

ROLE OF ENGLISH COMPETENCE AND COMMUNICATION
IN RECRUITMENT PRACTICES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY
FOCUSED FROM THE LENS OF RECENT GRADUATES OF
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN DHAKA

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

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

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Approval

The thesis titled “Role of English Competence and Communication in Recruitment Practices: A Qualitative Study Focused from the Lens of Recent Graduates of Private Universities in Dhaka” submitted by Maisha Binte Salim (23303040) of Spring, 2026 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts on 10th May 2026.

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Ethics Statement

Abstract

In the context of South Asia, being able to communicate in English still remains a daily hesitation among many. We are hence left to ponder - to what extent is English communication really required for Bangladeshi workplaces to function? This research study investigates the role of English communication and competence during the recruitment process involving job application and job interviews of recent graduates and final year students of some private universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The study aimed to assess whether showing an English competency during job interviews has an impact on the recruitment process, further dissecting how much English proficiency is truly required in the job roles of Bangladeshi workplaces to function. Using a qualitative approach, the research includes 11 online in-depth interviews of recent graduates and final year students. Key findings reveal that English language competence may not always be the primary determinant during the initial stages of recruitment in every organization. Some workplaces may prioritize technical skills or experience over spoken English proficiency during interviews. However, the findings suggest that once individuals enter professional environments, a certain level of English competence often becomes expected of them, highlighting the post-colonial effect of language imperialism through historical, economical and cultural factors.

Keywords: English Communication, English Proficiency, Recruitment Process, Job Interviews, Bangladeshi workplaces, Language Imperialism.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, whose unwavering support, strength, and sacrifices made this journey possible. Despite the challenges she faced in her own life, she never stopped encouraging me to pursue my education and continue toward this degree. She carried dreams she could not fulfill herself and ensured that I never gave up on mine. Her constant belief in me became the foundation that kept me moving forward throughout these years. I would also like to dedicate this work to my grandfather, whose financial support and stability allowed me to realistically continue my studies despite societal pressures and difficult circumstances. His support made this journey possible in ways words cannot fully express. To Tahlil and to my brother, thank you for helping me through some of the darkest and most difficult phases of my life. Your support reminded me to keep choosing life, even when everything felt overwhelming.

Most importantly, I dedicate this thesis to myself. Beyond academics, this 3-and-a-half-year journey was a constant battle between responsibilities, survival, and self-preservation. There were countless nights filled with uncertainty, anxiety, and moments when giving up felt easier than continuing. While balancing studies, part-time jobs, extracurricular responsibilities, personal struggles, and mental health challenges, I still chose to keep going every single day. This thesis represents far more than academic achievement — it represents resilience, survival, and perseverance.

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List of Acronyms

EM	English Medium
BM	Bangla Medium
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
ELF	English as a lingua Franca

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Language and society have always been interconnected to each other. It is thus important to explore how various social factors result in many linguistic variations. These variations arise depending on context, social setting and the relationship between speakers. Not only do we consider a level of formality, but also what is optimal and expected within the boundaries of that social context such as in workplaces like educational institutions, corporate organizations, NGOs, etc. Since social structure and linguistic structure influence each other, both are essential parts of how communication functions within society, and reflection upon the language itself. Language is complex; it is not only a communication tool but also provides information, performs and reveals identity. According to Howard (1994), she emphasizes how multiple theories have reflected on how “social structure is represented and sustained by the cognitive systems of individual actors, and, on the other, how these internalized representations of social structure shape social processes. In other words, to comprehend individual agency, it is crucial to understand how people perceive, evaluate, and negotiate this highly information-driven world”. In addition to spoken communication, nonverbal cues are also used in society and are just as important in conveying the aforementioned information. The interpretation of such information is thus influenced by a variety of different factors such as posture, eye contact, facial expressions, gestures or something as simple as tone of voice. These nonverbal cues might be used to convey confidence, or concern, in many cases, without any words being said. In professional contexts like job interviews, where first impressions are important, this becomes rather critical. Many applicants may be proficient in writing communication and

expertise but they also might have trouble speaking clearly under stress, resulting in an inability to articulate ideas vividly in the moment.

Within Bangladesh, Bangla is the primary language used for verbal communication among office employees, with English still widely used in written communication across many private workplaces. This creates a rather interesting divide between how English is used when it is spoken and how it is officially used. Most of the decisions, emails, and reports are expected to exist in English and such practices are considered to be “professional”. This expectation becomes far more visible whenever it comes to the question of hiring people. Employers do not solely look at degrees anymore. As one would expect, they additionally want to know how well a candidate understands the job. That includes knowing the subject, applying what you know in real life, and having practical skills. Theoretically speaking, the ability of one to access a job should depend on how well a person’s skills fit the job. But in reality, language often seems to become an added filter. In multiple corporate roles, English is not treated like a tool but rather widely regarded as a proof of competence. However, not every sector necessarily adheres to the aforementioned norm. Bangla is still used as the primary language in local industries, such as retail stores and small companies. A construction worker cannot and is not expected to write emails in English. As Bordia and Bordia (2015) states, “In global linguistic landscapes organizations may find employees are more willing to adopt the foreign functional language than in local linguistics landscapes”.

Although English still remains a foreign language, it is seen as a marker of eliteness and holds value in institutional and educational sectors. Peltokorpi and Vaara (2014) states how “language is also closely linked with power”. Consequently, English also seems to serve as a social signal nowadays. All the English speakers are seen as skilled, educated, or qualified for corporate positions in many professional contexts. Even if a candidate has sufficient knowledge and experience, their lack of English Language proficiency may cause them to be evaluated

less favorably. This leads to potential prejudice in hiring procedures. As a result of such practices, English is often associated with potentially serving as a gatekeeper that determines who is competent, regardless of their true aptitudes. As such, this study focuses on fulfilling the research gap on identifying how much this perceived importance of English affects the recruitment process.

1.2 Significance of Study

The significance of this study is to be able to understand how recruitment practices work in Bangladesh and how English language plays a role during the application process. The results of this study will contribute to the employment sector where aspiring candidates seeking jobs may benefit from previous experiences to have an idea about what they should be expecting and help them prepare for further interviews. This study may also benefit educational institutes to further equip and shape students with necessary curriculum design to help students adjust to workplaces in real contexts, according to the demands and expectations. As the participants of this study were interviewees of final year students and recent graduates from different academic backgrounds such as with degrees like English, Business and Computer Science, the study expands to its exposure to different fields of professions. The results can help recent graduates to be updated with the new trends and patterns that the recruiters expect. Additionally, the research has also been conducted considering the historical, cultural and economic dimensions.

1.3 Research Objectives

- Examine the role of the English language in recruitment practices during the interview process and job application within the private sector.
- Impact of English competence in workplaces during the interview process and its impact on real-life work performance.

- Study the expectations recruiters have from the applicants from their past experiences through 11 online interviews.
- Analyze the historical, economic and cultural patterns and trends of English language and its influence in Bangladeshi workplaces.
- Provide insights that may help future job-seekers better understand recruiter expectations and prepare for the recruitment process and interviews accordingly.
- Offer recommendations for educational institutions to develop curriculum to equip students with such English use that helps graduates for real-world workplace demands.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 The Colonial Roots of English Dominance

Through the lens of sociology, language has always been a cornerstone of culture and the identity of its respective population. It is for this reason that language has historically been a rather important target of colonial powers to be able to consolidate control over populations that they seek to either settle or exploit. By replacing the indigenous languages with their own, the colonial forces, to a very large extent, attempt to shape their thought, identity and social hierarchy. This process is what Philipson (2009) coined as being linguistic imperialism defining it as the “notion that certain languages dominate internationally” and “the way that nation-states privileged one language” with the intention of forcing the “shift to the dominant language” (Phillipson, 2009, p. 2). It can be safely said that in many cases this endeavour was largely successful. As Agyekum (2018, as cited in Shahrani, 2020) observes, linguistic imperialism produces "a linguistic situation where the indigenous people are gradually conscientized to shun their indigenous languages and adopt foreign languages because of the benefits they expect to derive from them," to the extent that they are made to believe their languages "cannot be used in any transaction in education, economics, science and technology."

This shift in perception, from viewing one's own language as inadequate to accepting a foreign one as the only legitimate medium of being able to advance oneself, represents perhaps the most enduring consequence of colonial linguistic policy which is precisely what Phillipson (2009, p. 1) describes as "one of the most durable legacies of European colonial and imperial expansion."

Bangladesh, a nation that had been subjected to British colonial rule for nearly two centuries, presents a rather obvious example of such a phenomenon. English was formally imposed throughout the subcontinent with Lord Macaulay's 1835 Minute (Awal, 2021). The Minute was published with the stated intention of establishing English as being inherently superior. Macaulay (1835) explicitly claimed that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia," which laid the ideological foundation for the colonial education system that would systematically undermine indigenous languages since it was published. The Minute mandated English be implemented across all British India, and this was further institutionalised with the establishment of Dhaka University in 1921, where English served as the medium of instruction within all departments (Awal, 2021). Crucially, this dominance outlasted the duration of the colonial powers within the country itself. Despite the attempt of the re-implementation of Bangla-medium instruction in public universities across a now sovereign Bangladesh in 1972, this was gradually reversed, with private universities continuing to operate exclusively in English (Awal, 2021).

Ultimately, the establishment of the colonial education system changed administrative and educational structures, and most importantly, it changed the way Bengalis perceived their own language. It embedded a sense of linguistic inferiority that Agyekum (2018, as cited in Shahrani, 2020) observed, where communities are conditioned to abandon their indigenous languages and favour the colonial tongue. Bangladeshi learners have greatly internalised the belief that their own language is inadequate, causing what Awal (2021) describes as being a form of pervasive linguistic inferiority complex that "negatively affects their academic and professional careers". This inferiority complex, aside from its social aspects, has tangible consequences. English, in the present-day, has come to function as a gatekeeping mechanism, with Khan and Chaudhury (2012) stating that it provides "access to information and high-tech communication to the limited few who have access to English education." Those without

adequate English Language proficiency commonly find themselves systematically excluded from education and opportunities. According to them, the English language has come to serve as "a screening mechanism in most job selections, university admission tests and even the Bangladesh Civil Service entrance examinations" (Khan & Chaudhury, 2012). As such, there is ample evidence that the language of the coloniser did not leave with the coloniser. Throughout the decades, it stayed, embedding itself in institutions, employment structures and conditioned the population to view their own tongue as insufficient. The use of English proficiency as a screening tool in recruitment and civil service is therefore not a mere measure of competence but rather a continuation of the linguistic hierarchy established by Macaulay in 1835. It is within this context that the role of English in Bangladeshi workplaces and recruitment must be understood.

2.2 English in the Bangladeshi Workplace

The aforementioned entrenchment of English within the daily operation of organizations and workplaces has also been quantified in a variety of different studies, especially in terms of its functional requirement in these areas. Khan and Chaudhury (2012) established this empirically through semi-structured interviews with thirty employers across major Bangladeshi employment sectors including garments, finance, education and healthcare. They focused especially on companies which not only had a large number of employees but also had the practice of employing fresh graduates. The study found that 73% of organisations use English at high frequency, with 90% and 94% of local and international communication being conducted in English, respectively. This idea is further propagated by Aline (2021), whose survey across banking, garments, healthcare and education sectors found that 77% of respondents reported needing English at their workplace. This idea is further supported in the study conducted by Rahaman (2026) who examined English use among in-service mechanical engineers throughout a thirty-day period with their usage being logged in a diary. Their findings

reveal that the majority of engineers used English on 21-25 days per month, indicating an almost daily reliance on English. Among all sectors investigated within the studies mentioned above, writing consistently emerged as the most critical skill. Of the employers interviewed by Khan and Chaudhary (2012), 94% expected proficiency in writing and speaking. In the aforementioned study by Rahaman (2026), 87 out of the 97 respondents identified writing as the most important and frequently used with one of the respondents stating, “Writing is required the most. Speaking is necessary, but less often.”. This is further corroborated with Aline’s study (2021) where writing was identified as the most important trait in the workplace with speaking being the second most important. In this study, the former is reported to be widely used in paperwork such as reports, emails, business letters and even meeting minutes, even if the meetings themselves may have been in Bengali. Interestingly, these are exceptionally high figures for a Bangla-speaking nation where English holds no official status and has no mention in the constitution. Such figures allow the inference that English has moved beyond being just a practical necessity and become an institutional norm.

Moreover, the literature suggests that the relationship between English and its function in the workplace is not uniform across all the different sectors. Rahaman et al. (2026), for example, argues that in the engineering sector specifically, English operates primarily as a tool to manage workflow and communicate technical information with international partners, rather than as a cultural or prestige marker. In this instance, it is seen that English proficiency in technical fields can be like a vocational skill comparable to any other area of expertise. Similar instances are also seen in the study by Aline (2021) where English is required to communicate with foreign clients and to improve workflow. However, Khan and Chaudhury (2012) saw differing results as they found that employers across non-technical sectors frequently referenced the idea of "company image" rather than a necessity for communication or work as the primary justification for English requirements within that company. Victor (1992, as cited in Aline,

2021), also states that, in many instances, strong English communication skills are often valued above technical expertise itself. All these studies taken into consideration suggests that the demand for English in the workplace is more complicated and based on the aforementioned linguistic inferiority than merely being a functional necessity. This dynamic also means that, as can be inferred quite easily, employers will also mostly pursue individuals who have a stronger grasp of the English language during the recruitment process itself . This particular phenomenon is also corroborated by Khan and Chaudhary (2012) who found that 93% of all employers held the belief that a lack of proficiency “seriously hampered the job prospects of prospective applicants”. Aline (2021) also observes that in the banking sector, those who are comfortable using English to convey themselves have a better chance of being selected. Rahman (2019) also notes a study based on South Asia Contexts in 2010 claiming that 86% of organisations consider English proficiency an important factor in recruiting new engineering employees as well as determining their salaries.

However, this widespread expectation is also accompanied by the fact that employers report that the English language proficiency of the employees and prospective candidates were much lower than their required proficiency of the organization (Khan and Chaudhary, 2012; Mumu et al., 2022). Employees themselves also feel unprepared and uncomfortable to engage in English in the workplace What emerges from these studies collectively is a picture of English as the de facto lingua franca of the Bangladeshi corporate world, being demanded across sectors regardless of whether the nature of the work genuinely requires it and whether the employees are comfortable in using it. This raises the fundamental question of whether English proficiency in Bangladeshi recruitment functions as a legitimate measure of professional capability, or a gatekeeping mechanism that has its roots in colonial policy and the linguistic inferiority complex that stemmed as a result of it.

2.3 Cross-Cultural Communication & Professional Representation

With a rising globalization impact, many organizations and educational institutions have expanded their networks both on a national and an international platform. As Pauwels (2014) shares in one of her book chapters, that “..there are of course differing views, perspectives and opinions about globalisation, definitions of the term tend to include similar elements: globalisation is seen as a process (social, cultural, political, economic) that has an impact on everyday life. It overcomes geographical constraints potentially reducing other boundaries or differences (social, cultural, linguistic, economic)”. This leads to a mass cross-cultural interaction among employees coming from a global network. Luring and Selmer mentions, “As organizations expand beyond national borders or become diverse locally, employees are increasingly likely to encounter others who engage in conversations in their ethnic languages” (Luring & Selmer, 2012). Language barriers stemming from multilingualism can not only lead to communication inefficiencies but may also decelerate sales or drag merger conversations (Ghemawat, 2011; Neeley, 2012). It is therefore necessary that all employees and employers communicate in a particular language. In order to keep workplaces run smoothly, effective communication becomes a key factor, and that communication is often in the medium of English language that connects the employees and employers on a mutual ground. Hence clear communication becomes not only a requirement but a necessity making English to be the common medium of instruction. Pauwels (2014) further emphasizes the “centrality of language and communication in the new economy” and how it shows the importance of commodification of language in the context of globalisation. He further argues that languages that have the ability to grant access to the global arena are increasingly treated as desirable linguistic capital.

2.3.1 English as Lingua Franca ELF in professional contexts

Serving as a primary means of connecting people from across the globe for professional and academic purposes, who come from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, English acts as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Pauwels (2014) mentions, “The status of English as a global lingua franca has had major effects on the LL scene: English has become the language most widely studied as second, third or ‘foreign’ language”. In cases where individuals share the same native languages, ELF acts as an effective communication ground to interact among workplaces which include international collaboration. This allows people from diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas, build professional relationships, negotiate tasks, and so on bringing professionals together in the same working environments. In instances such as this, English becomes an indispensable tool to use as a common method allowing participants to move beyond language barriers and focus on significant communication. It creates a setting where people can share perspectives, knowledge, and expertise despite cultural differences, making collaboration more inclusive and productive. Therefore, when professionals share a common linguistic framework, it allows more transparent communication or negotiations which might otherwise have been hampered due to differences in language.

2.3.2 Workplace Communication efficiency and coordination

Effective and transparent communication directs employees to negotiate and perform tasks through instructions, messages and feedback to be delivered in such a way that is comprehensible to everyone. Bordia and Bordia (2015) explains how “Employees may have to use the foreign language in meetings with representatives of the headquarters, to understand policies and new business ideas presented by the headquarters, to read documents written in the foreign language, to write reports, and to engage with human resource practices such as performance evaluations”. Coordination, on the other hand, aligns the efforts of various individuals and teams to achieve common goals, maintaining productivity and workflow. Clear

communication allows teams to update one another on progress, identify challenges early, and adjust strategies accordingly. When communication means are well-managed, organizations are better able to synchronize their activities, enabling smoother and more productive cooperations. Although Bangladeshi workplaces often communicate in Bangla verbally, most official paperwork and document handling are however done in English. As Pauwel (2014) further adds, "...the dominant status of English in the LL scene has been supported by a massive English language learning industry that constantly produces materials, designs new curricula and modes of delivery for their products". Organisations that actively work to develop the English language capacity of their workforce or implement English within the workplace are therefore better positioned to reduce miscommunication and asynchronization while also improving productivity. In this sense, proficiency in the English language acts more as an organisational resource that directly shapes workplace efficiency, rather than just a personal attribute or skill.

2.3.3 Access to global opportunities

Competency in English opens a door to international opportunities and academic excellence. Starting from schools and universities offering fully funded/partially funded scholarship opportunities, summer schools, exchange programs or any kind of study-abroad programs to international internships and work opportunities - all of these require a basic and minimum requirement to assess an individual's English compatibility. This assessment is done through international language tests such as IELTS, TOEFL, PTE, etc. Nunan (2003) states, "In business, industry, and government, workers are increasingly expected to develop proficiency in English. These demands for English offer opportunities to the TESOL profession but at the same time they have created many challenges for TESOL educators internationally". These tests extract quite a large sum of money from local citizens. Despite the high test fees, many are still applying abroad for international opportunities, seeking better quality education and

setting advanced career goals. It is undoubtedly true that having this language competence acts as a bridge, enabling individuals to communicate and connect with the people across the world who share different cultures. Looking at how linguistic frameworks help people access global opportunities, young students may land in high-ranking universities, attend summer schools, be part of exchange programs, engage in research work, obtain internships in multi-national companies and might even land a job. Ushioda (2017), for example, notes that the value of English as a global language has become a rather key driver of motivation among learners, causing proficiency and certification to be increasingly tied to future professional and academic aspirations. Hence, young professionals can utilize this English proficiency to further collaborate with foreign clients and expand their global network, benefitting both of their academics and professional career. Besides, this also allows remote jobs such as through freelancing which includes content writing, web developing, translating, editing, graphic designing, etc. - all of which requires a significant strong competence in English in order to perform the roles. This shows a heavy reliance on English competence, not only through writing, but equally covering speaking, listening and hearing. The access to global opportunities stems from the area of education to business to technology expanding the base for everyone to get connected and moving beyond only the local context.

2.3.4 Professional representation - language as a marker of professionalism

Although Bangladesh's native language is Bangla and English remains as a foreign language, it is seen as an "elite" marker and holds a significant role in educational sectors. As Nunan (2001) says, "The demand for English language and English language education has increased exponentially with economic globalization". In English Medium schools and universities, the primary language used for communications and instruction is English. While this perspective may seem partial, those who are fluent in English are often perceived as someone more capable of navigating international professional and academic spaces in reality. It is through these

education systems that shape students and professionals in how they present themselves and are perceived by others. The English language becomes more than a communication tool within the broader context of cross-cultural communication by reflecting one's credibility, knowledge, competence, skills, confidence and so on and helping to establish employer trust (John et al., 2021). When interacting with collaborators abroad, it is therefore necessary to present oneself in such a manner that it projects a professional image aligning with global workplace expectations. It becomes closely connected to professional identity as the ability to communicate and perform effectively helps individuals represent themselves and their work be it a presentation, product display, a research, partnership, etc. in a both a professional and credible manner. Along that comes representing the entire team and organization or institute as well as culture and nation. Besides language proficiency, it is also the culture, values and practices of other countries that needs to be mindful of. This way, language is seen to be interconnected with prestige, presentability, broader cultural and professional identity that both individuals and teams as organizations/institutes carry into global environments.

2.4 Bias, Inequity & Ethical Dimensions of English-Based Hiring

The growing prioritization of English language proficiency within workplace and hiring practices in Bangladesh has positioned it, in many instances, as a primary determinant in employability, income and social mobility. As such, while this has been justified in many cases on the basis of globalization, such practices are also deeply embedded within greater societal and structural inequalities and failures leading to potentially significant implications for fairness far beyond just the labour market.

2.4.1 Socioeconomic Factors

One such example is the unequal distribution of high quality English language learning among prospective employees from very early on in childhood, which is inherently based on their

socioeconomic background and geographical location. Students from low-income families have limited access to private English education, access to books and extracurricular activities and may live in homes where English is not spoken which contributes to an overall delay in language development (Dsouza, 2025; Mridula & Ahsan, 2025). Rahman (2019) also identifies a significant rural–urban disparity in education, where limited resources and instructional quality in rural areas result in comparatively weaker English proficiency than in urban institutions. Similar results were found in another quantitative study conducted by Islam et al. (2024) which surveyed data from 370 graduates across English and Bangla medium backgrounds, utilizing statistical methods such as Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Individuals from “working-class” socioeconomic backgrounds were found to face double the English language proficiency related challenges relative to those from the richer class. What becomes through such empirical evidence is that proficiency in English is not evenly distributed and is greatly shaped by socioeconomic inequalities and such hierarchies are also further exacerbated when we take into consideration its previously discussed importance in hiring decisions.

According to a 2013 Euromonitor study, employees that had strong English proficiency earned approximately 5–15% higher salaries than those who were less proficient with the difference rising to 20–25% by 2013 (Euromonitor, 2013, as cited in Erling & Power, 2014). This discrepancy in terms of salary is of even greater significance when analyzed in the context of the unequal distribution of high-quality English language learning which is inherently based on the socioeconomic and geographical location of a prospective employee. As a result, such recruitment processes and salary structures create a labour market in which English proficiency becomes a primary factor in earning potential, furthering pre-existing social and economic hierarchies rampant within Bangladeshi society.

2.4.2 Failure of the education system

In response to the perceived global importance of the English language and both the national curriculum presiding over the primary and secondary levels, as well as the tertiary education have adopted English language learning, with tertiary education being conducted almost entirely in English (Akteruzzaman and Islam, 2017; Mahjabeen, 2025). In the case of the latter for example, in the 1990s the National Curriculum and Textbook Board introduced Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at the secondary and higher secondary levels in Bangladesh, in order to equip students with the English communication skills that is required due to increased globalization (Binoy et al., 2007). Furthermore, it is expected that such methods would allow students to have a better grasp of English before they move onto their tertiary education (Akteruzzaman and Islam, 2017). In the tertiary levels too, the implementation of English medium instruction was implemented with the stated intention of improving “the quality of our higher education to match the international standard” (Akteruzzaman and Islam, 2017). However, as evidence suggests, the intended outcomes of these initiatives have not been fully realized.

CLT, for example, has not been fully effective within Bangladesh due to a combination of cultural, institutional and pedagogical constraints. One such limitation is the incompatibility between the communicative and context-driven nature of CLT and local cultural norms which significantly differ from those of native English speakers. Furthermore, it is found that there is no standardized system to evaluate the communicative competence of students making assessments under the CLT framework difficult. Moreover, there is a severe lack of mechanisms to develop proper CLT teachers due to insufficient training facilities. Many teachers are also hesitant, or in many cases, reluctant to adopt CLT due to it being more demanding than the previously used Grammar Translation Method (GTM). Furthermore, the students themselves, due to the aforementioned reasons, do not gain the confidence to use

English in everyday communication which also undermines the practical learning aspect of CLT (Rahman & Karim, 2015; Mahjabeen, 2025). In the case of tertiary education, the implementation of English has also caused some issues for the students. For example, Mahjabeen (2025) explores the impact of English-medium instruction in the tertiary level via a mixed-method study combining survey responses from 50 students with semi-structured interviews of 10 teachers. The findings show that while many students do appreciate English as the medium of instruction in university and its potential benefits for global employability, they also point out significant challenges. For example, students from Bangla-medium backgrounds reported experiencing communication barriers, reduced confidence, and perceived bias from instructors. Furthermore, students reported that the university did not help to develop their English language proficiency or help them adapt to the aforementioned challenges related to the medium of instruction. Students from an English medium background, however, experienced a greater ease of participation and more favorable academic recognition. As such, students from Bangla-medium background are subjected to challenges that can hinder their engagement and learning under English-medium instruction, which limits their overall ability to fully benefit from the education.

The failings of these systems and their consequential challenges have direct implications for students in the workplace. When such educational challenges are combined with the previously explored fact of employers frequently reporting employees as lacking sufficient English skills, it becomes quite evident that the practice of expecting high levels of English language proficiency during recruitment is inherently problematic and inequitable. Students are, to a very large extent, being held accountable for the systemic gaps that exist within the education system.

2.5 Theories Relevant to Linguistic Imperialism

Language belongs with native speakers, community and society. However, English has expanded to become a global form, gaining international recognition. **Robert Phillipson's** theory of linguistic imperialism focuses on "how and why certain languages dominate internationally, and attempts to account for such dominance in a theoretically informed way" (Phillipson, 1992). Robert Phillipson has coined the term "linguistic imperialism", meaning dominating another country or society. It is a type of relationship where one society dominates another society. It can be of multiple types: economic, political, military, communicative, cultural and social. Phillipson argues that this global dominance of the English language is tied to power, history, colonialism and inequality. He talks about core countries and periphery countries. While the core countries include English speaking countries like the USA, UK, New Zealand, Australia and Canada, the periphery countries are considered marginal/weak countries that do not have English as their native language among which Bangladesh is one. He also says that English Foreign Language (EFL) countries are turning into English Second Language (ESL) countries because English is a precondition for higher education. English can therefore be seen to be spread in a way that is beneficial to these core countries while marginalizing local languages, creating a power dynamic and imbalance. Philipson's theory is relevant to this research study in Bangladesh because although English is not officially recognized here, it still continues to carry symbolic value in both educational and professional settings. It helps to frame how English language operates as an added filter in hiring processes within a country where English is not even an official language, highlighting how it still reflects upon English influence.

Suresh Canagarajah's theory is widely recognized for developing the concept of translingual practice which challenges the traditional view of language as a fixed and standardized system. He has shown the inequality in English language teaching, where academic centers often shape

publication conventions and practices in response to technological advancements. Canagarajah states, “If multilingual speakers display such stupendous competence in acquiring and using a hybrid language like LFE, there is evidence that it comes from language socialization and awareness developed in their local communities” (Canagarajah, 2007). In context to Bangladeshi workplaces, this is related to this study as speakers often use Bangla and English combinely in both informal and formal interactions including professional settings. Chanagarajah’s theory aligns with this study as to how English competence may not always require high fluency, rather the ability to get the information delivered properly, indicating clear communication and for participants to adapt accordingly in interview settings and during work places where multilingual practices are not uncommon. Additionally, it helps understand how English functions in multilingual settings where language is shaped by not only global standards but also local realities. The key element is that speakers do not separate languages rigidly, rather blend, adjust, adapt, and negotiate meaning, emphasizing on effectiveness; local contexts shaping language use.

Braj Kachru divided the English speakers into three groups: inner circle, those who speak English as their first language like the USA, UK, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. Outer circle, those who speak English as their official second language such as Malaysia, Singapore, India, etc. as countries which gave English as an official language status. Finally the expanding circle where English is spoken as a foreign language such as Bangladesh. Kachru states, “Whatever reactions one might have toward the diffusion and uses of English, one must, however, admit that we now have a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic universal language” (Kachru, 1996, p.138). He further adds, “English continues to alter the linguistic behavior of people across the globe, and it is now the major instrument of initiating large-scale bilingualism around the world- being a bilingual now essentially means knowing English as an *additional* language, as a language of wider communication, with one or more languages from one’s

region” (p.138). These are all relevant to this research study as it aligns with Braj Kachru’s model of World Englishes and the concept of the global spread and dominance of English. Kachru’s Three Circles model positions Bangladesh within the Outer Circle, where English plays as a second language used in areas of education, administration, and professional communication. Furthermore, Kachru’s notion of the hegemony of English provides a critical lens to understand how English operates not only as a practical skill but also as a marker of prestige, competence, and employability. This also helps understand why English proficiency may be treated as a key requirement in recruitment processes. Kachru (1996) observes that English maintains a dominant position across different cultures, specifically in areas like education, administration, literature, national and international communication, and this dominance is further reflected in societal attitudes toward the language and its users (p.139). Such ideological perceptions shape employer preferences and may contribute to unequal opportunities among graduates from different educational and socio-economic backgrounds - highlighting how global hierarchies of language may influence local recruitment practices.

Alastair Pennycook believes the promotion of English has resulted in economic inequality because the motives behind promoting English are political, social and economic. He calls English “gatekeeper” as proficiency in English gives access to different advancements, achieved by different sectors: business, education, sciences and technology. Pennycook mentions in his book *Language as a local practice*, about how language not only depends on rules, rather on context and practice, “To look at language as a practice is to view language as an activity rather than a structure, as something we do rather than a system we draw on, as a material part of social and cultural life rather than an abstract entity” (Pennycook, 2010, p.2). Pennycook’s central argument states that language is not a fixed, pre-given system but rather emerges from socially embedded, locally situated activities that provides a powerful theoretical lens through which to examine the role of English communication in Bangladeshi recruitment

practices. Pennycook challenges the assumption that language, particularly English, operates as a neutral and universally applicable tool. He argues instead that “languages are a product of the deeply social and cultural activities in which people engage” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 1). This is relevant as to how English competence may not always be prioritized in all organizations, institutions of companies during recruitment. Different Bangladeshi workplaces, depending on their sector and organizational culture construct their own locally embedded expectations around English, indicating that the need for English itself may be a local practice. Reflecting upon the post colonial dimension and language imperialism, it is important to notice that once graduates enter professional environments, English competence however becomes expected in the long run. The English language in the Bangladeshi context, carries the lingering control of colonial governance and continues to function as a marker of professional legitimacy, not because it is inherently necessary, but because institutional and social practices have made it so over time.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter includes the discussion of the methodology of this study, involving research design, research instruments, data collection method, data analysis method and ethical issues.

3.1 Research Design

This research paper was conducted using a qualitative research method. The reason for choosing a qualitative approach was because it would allow an in-depth understanding of real-life experiences, personal stories and perspectives which may not be well suited through a quantitative research method. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions, allowing participants to provide detailed, elaborated responses. The resulting data were then analyzed and interpreted to construct meaningful narratives of participants' experiences relevant to the study.

3.2 Research Questions

1. How do employees perceive the role of English language competence in obtaining employment opportunities in Bangladesh?
2. How do employees experience the importance of spoken and written English during recruitment and workplace communication?
3. To what extent do employees believe English communication skills influence their professional representation, workplace interactions, and access to career opportunities?

3.3 Participant Details

Participant	Pseudonyms	Gender	Major	Age	Medium of School	Year of graduation	University
01	P1	Male	CSE	25	English Medium	2023	NSU
02	P2	Female	BBA	23	English Medium	2026	BRAC
03	P3	Male	ENH	24	Bangla Medium	2025	BRAC
04	P4	Female	BBA	24	English Medium	2026	BRAC
05	P5	Male	ENH	25	Bangla Medium	2025	BRAC
06	P6	Male	CS	24	English Medium	2026	BRAC
07	P7	Male	ENH	26	English Medium	2026	BRAC

08	P8	Male	BBA	24	English Medium	2023	CUB
09	P9	Female	BBA	25	Bangla Medium	2023	AIUB
10	P10	Female	ENH	24	English Medium	2025	BRAC
11	P11	Female	ENH	24	English Version	2026	BRAC

Table 1: Participant details

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection for this paper involved taking semi structured interviews with the participants to gain a better understanding of their perspectives while applying for jobs and how the role of English competency impacted their process of recruitment. The outcome of the paper was to find whether a relationship between hiring decisions was due to English competency by interviewing some graduates and undergraduates who have given both or either of part-time and full-time job interviews as employees. The interviews were conducted mostly online through platforms like Zoom and Google Meet. The interviews were taken in both English and Bangla by the researcher, which were later converted into a complete English translation for the transcription. The English questions were quickly followed by Bangla questions for better understanding from their side. For some of the participants, the questions were repeated and a few follow up questions were asked for them to better grasp it. Furthermore, before diving into the interview questions directly, the researcher engaged in light conversations to build a

rapport between the researcher and the participants. Some challenges faced during collecting data were time constraints. Having to find a suitable and common time for both the researcher and the participant was a bit difficult due to ongoing jobs of the graduates or academic pressure of the final year undergraduates. Lastly, prior to the interviews, participants were also informed that this will be a voluntary participation without the involvement of any sum in exchange. Data collected by the participants were organized in different files for each segment. Their responses were recorded by using the “voice recorder” app on the researcher’s smartphone and later moved to a Google drive folder. All the information was placed in Google Drive by labeling each file to maintain order and keep information analytically. Starting from original files to copies of the files as backups, all were labeled in a coherent manner.

As per secondary data, some literary texts available online such as journals, articles, books from Google Scholar and jstor were used.

3.5 Research Instrument (Interview Questions)

Semi structured interview (Employee perspective)

1. Where are you currently employed?
2. Have you given any interviews as part of a job application?
3. How many job interviews have you participated in and for what role/position?
4. During the interviews, what mode of language (English, Bangla, mixed - code switch) were used? Were you comfortable with it - confident, fluent, etc.?
5. In the case of both languages used, did you feel any shift in conversation (intonation, facial expression, etc.) by the employer when changing languages?
6. Did you feel your skills or personality were judged by the way you spoke in English?
(from the employer)

7. Before sitting for an interview, did you feel the pressure to improve your speaking skills?
8. Do you think employers prefer applicants with fluent English speaking competency even when the job does not require it?
9. At any stage of the interview, did you feel the way you spoke English impacted the recruitment process?
10. How did you prepare yourself for a job interview?
11. What factors do you think come into the picture in terms of recruitment procedure - educational background, merit, etc.?
12. From your opinion, do you think recruitment practices in Bangladesh are fair to candidates who are not fluent in English?

3.6 Data Analysis Method

A total of 11 participants have been interviewed online through Google Meet. Among these participants, 6 are graduates and 5 are last-semester students who have been in the “job-hunting” era for quite some time now. The participants are hence recent graduates and final year students of private universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The key requirement for the participants was whether they have given job interviews as part of their job recruitment process and have been involved into looking for jobs or already employed into jobs for a few years. A thematic data analysis has been done to take into account their experiences of participating in prior job interviews. This paper uses Braun and Clarke’s six-phase thematic data analysis framework including familiarization with data, generating initial codes, finding themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and finally, writing the analysis itself. The discussion has been done parallel to the analysis as well. There are 11 datasets of the participants to reflect upon their journeys and perspectives of job interviews as a seeking

employee. The datasets have been used for the purpose of this narrative qualitative research by identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning within the datasets. This is to ensure that the findings of the research are presented in a transparent, coherent and analytically sound manner.

3.7 Ethical Issue

An information sheet outlining the research purpose, process and ethical considerations of the research were provided beforehand to ensure participants are fully informed about the research. A consent form was also given to which participants - here, the final year undergraduate students and recent graduates were required to sign before participating in the interviews. The participants were also informed that all the data being shared will remain confidential such that pseudonyms will be used for corporates, organizations, workplaces, employer names and their names as well to keep it anonymous. Their permission to record their interviews was placed in utmost priority. It was ensured that they do not rush, and take their time according to their time, pace and convenience. The setting of the interview was also taken according to their preference such as either online or offline to ensure their safety. This was done to make the participants feel respected and safe when sharing their information. It was also reminded to the participants that the option to withdraw at any point without any consequence was also kept open for them.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Body Language: Gesture, Posture, Confidence, Anxiety

Reflecting upon the participants' experiences of attending job interviews, other elements that commonly appeared were anxiety, hesitancy and fear becoming a part of their uneasy feeling. They shared how anxiety during interviews can become visible through physical behaviors such as speech hesitation, stuttering, or difficulty articulating ideas. These responses often occurred regardless of the participants' necessary knowledge or qualifications. They also explained that anxiety could increase when they interpreted certain non-verbal cues from interviewers as signs of judgment. P4 recalled an interview experience where nervousness caused her to briefly switch to Bangla while answering questions. Reflecting on the moment, she explained that she "got nervous and due to being nervous, I spoke a bit of Bangla...I thought it was looked down upon." In response to these challenges, some participants described strategies they used to control their anxiety and maintain a professional presentation. P10 explained that excessive stress during interviews had previously led them to "stutter" and "completely blank out". She also adds, "...the more I stress about something, the more I stumble over my words" which led them to consciously manage their reactions by reminding themselves that the interview outcome was not overly significant and by maintaining "a professional body language." Participants also noted that recruiters often interpret posture, tone, and manner of speaking as indicators of competence.

4.2 Knowledge and Relevance to Job Alignment

When applying to jobs, knowledge is measured through an individual's intellectuality, their educational background, merit and skills that he or she has obtained. How much that person is aware about the subject matter; in this case, it is about whether the candidate is aware or

familiar about the tasks to be performed as per the job role. This may include the candidate's performance, capabilities, practical skills, concepts, principles, and so on. Job alignment hence is dependent upon the candidate's prior knowledge relevant to the job that he or she is applying for. Hence, when a person's abilities and qualifications are interconnected to the tasks and responsibilities of the position, it indicates that the candidate is suitable for the job role. This depends on whether the chances of being selected for that position increases or decreases based on this. While language plays a key role in many job positions, there are also some positions that may not require an English language competency for the job to be done. In a country where the majority speaks Bangla as their first language, both Bangla and English are used in workplaces, although the level of English mostly depends on the type of job. In local sectors like retail shops, service jobs, construction and transportation areas, individuals mostly communicate in native language.

On the other hand, higher education institutes, multinational companies, corporate offices and big international companies may often communicate in English such as through written documents and paperwork, sending emails, preparing reports, communicating with international clients, advance data collection from professional resources, etc. This aligns with a study by Rahaman (2026) where he highlights writing being the most required. However, although most paperwork is mostly done in English, there is still a large chunk of people speaking in Bangla with colleagues; at the end of the day, Bangla is still their mother tongue where individuals feel more comfortable speaking it. Therefore, while mode of english communication may be necessary in some places, many jobs in Bangladesh are mostly still performed effectively with Bangla as their primary language, making knowledge and job alignment prioritized instead of English competency. So English competency is not the only deciding factor for the tasks to be completed by the employees as long as the job is done one way or the other.

4.2.1 Alignment and Articulation of Knowledge with Position

Requirements

The majority of the participants explained that employers expect candidates to showcase knowledge that directly aligns with the responsibilities and professional expectations of the job. Recruiters often assess whether candidates understand the field they are applying to and whether they can apply that knowledge in practical contexts. Participants noted that specific organizations, especially those that are in partnership or collaboration with international or corporate environments, require candidates to demonstrate both conceptual understanding and the ability to communicate those concepts in English.

Participant P2 explained that in many professional settings, knowledge is closely tied to international standards, which influences the expectations placed on candidates during interviews. She stated that recruiters often expect candidates to demonstrate their understanding of field-specific concepts while also communicating them effectively, noting that “..recruiters expect me to know financial concepts and communicate them in English because there’s an international standard for these concepts. They prioritise both your knowledge and how well you can communicate it”. This highlights how knowledge and communication are intertwined within recruitment processes. Likewise, P5 emphasized that knowledge must be presented in such a manner so it aligns with the organization’s expectations and professional culture. He suggested that employers evaluate candidates not only on their understanding of the subject matter itself but also on how well their knowledge and verbal demeanor align with the company’s goals. As he explained, “speaking English in a good manner, utilisation of proper words which can be aligned with their company’s vision and mission impacts their decision making because they can evaluate how capable you are for that particular position..for example there are a bunch of words that should be familiar with the

organization structure”. He further adds, “..understanding the roles and responsibilities and how my skills are aligned with those particular requirements, how I can be a valuable aspect or asset for that organization or company, and know something very unique about the company that a minimum amount of people actually know”. Besides, P10 also shares how although “Merit is very important, but if your merit doesn’t go hand in hand with your articulation, there can be a bit of an issue that is not very fair but it exists”. Their overall experiences during the recruitment process indicate that candidates perceive knowledge as something that must be strategically presented to match the role and the organization. Hence it highlights the necessity for interview candidates to align their knowledge and being able to reflect that upon the way they express themselves.

4.2.2 Past Experience, Appropriateness and Presentation as Evidence of Knowledge

Previous work experience, the ability to understand the use of certain statements and being able to present professionally were some elements shared by the participants which often serve as tangible evidence of a candidate’s knowledge and skills. Participants explained that internships, research roles, extracurricular involvement, and leadership experiences frequently become key elements in demonstrating job alignment during interviews.

P6 for instance, described how he used his previous experience as part of his introduction during an interview to demonstrate relevant knowledge and professional exposure. Reflecting on his interview process, he explained that “my club experiences and extracurricular experiences and a lot of the event management that I did..has given me instant, proper speaking skills”. He also says, “..I did feel my command in English and being able to convey what I want to say and me knowing what points they want me to touch had an effect on my employment”. He also added how he took his preparations, “..having a good understanding of

the role.. a talking point ready on important parts, anything related to my skills and application”. Besides, he mentions how recruiters also notice “how you address the people involved in recruitment, or if you have to send a mail back, your ability to do that are taken into account in terms of competency overall, because these are in the long run very important components of you functioning as a productive and actually efficient and useful unit in the workplace”. This is a major element which reflects upon how the recruiters align these follow-ups as a sign of productivity. Another participant, P9 shares, “The main focus is on experience and relevant activities. They used to focus on CGPA, merit and positions before but now, not so much. They focus more on experience”. These reviews suggest how candidates often draw upon previous professional experiences to showcase both their expertise and their familiarity with prior experiences which may align with the ones that they are applying for the new position for and how it varies from one company to another, depending on different roles.

Participants also pointed out that job advertisements themselves often specify educational backgrounds or experiences that signal both alignment with the role and the judgement of English competence. Adding on, P4 also observed that “many job descriptions specifically mention that candidates from an English-medium background...”. Another participant P11 makes a similar statement, “English Medium students might have a higher chance of getting the higher paid jobs..there might be a bias ‘oh she can speak English very well, I can make her the face of the company’ so that person might also get promotions earlier”. P6 mentions how some recruiters “give preference to people from top private universities or even renowned public universities which have a different merit to the name itself..companies give precedence to that”. P7 quite similarly makes a comment, “..they look at whether you’ve worked in similar fields and whether your institution is considered ‘reputable’ where sometimes English Medium education is favored”. These responses indicate that recruiters not only prioritize a firm

background of English competence but also checks an educational background to evaluate a candidate's potential fit for the position that they apply for.

Participant P2 explains that “if you know something but can't present it properly, it still won't get you the job” indicating that knowledge itself is not enough and that their speech needs to be transformed into a convincing way to the recruiters. On a similar note, P5 highlights that when candidates have a set of strong knowledge and skills but are unable to communicate effectively may reduce their chances of getting hired as he says, “..if you're not able to communicate with people, even though you have something concrete about what they are asking, you will not be able to present yourself, you not be able to convince the recruiter”. Hence the aforementioned responses suggest that interviews as part of the job application acts as places where knowledge and intelligence must be demonstrated transparently, prioritizing correct and clear use of English communication.

On the contrary, a couple of participants have emphasized that employers do look for evidence of not just interpersonal skills but also technical competencies when assessing the suitability of the candidates. P4 for example explains that “..they look for both hard skills and softs skills and how much of a team player you are, how much you can coordinate with other members of your team” noting that employers typically check various dimensions of a candidate's profile such as coordination abilities and teamwork. P8 describes how recruiters also look at whether a candidate can “handle problems and situations..” again suggesting how teamwork and problem-solving as skills are aligned to almost every job is also something they look for in a candidate. It is not only past experiences that help candidates demonstrate their technical knowledge but also their ability to function effectively within office settings and communicate with other colleagues. P9 shares, “I have given a few interviews for the accounts officer role where English is not important. The main point is whether you are knowledgeable...it's not necessarily mandatory to be fluent in English in this case”. P6 similarly states that “It does not

reflect your knowledge”. Overall, while English competency is often prioritized and seen as an “add-on”, other external factors like knowledge and skills are equally important in Bangladeshi work culture. This is similar to a study by John et al. (2021) where he emphasizes the importance of the English language being “more than a communication tool within the broader context of cross-cultural communication by reflecting one’s credibility, knowledge, competence, skills, confidence and so on and helping to establish employer trust”.

4.3 Globalization: International Clients, Cross-Cultural Interactions and Representation

First coined by the USA, globalization was introduced to develop mutual growth and reduce trade barriers. It plays a crucial role in making opportunities available through buying and selling across the globe. Globalization ensures the expansion of economic and social ties between countries worldwide through the spread of corporate institutions. It is important we consider to what extent the decisions would be economically rational. Globalization has also played a significant role in Bangladesh’s economic growth, trade being the catalyst of Bangladesh’s rise in global connection. Now English is quite important for cross-cultural interactions where people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds may have to work together. Many offices may have to deal with international clients to receive funding, promotion, branding purposes and many more. Starting from selling certain products and services to negotiating mutual agreements, a transparent exchange of communication is required for effective working relationships and understanding.

4.3.1 Communication with International Clients

Whether it is working in teams for collaborations, sharing ideas or contributing to international projects, English communication amongst each other has stood out to be the most crucial. Hence English language functions as a lingua franca - shared language used for communication

between people who speak different native languages. Sometimes, there are employees who have to represent a company or institution, at the same time creating an impression about their own country, in this case Bangladesh as well. When acting as representatives of their organization and country, oftentimes their ability to communicate in English to deliver what needs to be delivered professionally and clearly, has a heavy influence on how people from other countries perceive the company. It is important for the representatives to be presentable in terms of competence and professionalism at the same time maintaining a respectful global connection. Such a claim can be validated through some of the experiences shared by some of the participants.

P5 explained that many organizations require employees who can effectively communicate with global partners. According to him, the ability to speak English fluently often becomes an important criterion because employees may need to interact with clients from different countries. As he described, “I had to work with a lot of international experts so in that case I had to be able to speak in English” reflecting how speaking English was a necessity in the job role he was applying for. P8 similarly also states “I have to work with foreign clients, so the only mode of communication for me was English language”. In addition to this, he also shares, “whether you go on an international or Bangladeshi national level, speaking fluently in English will always be there strongly”. Another participant P2, talks about how much dependence we have on English language, making it more of a necessity rather than just a requirement. As she says, “many small companies in Bangladesh tend to cater to international clients” highlighting how “most young people now target small-scale companies, startups or software-related roles that deal with international clients. For these jobs, fluent English is necessary where many young people turn to freelancing, which requires strong English communication skills”. In cases like this, employers expect interviewees to show not just technical competence but also the ability to communicate their knowledge in such forms that it aligns with international

business practices as well. This aligns with Luo and Shenkar (2016) as they mention, “To reduce language barriers to knowledge transfer, MNCs have explicit or implicit language policies for corporate communication, documentation and interaction” (Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014). This sheds light on how institutions may prioritize candidates who keep up a professional style of communication with international partners, highlighting that effective communication becomes critical while handling global clients. Hence English communication can be considered as pivotal linking to the global orientation of modern workplaces where employees may be required to unite with partners or clients across national borders.

4.3.2 Cross-Cultural Interactions in Workplace

The interviews taken reflected upon the importance of English as a mode of facilitation during cross-cultural interactions within the frameworks of professional environments. Participants have shared that multiple workplaces involve collaborators, managers and employees from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds for which English performs as a shared language that enables communication among individuals with different native languages. P6 for example shares how his workplaces sometimes involve interacting with international guests. In such scenarios, employees are expected to engage with them professionally and adapt to intercultural communication norms. Hence this instance shows how recruiters may look for this ability of someone who can navigate such environments easily. This participant also shared how extracurricular and leadership experiences involving international engagement were sometimes viewed positively during recruitment as it reflects upon operations management. He said that he often mentioned these experiences as part of his background when sitting interviews. He highlights on “club experiences and extracurricular experience... management stuff that I did, especially with foreign delegates..” to showcase his prior experience of interacting with foreign clients. Another participant, P1 who is a graduate and has been working in the business background shares how he “mostly works with international clients” and says how “most

companies that look for good English-speaking candidates are usually for roles that deal with international clients and require clear communication. That's when English-speaking candidates are more preferred". Once again this emphasizes the necessity of being able to handle people coming from cross borders. These settings involve tasks to be performed in a language that is understandable to employees who may have to use this language for example in meetings, to understand policies, business ideas, to read documents, write reports and overall engage with human resource practices (Bordia & Bordia, 2015). It reflects the need for collaboration in a multicultural environment, where understanding different perspectives is essential. It is through these narratives that participants highlighted that English proficiency is frequently associated with intercultural adaptability and global communication skills, demonstrating how candidates may use cross-cultural experiences as evidence of their ability to operate in globally connected work settings.

4.3.3 Representing Organizations on Global Platforms

Following cross-cultural interactions comes with representation. It is about because of a company or institute representation when a compatible candidate is chosen to represent and deliver accordingly on global environments, placing smooth English communication as a key factor. P5 who works at a higher educational institute for instance, shared that companies sometimes evaluate candidates based on how well they can present themselves and the organization in professional exchange. As per his experience of participating in a few interviews, he quotes, "...it's all about presenting your thoughts and presenting what you believe your intellectuality so speaking English in a good manner, utilization of proper words which can be aligned with the company's vision and mission that impact their decision making.." reflecting upon how language proficiency becomes linked to a certain image and organizational representation.

P6 who has previously often worked with foreign delegates, and with an experience in research shares how he has seen professors “for international publication, they converted everything to English”. He also shares how the way of representing a company creates a certain image towards international clients “if you are to speak in front of people, if you’re presenting the employer has a mindset that you are intelligent”. He further adds that in academic and research environments, English functions as the standard language of communication as he says, “The research position then again, all international researches are done in English”. This highlights how English is not only used for interaction but also acts as a shared medium through which researchers from different countries work on collaborations, publications and research. On the other hand, P8 talks about the importance of why a company may prefer a candidate with better presentation and fluent speaking skills because they “can take that candidate in front of a big board, crowd or room full of seniors where they would see what and how that person answers upon asking critical questions”. He also adds using an example, “I’m taking this guy for accounts but he can represent the whole department when it comes to any important matter. When the whole team is involved, you need at least one or two person to speak for the whole team or speak for themselves, grabbing people’s attention in the crowd”.

On the contrary, P9 says “They think being fluent in English means you are capable of presenting well and they will send you to certain places. But if you’re not, then they won’t give you positions or send you to give presentations. This stands out as a negative point”. While we have both views, we can still see the difference between how being more “presentable” leads it to further opportunities. Hence the ability to use English becomes closely tied to how individuals represent their institutions within international professional and academic spaces. Overall, candidates perceive English as a form of global professional capital that supports connection to global workplaces.

4.4 Power Dynamics: Impression, Bias, Pressure, Expectations

Bangladesh being years as a colonized state, has somewhat still left a certain social hierarchy among the people of this country. Where English was once imposed forcefully, left a historical association with prestige, access, power and opportunities and still remains unchanged as of today. These have continued to influence social, cultural and professional environments where English competence is seen as an “elite” marker. The use of English is therefore still connected to social hierarchy and power dynamics which still exist years after independence. In various workplaces, people speaking in fluent English are viewed as a better candidate or more capable. This perception may prove to be incorrect as this, in no way reflects upon or questions a candidate’s skills, abilities and knowledge. This results in a form of biasness by the authority or officials upon candidates who are not competent enough in English but may be suitable for the job role, making them look less qualified. This is a well-aware scenario in Bangladeshi recruitment procedures where both the interviewer and interviewee realize that English is indeed a matter of impression. This therefore makes some candidates feel pressured to speak in a specific accent, structure or fluency in order to create a certain impression towards the recruiter. They think this fluency makes them appear more polished and educated for corporate positions even if the job does not exactly require English proficiency. In order to meet the expectations, the concept of English is often portrayed as a connection to upward social mobility or professional success - creating a power dynamic.

4.4.1 Impression Management and Recruiter Expectations

Participants frequently described how interview settings require them to manage their impression in order to meet recruiters’ expectations. They often feel the necessity to present themselves in such a way that reflects upon their competence, confidence and professionalism as the hiring decision is completely up to the recruiters. With that comes English proficiency as an elite marker. This creates a clear power imbalance where candidates carefully monitor

how they behave, speak, and present themselves during interviews leading up to a certain impression. P6 works at an organization where mostly local employees work together. Once a while, they have visits from international clients. He shares, “There’s this idea we have as Bangladeshis that if you speak English, it means you know things better so it’s good because he might be more intelligent” quite strongly reflects upon the mindset of Bangladeshis that they look up to someone’s way of speaking instead of focusing on his/her skills. P8 who has graduated and has attended multiple interviews explains that interviewers often evaluate candidates based on their overall presentation rather than only their qualifications. He noted that recruiters may decide whether someone appears professional “by seeing how you sit, talk and describe yourself”. The interviewee’s observation reflects on how setting an impression becomes a major element where candidates constantly feel being watched, making physical awareness including body language and speech to be evaluated by the recruiters. Another participant, P10 described how she intentionally tried to influence the interviewer’s perception, as she says “I wanted to impress them so I talked as much as I could, as fluently as I could”. She further noticed an instant shift in the interview dynamic once she began speaking confidently, “I could feel it the moment I started speaking. I could see they were impressed and I was conversing in English much more than the other candidates”. These experiences illustrate how candidates actively shape their behaviour to create a favourable impression in response to recruiter expectations.

4.4.2 Linguistic Pressure and Bias

The aforementioned “impression’ and “expectation” has made participants feel the constant urge to perform better, meeting language requirements which might at times lead to a bias among candidates. A couple of participants felt English fluency is treated as a sign of capabilities which stands as a challenge to candidates who are less confident in speaking English even if they have the required knowledge for the position they are applying to. P3

described feeling significant complusion during interviews conducted fully in English. He explained that he “felt pressure that if I couldn’t speak fluently, I might be rejected or treated differently compared to others who were more fluent”. He further adds, “Fluency in English is often equated with being smart. If someone isn’t fluent, they are considered less capable”. This perspective show how language expectations can create hierarchical dynamics where fluency becomes a marker of competence. On a similar point, P4 explained that speaking Bangla during an interview in a top and renowned company made her feel negatively judged. She stated that when she became nervous and switched languages, she believed it “was looked down upon”. Additionally, another participant highlighted the existence of broader linguistic bias in recruitment practices. P11 who often applied for teaching and instructor roles suggested that English proficiency may create unequal opportunities, explaining that “English medium students might have a higher chance of getting the higher paid jobs” and that employers may show preference toward candidates who speak English well. P6 explains through a cousin’s experience as an example about how he “has a good scientific background and about his work, but his command in English is basic. He faced trouble because people were throwing things at him in English and he was not able to answer back in fluent, instant English like them because his primary language knowledge is in Bangla. He can, if given time, express that in English but it was a misrepresentation of his knowledge”. Another participant, P4 says, “There is obviously a bias toward candidates who can speak English very well” indicating an unfairness among candidates. These observations display the existing biasness that some people generally may face about not being able to communicate in a certain language or a certain way. These responses suggest that language expectations not only generate pressure for candidates but can also reinforce structural inequalities in hiring decisions in reality.

4.4.3 Post-Colonial Effect/ Hierarchy

Interviews of the participants reveal quite a vivid post-colonial hierarchy deeply rooted within language use in Bangladeshi professional settings. Although Bangladesh is no longer under British colonial rule, English continues to function as a language of authority, professionalism, and prestige. Participant P10 directly reflects this power play when she explains that when addressing people in positions of authority, she instinctively begins the conversation in English, sharing, “..I have this tendency in university to always start a conversation with a faculty member or somebody in an official position in English and also when I sat for my first two interviews”. She further adds “Like in the workplace when my colleagues or I speak to the principal, we do it in English. But whenever we are speaking to one of the board members or directors, we could talk in Bangla”. This demonstrates how English has become associated with institutional power and formal authority, while Bangla is reserved for more casual interactions where the conversation doesn’t feel “mechanical”. This also showcase a certain hierarchy that is present in the workplace. This is aligned to a statement by Seabury (1980), “It is important, too, for administrators who must communicate well in organizing and maintaining their agencies and for social work educators who must transmit knowledge and skills clearly to their students”. Such linguistic shifts reveal how English operates as a marker of professionalism and status within organizational hierarchies, reinforcing a subtle power dynamic between individuals consisting a variety of roles.

Furthermore, P10 notes that when she spoke in English during an interview, the recruiters were “pleasantly surprised” and the conversation immediately shifted, making her feel that she would get the job because of the way she spoke. Her experience highlights how fluency in English can significantly influence employers’ perceptions of competence and may overshadow other qualifications. Similar observations are echoed by other participants as P6 remarks that in Bangladesh there is a common perception that if someone “speaks in English,

it means you know things better or...you might be more intelligent”. This perception demonstrates how colonial language hierarchies continue to shape judgments of intellectual ability, creating bias in professional evaluations where language proficiency becomes intertwined with perceived competence.

The dominance of English in education and professional discourse reinforces these expectations and pressures to a larger extent. A few participants note that many academic and professional standards are structured around English. P6 for example, explains that “all international researchers or standard researchers are done in English,” emphasizing how academic work and global professional practices are aligned with English as the primary medium. So, even when a person thinks in Bangla or writes in Bangla, it still has to be converted to English for international recognition. P10 once again, says how in office spaces or during interviews “English conversation feels mechanical while speaking Bangla it’s not there anymore. It feels more casual and comfortable”. This indicates that whether a person feels better speaking their native tongue, they still have to communicate in English during work settings to meet a certain standard. Similarly, P5 describes how most entry-level interviews follow “an English-based mode of communication.” These patterns reflect colonial influence that still lasts where English remains fixed in institutional systems such as higher education, research, documentation, and corporate communication. As a result, candidates often feel pressured to perform in English to meet these expectations, reinforcing a post-colonial linguistic hierarchy that continues to shape not just power dynamics but professional impressions and opportunities equally within the Bangladeshi workplaces.

The post-colonial influence also reflects on English being central to not only professional but also academic and economical opportunities. Although Bangladesh is no longer under colonial

rule and English is still considered a foreign language, the continued dependence on English in education, employment, and global work spaces, leads to the impression that colonial linguistic hierarchies still shape certain professional success. P2 shares, “They would often include certain terminologies that had to be in English”. She further adds, “Since our university education is conducted in English, even for local jobs, we often need to use English concepts and terminology. Due to job scarcity, many young people turn to freelancing, which requires strong English communication skills”. English being a medium of instruction in universities and job market, and being able to know certain academic terms in English can be seen to be closely aligned with what Nunan (2001) states, “The demand for English language and English language education has increased exponentially with economic globalization”.

4.5 Clear Communication: Reflection, Standard, Accent, Fluency

In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is important that the tasks are completed efficiently through clear communication for organizations, institutions and workplaces to function in a productive manner. It involves exchanging ideas, giving and receiving instructions in a thorough manner. Some candidates think that the way of speaking through a clear accent and fluency has to meet a standard likeable to the officials otherwise it gives the impression of being incompetent in English which may further impact their recruitment process negatively. When pronunciation and fluency is clear enough for clients and colleagues to follow the message, it is then when communication becomes effective and useful. Starting from choice of words - picking out what suits the context most, having a background knowledge about the conversation, a decent speed of speaking and depending upon whose presence they are speaking to remains a key role of clear communication. This shows a reflection upon the candidate and creates an awareness to help avoid misunderstandings. This professional standard is something that many participants think is important for workplaces to function smoothly, encouraging successful interactions amongst themselves.

4.5.1 Clarity and Articulation

A key concept shared by participants was that recruiters evaluated them based on their clear way of expressing thoughts during the interviews. They highlighted that a transparent communication includes not just being able to speak English but also being able to respond properly, organize ideas, and making the recruiters understand what they want to speak through a professional manner of conveying information. For instance, P1 reflected on his interview experiences by emphasizing the importance of clear communication in presenting oneself. He explained that he felt confident during interviews because he believed he could articulate his ideas clearly, noting that he was “I could properly communicate and make my point clear”. Similarly, P5 emphasized that communication skills play a crucial role in demonstrating competence to recruiters, stating “..important aspect is to focus on the communication competence”. According to him, even when candidates possess strong knowledge or qualifications, they must still be able to express in such a way that it convinces the recruiters upon one’s capabilities. As he explained, “if you are not able to communicate with people, even though you have something concrete about what they are asking, you will not be able to present yourself, you will not be able to convince the recruiter”. He further adds, “I felt that I need to have some practice on presenting my thoughts in a way so that it can be helpful for everyone to understand” showcasing how presentation of articulation of speech is important in communication for the other end to have to meet a certain professional standard. Another participant, P6 shares “They cared about how well spoken I was and how easy it was to understand what I was trying to convey, being able to compress that and deliver that within the interview window..” once again reflecting upon the importance of clarity throughout the interview process. Hence, participants perceived interviews as settings where clarity of expression functions as a reflection of professional capability through clear communication.

4.5.2 Fluency, Accent, and Communication Standards

Participants also discussed how fluency, accent, and perceived language standards influence evaluations of communication during interviews. While many acknowledged the importance of speaking clearly, they also reflected on the pressures created by expectations surrounding fluency and “standard” forms of English. A participant, P3 for example, explained that he often felt pressure to maintain fluency when speaking English during interviews. He noted that candidates sometimes fear negative judgment if they hesitate to express themselves, explaining that he “felt pressure that if I couldn’t speak fluently, I might be rejected or treated differently compared to others who were more fluent”. This perception illustrates how fluency becomes closely associated with professional competence in interview settings. P2 having applied to business roles and internships states, “..they require not only proficiency in English but also an accent that international clients can easily understand” emphasizing the necessity of how speaking has to be in a proper accent besides proficiency. Another participant, P4 who is also from a business academic background, further states, “They preferred a very structured way of speaking”. Similarly, P6 compares his ability to speak English in a complex manner to be considered better than those who weren’t. He also mentions that because he comes from an English Medium background, it makes it easier for him to utilize the use of unique words clearly indicating himself as an advantage. As he states, “I think the fluency and use of complicated English words did make a difference as other candidates’ English was a little bit broken” distinguishing himself with other candidates based on complex use of English, hence indicating a communication standard during recruitment. This directly aligns with Mahjabeen’s (2025) study where her findings show “students from Bangla-medium backgrounds reported experiencing communication barriers, reduced confidence, and perceived bias from instructors. Furthermore, students reported that the university did not help to develop their English language proficiency or help them adapt to the aforementioned challenges related to the

medium of instruction. Students from an English medium background, however, experienced a greater ease of participation”.

P10, a graduate with a degree in English herself shares the impending standard that is required to have met during the interview process. As she says, “Knowing English is not enough, you have to know how to speak in a certain accent or a way for people to really accept you, so it’s not just a requirement for English but also a kind of English that people are looking for”. She further states “You have to speak English in a certain way to really stand out” highlighting that English communication ranges from a variety of standards to be met, as such to become exceptional, increasing the chances of employment. A final year student P11 who has given interviews mostly in the positions of teaching shares that “..recruiters look for confidence and fluency, especially for a teacher’s position”. She further adds, “..good pronunciations really do help in places like sales or marketing. They’re obviously trying to reach a more global market and so employers prefer candidates with better English-speaking competency. To be able to speak fluently is a bonus..” highlighting that external factors like pronunciations and accent have an equal effect as the job role. Overall, proper English communication interviews are therefore not merely delivering information but also a matter of professionalism, confidence and suitability for the role.

4.6 Limitations

This study is subject to multiple limitations that may be considered when discussing findings. The research design initially intended to include perspectives of both recent graduates and employers with a recruiting experience to showcase a balanced understanding. However, due to the unavailability of most of the employers, it was not possible to secure sufficient participation for this side. Hence the research study reflects only on the experiences and perceptions of recent graduates which created an imbalance in stakeholder representation.

Furthermore, as the interviews were conducted online, there were some technical interventions such as an unstable internet connection which affected the flow of conversation for which some parts of the participants' responses were cut off for some time or unclear due to the glitch. Some portions of it were therefore not recorded properly leading to minor gaps in data. Further research may address the aforementioned limiting factors by incorporating a more balanced sample including employer perspective and premium zoom/google meet to conduct online interviews to ensure higher data quality.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Research

This research reflects upon the common elements the participants faced during their own recruitment process, pertaining to language and how that shapes professional opportunities. The literature review discussed in detail the historical context of Bangladesh's colonial past, emphasizing the post-colonial influence of the British Empire on the country's linguistic landscape. This historical background is key in explaining why the English language still holds a significant position in education, professional communication, and institutional practices today in a post-colonial Bangladesh. The analysis section further explored themes such as the importance of international communication, cross-cultural interaction, and professional representation for Bangladeshi citizens. In most professional environments, language becomes closely connected to how individuals present themselves and how they are perceived by others, giving way to linguistic imperialism. Participants' responses reflected the idea that there are certain linguistic expectations in professional settings, particularly when interacting with international clients, organizations, or global networks. English often functions as a common medium that allows professionals to participate in cross-cultural communication and represent themselves and their organizations in a global playing field.

At the same time, the study also finds that English language competence may not always be the primary determinant during the initial stages of recruitment in every organization. Some workplaces may prioritize technical skills or experience over spoken English proficiency during interviews. However, the findings suggest that once individuals enter professional environments, a certain level of English competence often becomes expected of them. In many institutions and organizations, everyday workplace tasks such as writing reports, preparing

documents, communicating through email, or engaging with international partners are largely conducted in the English language. Hence even if spoken fluency is not always strongly emphasized during recruitment, other aspects of English competence like reading and writing, remain important in professional settings. These soft and linguistic skills enable employees to navigate workplace communication effectively and fulfill organizational requirements. Overall, the study concludes that while the role of the English language in recruitment practices may vary across contexts, English competence continues to play a meaningful role in professional communication, workplace functionality, and access to broader global and institutional opportunities.

5.2 Implications of Research

The English language is complex and often linked to historical and socio-economic contexts. Due to this, the study reveals how language can create distinctions or advantages in employment opportunities such as through prior work experience, educational background, skills development, etc. The findings may help future graduates to understand the importance of English proficiency during recruitment, allowing them to better equip themselves as suitable candidates for employment purposes like job interviews or professional communication. Most importantly, this study may encourage recruiters to reflect on whether their reliance on English is truly relevant, whether the need of English competency is necessary for the job position that the candidate is applying for. This would also help them design in a particular way, become fair and inclusive during hiring practices. These results may guide private universities to improve the English curriculum in such a manner that real-life English language use can be integrated into their lessons such as presentation skills, workplace communication, etc. aligning with job market demands.

5.3 Future Research Recommendations

This study primarily focuses on recent graduates or final year students of some private universities of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Hence further research may include a study from the perspective of recruiter's views on English proficiency and based on what specific qualification they hire candidates for. Furthermore, while this research only dissects experiences from private university students, future studies may involve interviewing recent graduates from public universities and may also target universities that are outside Dhaka for a more expanded study. As language proficiency often changes over a period of time, could be either a growth or a drop - future researchers may track graduates over time to check how English language affects not only initial recruitment but also later in the career.

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Appendix A.

CODING 01: P1

Data Excerpt	Codes	Theme
“We mostly work with international clients..” “I think they’re pretty fair in terms of recruitment processes because most companies that look for good English-speaking candidates are usually for roles that deal with international clients and require clear communication. That’s when English-speaking candidates are more preferred.” “I believe as long as communication is clear, employers don’t think about English-speaking fluency that much.”	International clients Fair Clear communication	Cross-cultural interactions
“..most of the interviews were spoken in Bengali because they were mostly Bangladeshi companies” “I was comfortable either way”	Comfortable	Competency

“it does happen where an employer decides if a candidate is smarter or not depending on how fluent they are in English”	Smart candidate Fluency in English	Stereotype Biasness
“I was pretty confident that I could properly communicate and make my point clear.”	Confident Clear points Proper communication	Confidence Expressions

CODING 2: P2

Data Excerpt	Codes	Theme
“They would often include certain terminologies that had to be in English.”	terminologies english	power dynamic
“..I feel more confident explaining certain things in English.”	confident	confidence/body language

“...it’s quite normal for both the interviewer and the interviewee to constantly shift between Bangla and English. When conversations become technical, they often switch to English, and when explaining regular things or trying to maintain a natural flow, they switch to Bangla. That feels more natural and makes the conversation smoother.”	shift	code switch
“...many small companies in Bangladesh tend to cater to international clients. Because of that, they require not only proficiency in English but also an accent that international clients can easily understand.”	International clients Proficiency Accent	Cross-cultural interactions Fluency / standard
“...English proficiency was required. For content writing and for communicating with international clients, fluent English is necessary.”	Content writing Communication with international clients Fluency - necessary	Cross-cultural interactions Fluency / standard
“I definitely felt anxious for roles that required communication with international	Anxious	Body language (anxiousness)

clients because English speaking is seen as a priority. For example, for roles like virtual assistants or administrative support, such as scheduling meetings or tracking projects, employers may still prioritise English-speaking ability.”	English speaking as a priority Roles like virtual assistants, administrative support, scheduling meetings, tracking projects	Job alignment
“verbally rehearsed beforehand to make myself more comfortable using that language during the interview.”	Verbally rehearsed beforehand Comfortable	Need for practice (previous competency)
“...recruiters expect me to know financial concepts and communicate them in English because there’s an international standard for these concepts. They prioritise both your knowledge and how well you can communicate it. If you know something but can’t present it properly, it still won’t get you the job.”	Expect knowing financial concepts International standard Knowledge and communication Know something but can’t present	Alignment of knowledge and expression (existing knowledge but unable to express)

“..Most young people now target small-scale companies, startups, or software-related roles that deal with international clients. For these jobs, fluent English is necessary. Since our university education is conducted in English, even for local jobs, we often need to use English concepts and terminology. Many international clients choose small-scale companies in Bangladesh because services are cheaper, which has led to a growing freelance market. Due to job scarcity, many young people turn to freelancing, which requires strong English communication skills.”	International clients Fluency- necessary Local jobs - english concepts and terminologies Services in bd- cheaper Job scarcity - freelancing (more pay than usual) Communication skills	Cross-cultural communication Exploitation Clear communication
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CODING 03: P3

Data Excerpt	Code	Theme
“..in interviews that required me to speak entirely in English, I lacked confidence.”	Speak fully english Lacked confidence	Bias treatment Pressure

“I felt pressure that if I couldn’t speak fluently, I might be rejected or treated differently compared to others who were more fluent.”	Felt pressure Rejected Treated differently	
“..they assumed I was struggling with English and were being kind by allowing me to speak Bangla freely. That change in impression was noticeable.”	Struggling Being kind Change - noticeable	Impression
“Even though I introduced myself as an English graduate, the first thing they asked was whether I had taken the IELTS exam or had any proficiency document to prove my English skills.”	English graduate Ielts Proficiency document	Background
“...they didn’t even ask about my major. They assumed I came from a literature background and believed that studying literature alone wouldn’t help improve communication skills. So they asked for an additional document as proof of English proficiency.”	Literature background Improve Communication skills Additional document	Clear communication

“..asked my friends about interview language, most of them said interviews were conducted in English. There is a common perception among English graduates that you’ll only be selected if you can speak fluent English.”	Interview language Common perception Speak fluent english	Impression
“I followed English content creators who guide people on job interview preparation. I also used AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini, using their voice models to simulate job recruiters and practice interviews before the actual ones.”	Follow content creators AI tools Voice models Practice	Power dynamic
“..I don’t think they are fair—especially in the private sector. Fluency in English is often equated with being smart. If someone isn’t fluent, they are considered less capable.”	Fair Private sector Equated with being smart Fluent Capable	Biasness Power dynamic Competence

CODING 4: P4

Data excerpt	Code	Theme
“...90% of the interviews i had attended were conducted fully in english”	Conducted in English	Mode
“In big companies, for example, I gave an interview in HSBC for an internship role so there I got nervous and due to being nervous, I spoke a bit of bangla like for example I ended up speaking in bangla so I thought it was looked down upon. I mean it is an MNC and major corporate conglomerate banks which are established and stuff like that. They look down a bit when spoken in a mix of Bangla and English.” “So if it’s more reputable they prefer u only speak in English...”	Big companies Nervous Looked down upon MNC Major corporate conglomerate Reputable Established	Fear and anxiety Power dynamic
“So the interviewer will not respond to you in bangla, like they will continue to speak in english even if you speak in bangla and obviously as per the body language they look a bit down on you.....there’s a preference to english which is quite evident in the	Preference Body language Look down Evident	Body language Preference

interviewees- the way they act, the way they conduct themselves, they don't really prefer you use bangla especially because since all the tasks are going be in english they prefer the fluency a lot. This gives a competitive edge if you can conduct yourself in english compared to speaking in banglish or in bangla.”	Act/conduct themselves Task- english Fluency Competitive edge	
“...when I asked for feedback, they specifically emphasized that they are looking for someone who can conduct themselves in English properly so sometimes.. So you are..it’s a part of the judging process like whether they are gonna hire you or not, a lot of it depends on whether you can conduct yourself in english...”	Judging process	Expectations
“..I felt a lot of pressure. They preferred a very structured way of speaking..” “...you can’t stutter, you can’t like mess up. For instance you can’t lag or be nervous, it’s very hard for someone whose like both bangla	Pressure Structured Stutter Mess up Both bangla and english as	Body language- nervousness, pressure

and english are the primary language and banglish is like a part of way they conduct themselves...so speaking in full english becomes a bit hard.”	primary language	
“The supervisor clearly stated that ‘because we thought you spoke so well we thought you knew a lot which is why we hired you’ but she was later taunted that ‘you speak so well then why is job performance so low’. So the main takeaway is that the interviewers definitely prefer someone who can speak well compared to people who can’t.”	Speak well Performance low Prefer	Preference Speaking and job alignment
“They look for both hard skills and soft skills and how much of a team player you are, how much you can coordinate with other members of your team..”	Soft skills Hard skills Team player Coordinate	Skills - job alignment
“..there is obviously a bias toward candidates who can speak English very well. So for those who have not practiced English very well in their undergrad, I feel like employers would	Bias Practice Pick Fluent	Power dynamic

not pick them over people who are already fluent and really good in English...”		
“Many job descriptions specifically mention that candidates from an English-medium background..”	Specifically mention EM background	Past experience Fluency
“I think also the way you behave, the way you speak and also the way you present yourself - all have an impact on the recruitment process....I don’t think they are fair”	Behave Speak Present Impact Fair	Body language Clear communication Presentation Unfairness

CODING 05: P5

Data Excerpt	Codes	Theme
“Most of the entry-level interviews followed an English-based mode of communication..”	Entry level English-based	Post colonial effect Power dynamic

“..there were international people..” “..if i get selected for that position i had to work with a lot of international experts so in that case i had to be able to speak in english..”	International Position Experts	Expectation of cross-cultural communication Hierarchy - power dynamic
“...yeah i felt that i need to work on or emphasize on or have some practice on presenting my thoughts in a way so that it can be helpful for everyone to understand so in terms of presenting myself in a particular language it also requires that i need to be fluent in terms of expressing my thoughts so yeah overall its not only about the speaking or the fluency in speaking but also presenting..make them understand.”	Need to work Emphasize Practice Presenting thoughts For everyone to understand Expressing thoughts Speaking, presenting	Clear communication
“..its all about presenting your thoughts and presenting what you believe your intellectuality so speaking english in a good manner, utilization of proper words which can be aligned with their.. The company’s vision and mission actually and	Intellectuality Good manner Utilization of proper words	Clear communication (expressions, presentation)

that impact their decision making because if you are good enough to communicate with your interviewees, it would be better for them to evaluate how much capable you are for them or how much fit you are for that particular position so yeah i felt that when i use some english oriented, impactful words actually in developmental organization for example there are bunch of words that should be familiar with the organization structure and everything..”	Aligned Company’s vision/mission Impact in decision making Evaluate Capable Particular position	Decision making - power dynamic Evaluating capabilities (fairness) Job alignment
“When the interviewers agreed with my responses and engaged positively, it gave me the feeling that they were satisfied and that I was on the right path.”	Engaged positively Satisfied Right path	Body language
“understanding the roles and responsibilities and then how my skills are aligned with that particular requirements and how i can be a valuable aspect or asset for that organization for that company”	Roles and responsibilities Skills Valuable aspect/ asset	Job alignment

“..know something very unique about the company that a minimum amount of people actually know.”	Knowing unique about company	
“..if you are not able to communicate with people, even though you have some concrete about what they are asking or seeking for, you will not be able to present yourself, you will not be able to convince the recruiter so in that case i think the first and foremost..uhh important aspect is to focus on the communication competences..”	Communicate Presenting yourself Convince the recruiter Focus on communication competences	Clear communication, delivering the message properly

CODING 06: P6

Data Excerpt	Codes	Theme
“..I do a lot of extracurriculars so I have to speak a lot.” “I think I was a little bit more confident since I'm from an English	Extracurricular, speak a lot More confident, EM background	Prior practice, experience

medium background. So I was a little bit more confident when I was completely speaking in English.” “As I said, I have a long experience of speaking so I was generally comfortable and I think I was a little bit more confident since I'm from an English medium background.”	Comfortable	
“..my introduction I did it in English because I do not think the alternative for Bangla was appropriate there. The research intern position was mixed, I used both Bangla and English.”	Research intern position Appropriate	Job alignment
So I kind of read what they were expecting.	Read Expecting	Body language
“They asked me that you might be dealing with people that might not have good english so can u like switch to bangla and you know talk completely in bangla.....i was like not	Switch Tone shift Casual, serious	Code switch Tone shift - body language

ready for it. And they were really serious about the tone shifted from a friendly-casual to a little bit serious.”		
“So when i was speaking in proper, fluent english, it was a proper exchange and based on their facial expressions and their change initially there was a tension but when i started speaking and when it built up after my introduction and everything, they were more like comfortable and there was a shift from a more HR attitude to a more casual and conversational attitude.”	Proper speaking Fluent English Tension Comfortable Shift Attitude	Body language Impression
“I think there’s this idea we have as Bangladeshis that if you speak English, it means you know things better or and it's like, usually we're doing that in a non corporate or non working space, people usually, like if he's speaking in English, so it's good he might be more intelligent or something.”	Speak english, know things better, more intelligent non corporate Working space Presenting	Power dynamic Hierarchy Impression, perception Intellectuality Presentation

“I think, yes, it does affect if, if you are to speak in front of people, if you're presenting, if it's such a business position or marketing position where you're not talking about it, and also, if the employer has the mindset that speaking English means more intelligent, because we do have this perception in Bangladesh.”	Mindset Perception	
“when I mentioned specific jargons and stuff,uhh the employers were like, there was like, a physical display of contentment that”	Jargons Physical display of contentment	Impression Body language
“..I think the fluency and use of complicated English words did make a difference, because a lot of the other people that interviewed, however much I could assess from far away, their English was comparatively a little bit broken, especially those that	Fluency Complicated English words Difference English comparatively broken	Clear communication - fluency Biasness

are not from English medium background.”	EM Background	
“..my club experiences and extracurricular experiences and a lot of the even management stuff that I did, especially with foreign delegates and everything, has given me instant, proper speaking skill..” “ speaking skill wise, I was confident.”	Club and extracurricular experiences Management Foreign delegates Instant, proper speaking skill Confident	Past experiences International - cross cultural communication Skills Body language
“..they cared about how well spoken I was, and how easy it was to actually understand what I was trying to convey. So I would definitely say that it played an important role in that..” “..I think being able to actually compress that and deliver that within the interview window..”	Well spoken Convey Understand Important role Compress and deliver Within the interview window	Clear communication - delivering/conveying the message

“The research position then again, all international researchers or standard researchers are done in English. So although that interview did not demand that, but I do know that my English during the interview played a role.”	Research position International researchers Standard researchers English - played a role	Job alignment International clients- cross cultural communication Standard
“..in terms of verbal communication they might use bengali language but in terms of official documentary process even in the government job you can see that they use english..”	Verbal communication - bengali Official documentary - english	Powerplay Hierarchy Post colonial effect
“I think nowadays, all workplaces actually want that, regardless of whether there's a demand for it”	Demand	
“..they are going to use that physical interview process as a big part of the assessment. So I did feel my command in English and being able to actually convey exactly what I want to say, and me knowing exactly what	Interview as assessment Common in english Conveying what he wanted Points they wanted him to touch/cover	Job alignment Clear communication - conveying message

points they want me to touch that affected my employment”	Command in english Affect employment	
“Generally, my pipeline is to research the company to see what their vibe is like, what their culture is..what kind of employees they want, what kind of communication did they do on social media....website or anything. I check that out. Then I try to find people that have actually gone through the interview process or work there, if I have a connection, and ask them for a similar question. So that I can have a mental preparation of some answers ready.” “having a good understanding of the role, and probably rehearse a little bit, I did not like dedicatedly rehearse...when I was on the way...I was actually thinking this part was important, so I should be aware of it,	Research the company Vibe Culture Social media Communication Similar questions Mental preparation	Background check, past experiences Mental health Expectations Connection, networking Job alignment

and have a talking point ready on that, and obviously think of an introduction.... if there's any skill based, anything related or the application that I made, anything that was part of my application, I would actually go through that, because there can be questions based on that”.	Good understanding of role Rehearse This part important Talking point ready Skill based Anything related	Preparation Skills
“Educational background, I think if you are from a reputed, reputed Education Institute, if you go to, like, good schools or good universities, even for private universities, I would say the recruitment process usually, you know, rights that we give preference to people from north, south brac University, UIU, ulab - the ones that are actually like on the top in terms of private university, companies give precedence to that. Even if you're from places like buet or from dhaka	Reputed education institution Has a different merit to the name itself Assess speaking ability as well as the relevance of your answers	Clear communication Job alignment (knowledge vs skill)

university, that's obviously has a different merit to the name itself.” “...I think at least good recruitment would like assess not only your speaking ability but the relevance of your answers. How much those answer actually, if reflect your knowledge or the relevance of those answers in terms of what role you applied for, uhm..I think these are some of the things that are considered.”	Answer reflecting knowledge Relevance of answers in terms of the roles you apply for	
“...for good companies or big companies, they also expect, like, a certain decorum from you, like how you dress or how you talk, or basic things, like, asking for permission before sit sitting, or greetings, or how you address the people involved in recruitment, or if you have to send a mail back, your ability to do that like I think all of these are taken into	Big companies expecting decorum - how you dress, talk, permission, greetings, addressing people, sending a mail back Taken into account in terms of competency	Body language (act, dress, talk, behave) Connection to sociolinguistics (social etiquettes, language expectations, culture)

account in terms of competency overall, because these are, in the long Run, very important components of you functioning as a productive and actually efficient and useful unit in the workplace”.	Long run Components of functioning productively and efficiently	Ability to reflect upon work ethics and commitment
“It's definitely a skill. It's not..it does not reflect your knowledge. Because I've had a lot of professors that actually do not speak English well, because they've worked all their life in Bangladesh, around Bangladeshi academics, and they actually do a lot of their thinking, brainstorming and everything in Bangla because they grew up like that. They were more connected to our mother tongue. They did their primary education and even their advanced education in Bangla. So what they do is they do their primary work in Bangla, then they for convenience, for	Skill Not reflecting knowledge Bangladeshi academics Thinking, brainstorming - bangla More connected to mother tongue Primary & advanced education - bangla International publication - converted to English	Power dynamic (native language) International

international publication, everything they converted to English.” “So English is just a communication medium, but it's not a reflection of your knowledge.”	English as communication medium not reflection of knowledge	
“..one of my cousins is from a Geography and Environment science background. He has a good idea as good scientific background, a good idea about his work. But he's command English is basic, he faced trouble because people were, like, throwing things at him in English, and he was not able to answer back in fluent, instant, English like them, because his primary knowledge is in Bangla. He can, if given time, he can actually express that in English, but it was a misrepresentation of his knowledge.”	Good background in science but basic english, cannot reply instantly in english Primary knowledge in bangla If given time, can express in english Misrepresentation of his knowledge	Knowledge vs language Misinterpretation Unclear expressions Verbal communication not matching with what he wanted to say

“I do think that that makes it really unfair, like a lot of places demand your written proficiency. But because a lot of us, we learn English, but we don't have a lot of places to use that since our people who are from a primary Bangla background do not regularly converse in English. So for them, I think it's really, really, you know, it plays a very big bias that the employers might have.”	Demand in written proficiency We do not have a lot of places to use english speaking People from bangla background not conversing in english regularly Bias	Biasness Demand in written proficiency Use of daily english/ practice
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CODING 07: P7

Excerpt	Code	Theme
“I’ve been privileged enough to be in some positions where I didn’t need to go through a formal interview process.”	Privileged	Bias

“Most of the positions I apply for are in the writing field, so the interview processes usually focus on writing tasks and speaking fluency.” “I work almost exclusively in the writing sector, and English is both the preferred and my own preferred language.”	Writing field Focus on writing tasks	Job alignment
“The interviewer was so impressed by my writing that I bypassed all remaining interview steps. Others were still being interviewed while I had effectively already been selected.”	Impressed Bypassed remaining interview steps	Power dynamic
“I’ve never felt that pressure personally. Even when I took my IELTS exam, I didn’t practice much for the speaking test. That said, I do acknowledge that the job market is highly class-graded. English-medium students often receive priority, not necessarily privilege, but preference.”	Pressure Class-graded Priority Privilege Preference	Power dynamic
“practically speaking, I can see why employers might prefer it, especially in today’s digitized environment where employees may be asked to appear in videos or	Prefer Represent	Representation

represent the company publicly. In my own field, English is a necessity. In other sectors, it shouldn't be, but due to language imperialism and colonial influence, English competency is often overvalued."	Language imperialism Colonial influence Competence - overvalued	Power dynamic Bias
"..my strong written English allowed me to bypass the spoken interview entirely. In another case, before entering university in 2021, I applied for a full-time content writing job. Although I was rejected due to lack of formal education, the interviewers expressed strong encouragement because they were impressed by how I spoke. Conversely, my Boimela application was rejected because of weak Bangla proficiency."	Bypass Encouragement Proficiency	Bias
"I never prepared specifically for speaking. My preparation always depends on the role. For writing jobs, I study the organization's writing style, tone, and content. That preparation helped me during writing tests. I also acknowledge that this ease is a privilege of my English-medium background.."	Preparation Role Writing style Tone Content Privilege	Body language Job alignment

“..they look at whether you’ve worked in similar fields and whether your institution is considered “reputable.” This reflects a colonized mindset, where English-medium education is favored. I personally benefit from this privilege.”	Similar fields Reputable Colonized mindset Favored Benefit Privilege	Past experience Job alignment
“I don’t feel fully equipped to answer because I am fluent in English, but based on observations, recruitment is biased. In northern Dhaka places like Gulshan and Banani English fluency is heavily favored due to Western corporate culture. In southern Dhaka, English matters less. I’ve seen capable candidates rejected due to lack of spoken English, even for primarily written roles. This is unfair and rooted in language imperialism. Recruiters need to move away from English bias, especially when the job itself does not require strong English skills.”	Observations Biased Favored Western corporate culture Matters Capable candidates Rejected Lack of spoken english	Bias Power dynamic

	Unfair Imperialism Require	
“Rejecting a contributor based on speaking, when the role is primarily written, is hypocritical. That rejection reflects colonial language bias rather than merit.”	Hypocritical Rejection Bias Merit	Bias Power dynamic

CODING 08: P8

Excerpt	Code	Theme
most of the candidates which I saw are, how do I say... they are maybe very good at English, but due to being afraid, or being their first time in an interview, or not being comfortable, not being enough confidence, they kind of mumble and struggle a lot.	Afraid Not enough confidence Mumble Struggle	Body language
I was fully confident since it was in English, and I have a lot of experience talking in English because my past experience on work, job experience, I have to work with foreign clients, so only mode of	Confident Past experience	Body language

communication for me was an English language, which helped me stand out in every interview I went.	Foreign clients Stand out	Previous work experience/job alignment International communication
“...the interviewer thinks like this, if the guy can speak properly, proficiently in English, he can take that candidate in front of a big board, in front of a big crowd, makes the English proficiency, makes the candidate at least 80 percent possible, say..taken for choice? Because the moment when you see you can speak properly in English, and you don't mind being uhm standing or presenting yourself in a crowd or room full of seniors, they automatically take you as their employer as candidate...they always see, what, how do you answer yourself when they ask you critical questions, and can you answer through all the mystery questions they ask you, and also how, how long you can hold this professional act in front of them in English while they question you.”	Speaking proficiently Big board, crowd Presenting yourself in a crowd Seniors	Fluency Representation

	Critical, mystery questions Professional act Infront of them	
“...once they see that you're a professional, just by seeing how you sit, talk and describe yourself, especially in English...”	Professional How you sit, talk, describe	Body language
“..you'll see this in Bangladeshi job culture or any corporate life in Bangladesh. whenever your English is in an excellent form any employer, any boss or any colleague, they'll start admiring you, thinking you're a bit better than them, or maybe a bit special, because just by speaking fluent English, can put you in a good position in a job. That's how the Bangladeshi job cultivate is.”	Bangladeshi job culture Admiring Special Good position	Hierarchy Power dynamic Bangladeshi social context

“They take it as an add on, as in, okay, I'm taking this guy for accounts, but he can represent the whole accounting department when it comes to monthly meetings or events or any important role or matter when the whole team is involved, you need at least one or two person to speak for the whole team or speak for themselves...Speaking fluent in English is not just a skill, it's also an art. art of uhm achieving attention, grabbing people's attention in the crowd, trying to make sense of what you're saying.”	Add-on Represent Important role Whole team involved Skill Grabbing attention Make sense of saying	Representation Importance Clear communication
“Nowadays a lot of corporate companies are looking forward to the new generation, the Gen Z students and the other candidates because it's time for the rising generation to stand up and they kind of understand that, and how today's generation is we like to speak up. We don't like to be submissive. So jobs and interviews.. they see how expressive you are and at the same time how submissive you are too. But what my actual answer was that yes, English speaking impacts the interview recruitment process...”	Speak up Expressive Impacts	Clear communication

“Just for the last day before the interview, I search a little bit about the company and the role, what they're asking me about this few questions, along with that, a mix of all the previous work, of what I do, so that I can answer all these questions when they ask me in small, brief, but yet professional way.”	Company, role Previous work	Job alignment Past experiences
“they will look for your educational background, where have you finished your studies. Then they'll see all the other things. How is your expression, the way of your speaking.. Can you actually handle problem, situation and whatnot, and the first, the first job, the employer basically takes a risk. If you're a candidate who has never worked, the employer doesn't know what he can do with you or what you are capable of.” “it's more likely to luck, plus there's a reference anyway as we're in Bangladesh, without a reference, getting a job is a very hard thing...”	Educational background Studies Expression Way of speaking Luck Reference	Past experiences Clear communication
“when they think of the university graduate, they no longer think of someone who just finished education. They think it's a professional coming from university who has learned for the last four years how to be a	Professional Stand out Expect	Body language Expectations

professional and stand out in a workplace. So they expect a lot, and it's sometimes for the first job interview...”		
“...they only want to see what work did you do in your previous job? What are you capable of? What tools do you bring in the table, if you join us in this table, I mean the company, and also, what are your connections and How, how strong and further your networking skills are so after the first job, trust me, the educational background- doesn't even matter that anyone care what you study or not. only for the first job, they'll try to see if you come from a good background.”	Previous job Capable Connections Networking skills	Past experiences
“...have you seen there was this summit in dhaka, there's a very good looking guy over the speaking about what plannings are there going to be in bangladesh in the next 50 years..of a when it comes to technology and whatnot.” “...the fact that he spoke the entire speech in english, it was for the bangladeshi crowd.. So even the bangladeshi crowd is in a stage where..yeah bengali	Bangladeshi crows - english speech Valuing differently Higher class treatment Standard	Hierarchy Power dynamic

speaking is also a standard but if you're not speaking in English properly..you're stuck in the Bangla rural sector because now if you go out and see police stations, or if you go to a restaurant, or if you go to a hotel or anywhere you go, if you speak a bit of English, automatically, they will start valuing you a bit differently or giving you a bit more higher class treatment. Now in a Bangladeshi culture they may refer it as a "high class treatment" but I believe it should not be called a high class would treatment rather than an actual standard."		
"there will be a point you will have to go and speak up to represent yourself. Or maybe a project you're doing, maybe a work you're doing, or anything you're doing, whether you speak fully in English or Bangla, there will be a big difference and that is the difference they will see. Now most of the time in Bangladesh seniors will not even understand what you're blabbering in English and won't even understand but will still clap their hands because they are thinking oh yeah he has just given a presentation in English and is able to describe everything."	Represent Difference Clap hands Presentation International / national level	Representation Cross-cultural connections

“..in terms of job recruitment, it is 100 percent important no matter whether you go on an international or Bangladeshi national level, that speaking fluently in English always matters and will always be there strongly.”		
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CODING 09: P9

Excerpt	Code	Theme
“..when the recruiters asked questions in English, then I would mostly answer in English but sometimes when I did answer in Bangla, they didn't seem to mind or didn't say anything. Some of them prefer it in Bangla and some of them in English, depending on the organization. The way they switch between Bangla and English, I was comfortable with it.”	Switch Comfortable	Code switch
“If I am applying to a better organization, then I feel the pressure to speak better English and present myself better.”	Better organization Pressure to speak better english Presenting better	Expectation Pressure

“I have given a few interviews for the accounts officer role where English is not important. The main point is whether you are knowledgeable about the accounts department. So it’s not necessarily mandatory to be fluent in English in this case.”	Main point - knowledgeable	Job alignment
“In terms of preparation, I research on the organization that I will be interviewing for, go through stuff related to my education, some general knowledge and recent developments.”	Research about organization Related to education Recent developments	Prior preparation
“The main focus is on experience and relevant activities. They used to focus on CGPA, merit and positions before but now, not so much. They focus more on experience.”	Main focus Experience Relevant activities	Job alignment
“In the Bangladeshi job sector, being fluent in English means you can present very well. They think you’re capable of presenting and will send you to certain places. But then if you’re not, then they won’t give you certain positions or send you to give presentations. This kind of stands out as a negative point. So in	Fluent in english Presentation Certain positions Negative point	Fluency Representation Job alignment Impression

certain sectors English is very important, not so much in others, so I would say it's fair.”		
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CODING 10: P10

Excerpt	Code	Theme
“..i have this tendency actually in university to always start a conversation with a faculty member or somebody in an official position. I always start the conversation in english and that was the case when i sat for my first two interviews because both of them were like in my university and like they were with faculty members so yeah i started in english..”	Tendency Official position Starting conversation in english Faculty members	Official use - power dynamic Impression
“Like in the workplace when I speak to the principal or my colleague speaks to the principal, we do it in english. But whenever we are speaking to one of the board members or the directors, we could talk in bangla.”	Principal, colleagues - english	Official use- power dynamic

“..i felt whenever the conversation shifted to bangla in an interview or in an office space, when you’re talking to your employer its a very mechanical conversation that you are having. But when youre speaking in bangla, i think that is not there anymore like you dont feel..the conversation doesnt feel mechanical anymore. It feels like more casual and i would even say comforting in a way even though i did study in english. I feel like whenever employers are speaking in bangla yeah.. There is a shift..its not very apparent but its there. A shift in mood you can say.”	Conversation shift Interview, office space -mechanical Bangla- not mechanical, casual, comforting Shift in mood	Official use- power dynamic Language suitability
“...interviews are always intimidating right and as i am still a newly graduated student with not much experience..”	Intimidating Newly graduated\ Experience	Body language Past experience
“..the moment i started speaking and i guess they didnt expect that i would speak in english because i am from english version background and they were happy that they had my cv with them and they could see my	Expect Background Speaking in english - pleasantly surprised	Expectation Impression Body language

educational background and i guess they didnt expect that i would be speaking in english so when i did, i could see that they were pleasantly surprised. I could see it. And the way they conversed with me after i spoke to them in english...i knew i was going to get the job while i was sitting in the interview and i know it was because of the way i spoke because they didnt really ask me like any of my like the questions that are usually asked in the interview.”	Knew i would get the job	
“..i wanted to impress them so i talked as much as i could, as fluently as i could and.. Right after that..they started you know they went on to negotiate the salary with me. So i knew that i was going to get the job and i knew that it happened because of the way i spoke to them.” “...that is something that i was really trying to do..really impress them with how i spoke and uhh that worked. There was an instant	Impress Talked as much Fluently Negotiate salary Instant shift Affect interview process Other candidates	Impression Fluency Salary negotiation Comparison

shift..i could feel it the moment i started speaking.” “In this one, this time i feel that yeah i could like.. I could see that they were impressed and i was conversing in english much more than the other candidates. So yeah i could feel that yeah it did affect the interview process...”		
“...there were a lot of times where i could feel that pressure..that i could see people where they sort of underestimated me that my..that i wont be very good at speaking because i am not from english medium background and that sort of stayed with me...” “...i would say yeah i didnt do o levels i got my ssc and hsc from this school, i could feel that people would start judging me instantly and some people have admitted to it. That you know like in my face, they did do that.”	Pressure Underestimated Not from EM background Judging Impress	Pressure Power dynamic Impression

“So that sort of really stayed with me I guess? So when i was you know i am working at an english medium school, so that was really playing in my head at that time that okay there is a possibility that you know i am not from an english medium background so they might not hire me so i have to impress them that my english is as good or you know on par with other english medium students so that pressure was definitely there yeah.”		
“Now an art teacher doesnt really know..she doesnt have to be very very fluent in english, they dont need to have really good english but uhh like one of the “higher ups” admitted that they were a bit skeptical about hiring her because apparently her english wasn't that good and maybe because she comes from outside of dhaka. so they hired her because you know she was very good at what she does and yeah with time, like you know like	Higher ups, principal Outside dhaka Skeptical	Employers preferring candidates with better speaking ability even when the job does not exactly require it

the principal himself said that yeah we were a bit skeptical.” “Like even if english is not, you know it is not part of the job like you know you don't have to converse in English, people still look for it.”		
“..even if they know english, knowing english is like not enough like you know you have to know how to speak in a certain accent or a certain you know way for people to really accept you so yeah its not just a requirement for english but also a kind of english that people are looking for.” “just speaking in english is not enough. You have to speak english in a certain way in order to you know really stand out.	Certain accent Certain way For people to really accept you Not just a requirement A kind of english that people look for	Meeting the standard

	Need to stand out	
“...i always try to tell myself that its not a big deal, like it doesnt matter whether i get in-when i have that kind of you know uhm attitude going on, i feel like it becomes a lot easier for me because the more i stress about something i feel that the more i stumble over my words, i might stutter, i might just completely just blank out so i try to keep that attitude that its not a big deal and i feel that helps but yeah other than that i do not usually use technical words.. I havent really faced them a lot but yeah i am trying to have this mental speech prepared in my head you know when they ask “why should we hire you” or “introduce yourself” so these two questions are something that I try to prepare myself with beforehand. But other than that i feel that the less preparation i go with, the better i do. But other than that I also do try to keep a professional body language..”	Stutter stress Blank Attitude (not thinking of it as a big deal) Mental speech prepared Keeping a professional body language Prepare myself beforehand	Body language (confidence)

“...being very articulated into what you want to..what you are saying, that is very important. Merit is also very very important but i feel like you know uhm if your merit doesnt go hand in hand with your articulation, uhm there can be a bit of an issue that that is not very fair but it exists. And uhm like so if you have the grades people will automatically assume that you are not articulated that if you do not have that confident body language people will start to question your merit as well.” “Merit and articulation, I think of them are like..they go hand in hand.” “...i have seen a lot of people who have a lot of merit but since there is you know.. Its not just that they have a problem with articulation, they just you know who has someone who has an awkward personality or somebody who is very shy and thats why they are not being able to articulate well.	Articulation and merit - combined Unfair but exists Body language - confidence Doubt Awkward personality, shy	Job alignment Biasness Body language
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Even they have faced a lot of question regarding their merit that you know people are constantly doubting them..”		
“i have some idea of you know what a person is looking for, what an employer is you know..liek when i am working for a company, when im working for anything, a club or newspaper or whatever, i am representing that organization. So umm so i have been on the other end and i know that whenever i want somebody to represent my organization i want some qualities in them okay. So i knew what i was looking for and whenever i am going into an interview i try to put that thing in my head as well that whatever i wa looking for in a candidate, an employer is probably going to look for the same things in me as a candidate.”	Representation of the organization Putting myself in their shoes Expecting what they would want to look for	Representation
“..i cannot really say that there is you know.. I cannot really generalize when it comes to the entirety of bangladesh but uhm i think it depends on the job like as i said.”	I cannot really generalize	Not generalized Depends on the job on whether recruitment practices are fair to

		candidates who aren't fluent in english Job alignment
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CODING 11: P11

Excerpt	Code	Theme
“...even if I did code switch in English he did not seem to mind and I did not see any shift in the entire conversation so I don't think that implies here.”	Code switch Didn't mind	Code switch
“Yes absolutely nowadays we know that the more you can speak in English and I don't mean that in a demeaning way but the better we can speak English the better it is. Since the position was for a spoken English instructor so of course I had to show them I am fluent in spoken English or otherwise they would not hire me for it.”	Better english Position - spoken english instructor Show them i am fluent in spoken english Not hire	Impression (standard) Fluency Affect the hiring process

“Yes I do think employers prefer candidates who have better English speaking competency than others. That's why I think there is a bit of discrimination in the case of Bangla medium and English medium students. I may be saying something stereotypical but good pronunciations really do help in places like sales or marketing. They're obviously trying to reach a more global market and so employers prefer candidates with better English-speaking competency.”	Better english speaking competency Discrimination Stereotypical but good pronunciations really do help Preference	Fluency and pronunciation
“Like the pressure I spoke about before I was feeling anxious about if they would not take me because it's a spoken English instructor position and they might judge me like,” how will you take the English classes if you cannot speak in front of us”.	Pressure Anxious Spoken english instructor position - take the english classes	Fear and anxiety Alignment with job positions

“I felt as though I could have said some things better, or the fact that I was stuttering, or the fact that I could have said the thing better in English, I could have had better chances”	Could have said some things better Stuttering Could have had better chances	Hesitancy Pressure to improve
“I gave the entire prompt about the interview and how I should prepare for it. How I should introduce myself.” “I also saw many reels on FB and Instagram about what I should say , the do’s and don’ts of an interview so I used to watch those and I still do. I took some ideas from there and I also asked a few of my friends so I kind of mixed those together, some ideas from myself as well...”		
“..in the written exam or interviews, they look at more of your personality, like social skills which are very important...obviously	Personality Social skills	Body language (personality and social skills)

you have the written results but if there's no written exams there will be an interview process where it matters how you convince your interviewer that you're eligible for the job. I think that's what matters. If your CGPA is good but you can't explain things or you don't have good social skills, that doesn't really work. Especially as a teacher you would need that. I think recruiters also look for confidence and fluency, especially for a teacher's position. I think that is what matters.”	Written exams, interview process Convincing your interviewer Eligible for the job Fluency and confidence Explaining things	Alignment with job positions (teacher) Impression/standard
“..English medium students might have a higher chance of getting the higher paid jobs. For example, for a marketing or sales job there might be a bias, “oh she can speak English very well, I can make her the face of the company”. So that person can do marketing and they might also get promotions earlier.”	English medium students Higher paid jobs Bias Face of the company Promotions earlier	Biasness (unfair promotion/ high pay/ EM-BM discrimination) Representation of the organization
“English is a global language, to be very honest, so a global language obviously works everywhere. To be able to speak	English - global language	Unfairness Knowing english leading to more job

fluently is a bonus point so it's not like you won't get a job but it might be harder for higher paying jobs or more job opportunities. I think English does matter and I would naturally blame the recruiters in this country if they consider this a major factor in the hiring process.”	Speaking fluently - bonus point Higher paying jobs More job opportunities Naturally blame the recruiters - if they consider this a major factor Not really fair	opportunities and higher pay range
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