behavior.

#### 4.1.9 Findings from Students:

1. Enjoy discussion with other students:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	42	57.53
No	31	42.46

The students were asked whether they like to discuss about their task with other students or not.

The given data shows that 57.53 percent of students enjoy discussing their task with their peers and 42.46% students are not likely to enjoy discussing.

2. Hearing others' opinion:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	39	53.42
No	34	46.47

The certain groups of students were also asked whether they enjoy hearing what other students think or not. The data reflects that 53.42 percent of the students are more interested in hearing other's opinion than the rest.

3. Clear and detailed instructions:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	73	100

No	0	0
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The table demonstrates that students always appreciate and expect clear and detailed instruction from their teacher. It helps them to understand the conditions better.

4. Learning on their own:

Responses	Responses	Number of students	%
	Yes	40	54.79
	No	33	45.20

Learning style is a very important part of acquiring secondary language. In that case, 54.79 percent of the students expressed positive views learning on their own than to learn through discussion. Although the rest of the 45.20 percent were more interested in learning through group discussion.

5. Following instruction:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	59	80.82
No	14	19.17

Students were asked whether they follow instructions of their teacher while doing assignment. 80.82% agreed of following instructions and the rest of the 19.17% believed they did not like to follow the instructions.

## 6. Like to write things:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	39	53.42
No	34	46.56

The given data shows that 53.42% students like write in order to learn language and 46.56% do not like to write.

## 7. Like to do physical activities:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	35	47.94
No	38	52.05

When students were asked whether they like to do physical task in class or not, 47.94 percent of the students responded positive on doing physical activities in classroom and the rest 52.05 percent responded negatively on the subject of learning through tasks that includes physical activities.

## 8. Remember best by writing things:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	40	54.79
No	33	45.20

Students were asked if they are prone to remember their lessons by writing or by some other methods. 54.79 percent of the students agreed on that they remember best by practicing through writing down several times and 45.20 percent of the students are less likely to practice this method.

9. Understand by reading:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	36	49.31
No	37	50.68

In the survey, students were asked whether they like to read or like to listen. 49.31% students like to read or understand news article by reading in the paper and 50.68% students like to listen the radio or oral directions since they understand better by listening to a particular matter.

10. Like to learn by playing:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	38	52.05
No	35	47.94

Through the study the students were asked whether they like to learn by playing or not. 52.05% students agreed that they like to learn by playing and the other 47.94 percent of the students do not want to play while studying.

## 11. Good at working:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	38	52.05
No	35	47.94

From the above we can see that, students were asked whether they like to make posters and cartoons by their hand or not. 52.05% students enjoy making or participating in these activities and 47.94% students do not want make these on their own.

## 12. Follow oral directions:

Responses	Number of students	%
Yes	49	67.12
No	24	32.87

From the above table we can see that, students were asked whether they follow oral directions of their teacher or not. 67.12% students agreed they like to follow oral directions than written something and 32.87% students do not want to follow oral directions.

#### 4.10 Analysis of Open Ended Questions from Students' Questionnaire

In the question number one most of the students claimed that they like to discuss about their task with each other. The English medium students get enough time to discuss with each other but the students of Bengali medium schools do not get the opportunity to share their thought

and as well time. Their teacher always remains busy to finish their syllabus that is why they do not want to waste their time.

In the question number six most of the students claimed that they love to write while learning. The students of Bengali medium schools responded that their teacher do not give them the proper time to take notes.

In the question number seven many of the students like to do physical activities. They like to learn by playing. The students of English medium school get enough chances to do physical activities. On the other hand the Bengali medium students do not get sufficient time to play or doing something or teacher does not want to waste the class due to physical movements.

### **1. Uncomfortable Environment:**

Many students of Bengali medium mentioned that their classroom environment is not very friendly. They feel very hesitate whenever they something in front of the whole class. These uncomfortable environments demotivate them to participate. On the other hand the students of English medium schools mentioned that their classroom environment is like their home. They feel very safe and comfortable. Their teacher is very caring and also their class mates. They help themselves in any situation.

### **2. Individual Differences:**

The researcher before mentioned that learning style is an individual preferences. It remains in everyone but it differs from one to another. Some students are extrovert and some students are introvert. The researcher found that the introvert learners feel very shy and uncomfortable if they

participate in classroom work. They do not feel comfortable in the class during any kind of speaking activities in the target language.

### **3. Fear of Participation And Mental Depression:**

Environment is an important fact for students. Environment helps them to build themselves. The students of Bengali medium mentioned that they do not like to participate in front of the whole class. They think that will feel inferior if they do any mistake. These types of overthinking makes them less effective learner because they lost their motivation, aggressiveness to participate or speak something.

### **4. Memorization:**

Many of the Bengali medium students mentioned that they try to memorize everything while giving a presentation. They become very nervous when they are asked any question by the teacher and they do not able to give the answer. By doing these types of activity they consider themselves as less-effective learner.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The three research questions were included in this study to explore the current practice of learning style in the English and Bengali medium schools. The major findings through classroom observations and interpretations of each teacher's point of view are explored in this section. It is investigated how the approach of learning style is conducted in the classes, the differences between the English and Bengali medium school and their method of learning and their classroom environment. This chapter is established to discuss the significant results found from students and teachers responses.

There are two types of learner in learning style- good learners and bad learners. Each student is different, has its own personality and way of learning. A good student is one who is interested in learning, who tries to apply their skill in practical settings. Halbach (2000) stated that more successful students use learning strategies more frequently and this is considered to have an impact on the ultimate level of competence of students, that is to say, their proficiency rates (as cited in Ho 2001). First of all, good learners are motivated to learn and they believe that they are capable of learning. They only focus on their learning process and want to engage in the process. Gan et al. (2004, p. 230) and Gan (2011, p. 68) also concluded that successful students report more use of learning strategies. The study carried out by Gan (2011, p. 68) stated that successful learners used learning strategies that covered all the language skills, whereas unsuccessful learners reported fewer use of learning strategies, which did not correlate with their reported wish to improve. The study exposed, the students of English medium were more effective than the students of Bengali medium. They are not afraid of making any mistakes. If they do any mistake they like to hear the

feedback instantly and they have the courage to accept it. They have good organizational skills and they love to take suggestions from anyone how to become more organized. They know their skill and also the learning style. They apply their learning style while reading or learning. While taking interview the students of English medium schools mentioned that they are not scared of asking to their teacher or they are not worried of speaking English. Secondly, good learners are curious about anything. They love to explore something new. Thirdly, good learners try to engage themselves in any types of activity. Their only focus is to learn something. They show their interest in the entire sector in where they can learn. Finally, a good learner is creative. They love to solve problems, create new ideas and love to accept challenges. On the other hand, less effective learners are opposite of more effective learners. They are not motivated and not curious about their task. They are always scared of speak in English. They feel worried while answering teacher's question as s/he corrects their mistakes explicitly. Nevertheless, Wong and Nunan (2011, p. 146) stated that unsuccessful students reported no need to continue learning, whereas successful students reported their objective to take more proficiency examinations. The study showed that the students of English medium are more effective than the students of Bengali medium. Finally the researcher discovered that the main reason behind the differences between English and Bengali medium school is environment. The teachers of English medium schools take care of each and every student and they try to find out how they want to learn and it is mandatory for them to speak in English in classroom. On the other hand, the teacher of Bengali medium do not take care of their students as the teacher of English medium does and there is not that kind of regulation to speak in English in the classroom. The researcher discovered that the classroom environment of Bengali medium school is very boring and monotonous so they get distracted from learning and the researcher also checked the grade sheet of both English and Bengali medium students. The

researcher found that, the grades of all the students of English medium schools are quite impressive and the grades of Bengali medium students were so poor without 3 or 4 students. In conclusion it can be said that to become an effective learner environment is very important and helpful.

A comparison between Bengali and English medium students will be drawn in this chapter. In English medium schools, Cambridge curriculum is followed. In the first school some grammar items such as Degree of Adjectives were taught followed by connotation and denotation. After explaining the whole item to the students some exercise were given to them from their text book. The difficult words were marked by the teacher to give more emphasis on them. Those who practice it more becomes more familiar with the language and it comes more naturally to them. Here the teacher was like a group leader who controls the behavior of the student and the students just follows his lead. New vocabulary and structural rules were provided to the student through the text books they were acquainted with. Most of the interaction took place between teacher and students. There was no way of dealing with the student's emotion. The culture was viewed by the everyday lifestyle and behavior of the target language speaker. There was no usage of native language because it was seen as an obstacle in the process of student's target language learning. Yet we did not find the use of native language in the first school. If the evaluation point is considered, here we have to say that we did not get any chance to observe them taking any test. Finally comes the point of teacher dealing with the student's error; here we have to say that the teacher asked the student to use the dictionary to check the meaning of difficult words and helps them afterwards if they fail to do so.

In another English medium school The Australian curriculum was followed. The foreign words should be taught independently without depending on the native language. For teaching the

foreign language no help from the native language should be taken. There was no usage of any proper text book. The students were asked to watch BBC news and the classes were conducted on the discussion regarding it. There was no use of native language and the students were taught to think in target language. Although the teacher directed the class but the teacher and students were more like partners in the classroom; unlike grammar translation method the students playsome role in this method. The classroom of the students was decorated with picture; use of regalia the teacher used those to explain difficult words to the students rather than using the native language. For example: The word “Discrimination” was taught to the student by using examples .After that they were given a task related to this word. The task consists of one question; why we should not discriminate among ours maids? One student wrote their answer and sticks it in a ball and threw it to whomever he wants. Then the person receiving the ball has to stick his/her answer and throw it to the next person. In this way new vocabulary is taught to the students. The interaction takes place mainly between teacher and students yet student also communicate with each other. There is no way of dealing with the students emotions. Spoken language is given more priority here. The culture of the target language speaker is given more emphasis. No formal test was taken in the session of our observation. The classroom was decorated in a lively and cheerful manner for the students to learn many phrases, vocabulary from there.

The difference between the first school and the second school are; the present of text book in the first school and absent of text book in the second school. The first school did not depend on the classroom environment for teaching the students whereas the classroom environment has an important role to play in respect of teaching the students. The vocabulary teaching is given more importance in school 2 however grammar items are given priority in school1. Finally the English medium classes were full communicative classroom. The interaction was between student to

student and also student to teacher and all the activities was students' centered and there communication was in English.

On the other hand, in the Bangla medium school the teachers were too busy to finish their syllabus. The classes were fully teachers centered and there was no participation of students and there medium of communication was in mother language. The students were not so attentive about their task. The students of Bangla feel shy in speaking English. They hesitate when they speak in English because they think if they are wrong then the whole class will make fun of it. They cannot communicate in English in their classrooms because their teacher was not helpful and it was not mandatory for them to speak in English inside the class. However, it is not possible for them to speak in English outside the class because they are not practicing inside the class and the most important thing is that their way of learning is not correct. They are not able to learn effectively. So, the students of English medium schools are more effective than the Bangla medium student in speaking English.

The third research question of the study investigates the difficulties of the teachers to implement learning styles in the classrooms of Bangladesh. The teachers mentioned that extreme and unnecessary pressure of completing the syllabus and manage the whole class it is quite impossible for them to know the learning styles individually. In this regard, Joyce and Weil stated that teachers teach students to develop concepts, to teach themselves skills, to use metaphorical thinking, to solve problems, and to inquire as the scientist does (Joyce and Weil, 2004). In our country, teachers, and students and as well as parents remain so busy with the assignments and examinations but no one is not conscious about the style of learning and their way of thinking. Therefore, majority of the students do not get to know how to learn effectively. The teachers do not use appropriate instructional policies to make students learn any lesson in classroom. The

untrained teachers, basically, follow the conventional teaching method and they discourage students to ask questions (Haq, 2006 p. 33). Teacher asks questions or gives written exercise to evaluate the students' performance in classroom. Due to large class size, short class period and unfavorable classroom environment teachers cannot assess work of all students and provide feedback (Ahmed et al, 2005 p.96). The teachers claim that due to the short time and large number of students it is not possible to look after all the students. On the other hand, most of the parents are not satisfied with the result of their children. They claim that though their child goes school everyday but they do not able to learn effectively and get poor marks. Most of the students claim that teachers are too busy and hurry to finish the syllabus. They do not even try to find out that who understood or not. Sometimes they do not give sufficient time to write down the notes. On this regard many parents complained that their children do not take notes properly due to the short time. Haq shows that generally the quality of the primary school teachers is not satisfactory and their performance in the classroom and behavior with the students does not reflect any expected attributes (Haq, 2006). The study exposed a great concern of students being not cared properly in the classroom.

On this regard, to extend the principles of learning style teachers need to do first is that try to get to know the individual learning style though it is not an easy task, but to make all the students effective learner it is important to do that. Secondly, the teachers will have to make the environment very comfortable so that the students can learn by enjoying themselves. Teacher can give them such tasks by which they can share their opinion without any hesitation and by sharing opinion their thinking capability will increase. Students can ask any question which is related to their task and the teacher will have to help as much as they can. In total the activities should be students' centered. Thirdly, if the students make any error the teacher should correct it very gently

so that the student should not feel insult. Finally the parents should be aware about their children's learning style and how to like to learn.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this paper is to explore the present practice of learning style in the Bengali and English medium school.

The data obtained from the research the practice of learning style in the context of Bangladesh. The researcher found that though some English medium schools under NCTB follows learning styles in their curriculum, the principles of learning style were not implemented properly. The teachers expressed positive attitudes towards learning styles but they did not follow the learning style properly. Moreover, the pressure of exams and class assignments did not give the students and the teachers enough time to concentrate on individual learning style. Another study reveals that only few teachers treat the students with love and affection, but others do not (Haq, 2006 p. 30). Moreover, a significant portion of teachers believes that the slow learners in school are inherently incapable to perform better, whereas the responsibility of teachers is to address the need of the students and try to identify their learning style to help them accordingly (Ahmed et al, 2005 p. 95).

The implication of successful learning style programmed requires the teachers' support and their positive attitude towards students. The teachers have a role to increase students' proficiency in English by knowing their style. From the research, it was identified that some students were visual learners, some were audio learner and some were kinesthetic learners but the teachers need to identify it successfully individually. By knowing the individual learning styles the learners will be benefited. They will be able to learn more effectively. In addition, schools authorities, as well as the teachers and parents need to take a step to implement learning style approach in classrooms.

The researcher suggested that it was necessary to educate the teachers with the techniques of learning style to implement a successful learning style. The students would be motivated if the teacher tries to find out their learning style. Moreover, teacher will have to create such environment where students can learn through playing or doing physical movements so that they the classes would not become monotonous for the learners.

To conclude, it is important to note that in order to receive the benefits of learning style for the effective learning it is necessary to implement the learning style successfully.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix I**

#### **Questions for the students**

This questionnaire is designed for a study on “Learning Styles and Strategies of Effective Learners in English and Bengali Medium Schools” for an undergrad thesis in English. Your answers will be used only for the purpose of the research. Thank you for your co-operation.

- 1) I enjoy discussing my ideas about course with other students.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- 2) I enjoy hearing what other students think about issues raised in class.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- 3) I want clear and complete instructions on how to complete task.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- 4) I learn a lot of the content in my classes on my own.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- 5) I complete projects accurately the way my teachers tell me to do them.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- 6) I like to write things down or take notes for visual review.
  - i) Yes                      ii) No

7) I prefer to make posters or actual practice and some activities in class.

i) Yes                      ii) No

8) I remember best writing things down several times.

i) Yes                      ii) No

9) I can better understand a news article by reading about it in the paper than by listening to the radio or verbal instructions.

i) Yes                      ii) No

10) I like to learn by playing or consecutively around.

i) Yes                      ii) No

11) I am good at working and remember things by doing a task.

i) Yes                      ii) No

12) I follow oral directions better than written ones.

i) Yes                      ii) No

## Appendix II

## Questions for the Teachers

This questionnaire is designed for a study on “Learning Styles and Strategies of Effective Learners in English and Bengali Medium Schools” for an undergrad thesis in English. Your answers will be used only for the purpose of the research. Thank you for your co- for the Teachers cooperation

Questions.

- 1) I choose lesson where there is something to look at (like picture, cartoons, movies, charts, diagram or video) or something to draw.

- i) Yes                      ii) No

- 2) I prefer lessons where we can do something concrete or at least move around.

- i) Yes                      ii) No

- 3) When learning a new skill I prefer someone to clarify to me how to do it.

- i) Yes                      ii) No

- 4) When learning a new skill I prefer to watch someone else show me how to do it.

- i) Yes                      ii) No

- 5) I provide very clear guidelines which is useful for students.

- i) Yes                      ii) No

i) Yes                      ii) No

i) Yes                      ii) No

i) Yes                      ii) No

i) Yes                      ii) No

i) Yes      ii) No

i) Yes      ii) No

## Thank You