

BANGLADESHI STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON ONLINE
SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING AS A HUMANISTIC
LEARNING

By

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the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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Approval

The thesis/project titled “Bangladeshi Tertiary Level Students’ Perceptions on Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning as a Humanistic Learning” submitted by

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Ethics Statement

All the rules of ethical issues have been maintained before conducting the study. Consent form (See Appendix A) was sent to all the participants before conducting the interview with them.

Abstract:

Since the time of Covid-19, online classes have got wider recognition. Even in today when the world is healing, and everything is happening on-site, online classes did not lose its existence. However, in today's post covid world, the students are facing stress, frustration, and many other mental and physical challenges. So, their learning environment should be such which is considerable to their physical and mental states. In such case, humanistic education might be a suitable teaching approach as it speaks for empathy in education along with many other skills for the development of the learners. Nevertheless, so far, very limited research study has concentrated on the humanistic education in online classes where humanistic learning approach needs more recognition in today's post covid era for enabling students to learn along with coping up with their personal hardships. That is why this research focuses on how much humanistic role the teachers play in the online synchronous and asynchronous classes, and also some barriers of humanistic education in such classroom settings from the perspective of Bangladeshi students. This study has taken a qualitative research approach where one by one interview has been selected as the data collection tool. Fifteen students from different universities of Bangladesh took part in this research study. From the interviews with the participants, it has been found that the students of Bangladesh are well acquainted with various online synchronous and asynchronous classes where they think that their teachers play multifarious humanistic roles by showing empathy to the students, inspiring creative thinking, allowing learning at own pace, and promoting learner autonomy in the classrooms. However, some barriers of humanistic education in online classes have been spotted as well like difficulty in emphasizing empathy and authority in the classrooms due to communication gap in online asynchronous classes, and also the inability of the teachers to allow learning at own pace to the learners for being liable to a fixed schedule. This study also recommends some solutions for overcoming the apparent challenges founded in this study. Overall, this research study acknowledges the concept of humanistic education in online classes, and thus opens up scopes for further scholarly work in the related field.

Keywords: Online classes; humanistic education; Bangladeshi tertiary level; synchronous and asynchronous classes; empathy

Dedication

The departed soul of my mother who has always been my guardian angel, and fuels me to keep going to be the one whom she always expected me to become.

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Glossary

COVID 19:	An infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
Synchronous Learning:	A type of distance learning where students attend classes virtually at the same time as the instructors and other classmates.
Asynchronous Learning:	A type of distance learning that do not occur at the same time or at the same place.
Humanistic Learning:	A learner-centered teaching approach based on the humanistic psychology.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT

The present age is ruled by technology. Almost every sector of our day-to-day life, is now being operated through various technological instruments. Educational sector is also taking a full advantage of technology. Different technologies are now being used broadly both in teaching and learning as it increases the learners' motivation and learners' engagement (Koptcha et al., 2016), promotes pedagogical benefits to the teachers (Ashrafzade & Sayadian, 2015), and also opens door for innovative and creative learning (Ke & Xie, 2016). Educational technologies are being used for both online and face-to-face physical teaching-learning settings. However, this study is only concerned about online learning. Different technology aided learning platforms have been developed for language teaching and learning. Such online classes are being held mainly in two types of settings: synchronous setting and asynchronous setting. Large number of online courses have been and still being designed based on the ideologies of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

To keep pace with the rest of the world, Bangladesh is now also using technologies largely for educational purposes. Here, the use of technologies is no longer confined to typing and printing textbooks only, rather extensive use of educational technologies is being made for teaching and learning. Language learning is no different from that. Technologies are being used for both online and face-to-face language learning settings. Also, for online language learning, both synchronous and asynchronous learning courses have been developed since the arrival of the covid-19 pandemic.

However, in every teaching-learning situation, students are one of the most important stakeholders, and it is important to explore their perceptions about the system as students' perception explains the student behavior on a particular phenomenon and their perception reveals the strengths and flaws of a particular teaching learning practice (Ehlers & Pawloski, 2006). So, it is important to view synchronous and asynchronous learning as well from the perspectives of the students. They should be given a voice too in the evaluation of online synchronous and asynchronous learning. They should talk about how much humanism they received from their teachers during a hard time like covid-19 when the whole world had been horrified, and also how much they are receiving in the present time from the prevailing online learning courses. Through this study, it would be investigated that how much humanistic synchronous and asynchronous learning has been in the time of covid-19, and also in the present time. Thus, the aim of this paper is to evaluate online synchronous and asynchronous learning as a humanistic learning from the perspective of the Bangladeshi students.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The use of computer started at the early 2000s in Bangladesh, but since the time of Covid-19, it amplified multiple times (Das, 2021). In the March of 2020, when the first case of Covid-19 was detected, Bangladesh government imposed a nationwide lockdown to curb the pandemic situation, and with that announcement, all kind of sectors except the health and food sectors were kept closed till any further instruction. Upon that decision, all education sectors of Bangladesh were kept closed for more than a year. However, activities were not halted during that time, and the credits go to the technological inventions which made it possible to run distant learning activities. All the operations were being run remotely. This

situation has been called remote teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). Such virtual education has been prospectus for Bangladesh. This enabled the teachers to conduct real-time interactive classes. This became beneficial for both the teachers and the students as it enabled to keep the learning environment normal in a hard time like covid-19. Also, such remote teaching had been challenging for a number of reasons like internet connection, lack of enough technological knowledge, poverty etc. However, such virtual classes opened up opportunity for the teachers to customize their teaching as online learning provides broader scope of tailoring the teaching. Teachers started using different online learning technologies which takes place in a virtual classroom. Even after some time, when things started getting normal, online learning did not lose its existence totally. Though all the operations in Bangladesh are now being conducted in face-to-face physical settings, online learning is still on trend. Lot of non-institutional courses are being run through online still as it provides flexible schedules. Specially, it is more popular among the job holders as they can attend classes from their workplace or home without visiting the campus. These online learnings are taking place both in synchronous and asynchronous settings. However, it is important to look into the online education for being well informed about the system. Thereby, the study focuses on exploring the online synchronous and asynchronous learning in the context of Bangladesh.

1.3 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The strike of Covid-19 has been like a rampage to the world. The virus transmission of covid-19 has been electrifying for a longer period of time. Covid-19 has been life threatening over the world. Millions of people lost their life across the global. Apart from that, covid-19 ravaged the world economy. The whole world had undergone economic crisis during the peak time of covid-19. Millions of people became jobless. Business earning was facing immense

lose. According to Khetrupal and Bhatia (2020), covid-19 has made adverse impacts on people's health, national economy, trading, sustainable development goals (SDG), education etc. Thereby, horror spread all over the world for the lose of life and property. As a result, people all over the world was stressed and terrified due to the pandemic situation. Emon et al. (2020) states that anxiety, frustration, and family stress during the covid-19 time compelled many students committing suicide. This reveals that how much stress covid-19 caused to the students. Also, it has been predicted that the trauma of covid-19 would prevail for the next few years as well (Rice, 2022) because turning to the previous situation after such a huge collapse of life and property. Apart from the covid-19 stress, students are to deal with their own problems every day. No matter what a student is going through, the educational activities keep running. For conducting healthy educational activities, it is important for education to be humanistic which is known to be empathetic learning. Also, it involves many other features for the wellbeing and over all development of a student. As already discussed, during the time of Covid-19, educational activities were not halted. Everything was running in online. However, the covid-19 terror is not over yet, and any time there might be any national emergency again for switching to online education. So, in a stressful time like Covid-19 period and also in the present world where covid-19 is still haunting people, it is important to get an insight into how much humanistic teachers have been to the students in such online classes because humanistic role played by the teachers has no alternative in such a hard time to help the students to recover from the trauma they are undergoing, and balancing it with their education. That is why this study would try to figure out what humanistic traits are available in online synchronous and asynchronous learning, and also some barriers of humanistic education in the online classrooms from the perspectives of the Bangladeshi students.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of this study are:

- Investigating about how much humanistic traits the teachers demonstrate with their students in the online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms.
- Identifying some of the challenges of executing humanistic education in online synchronous and asynchronous classes from the viewpoints of the Bangladeshi students.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have been formulated for obtaining the research objectives of this study:

1. How much humanistic role the teachers play in online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms?
2. What are some barriers of humanistic education in the online synchronous and asynchronous classes?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF HUMANISTIC LEARNING APPROACH

This section would broadly discuss the origin and definition of humanistic learning along with the theories related to humanistic learning.

2.1.1 The Origin of Humanistic Learning Approach

The term approach has been defined in different ways. Approach is a method of starting work on a task or problem as per the World Book Dictionary while terminologically it is defined as a philosophical view of the subject matter to be taught which creates teaching methods subsequently (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017). There are different approaches of teaching the learners. One of such approaches is “Humanistic” approach.

The term “Humanistic” derives from “humanism” which refers the way of thinking of an individual in which his interest and progress are in the central and dominant position, and he tends for cultural and practical elevation rather than scientific and speculative (Burnard, 1999). Again, Edwards (1989) defines humanism as a school of thought which believes human beings are unique and is different from other creatures because of some unique nature.

The concept of “Humanistic” approach is built on the concept of humanism. Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers are the pioneers of humanistic approach. Humanistic approach derives from the concept of “Humanistic Psychology” (Wertz, 1998). Humanistic psychologists believe that personal development of an individual is motivated by the need for relative integration, and is guided by intentionality, choice, hierarchical order of values and

an ever-expanding consciousness of awareness (Bühler, 1971, p. 378). Based on the ideology of “Humanistic Psychology”, humanistic approach refers to the person-centered teaching where teachers facilitate the learners by providing empathy, care and guidance to them (Nath et al., 2017). According to humanistic approach, body of knowledge is interconnected with culture, cognitive problems are concerned intellectual and artistic problems, and this approach uses heuristic methods (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017). This implies that humanistic approach is not only concerned with internal mechanisms, but also includes various external forces. Its heuristic nature signifies that humanistic approach promotes autonomy to the learners. It provides learners the floor of self-learning and self-discovery. Gage and Berlin (1991) mentions that one of the main objectives of humanistic approach is to promote self-direction and independence which indicates to heuristic nature of humanistic approach. Humanistic approach deals with behaviour both as individual action and as an interaction with others (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017, p. 31). Being originated from the humanistic psychology, humanistic approach facilitates learners’ understanding of himself so that he can make his own personal developments.

2.1.2 Theories of Humanistic Approach Related to This Study

Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers are the pioneers of humanistic approach. Their individual theoretical work combinedly built the foundation of humanistic approach. Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory and Carl Rogers theory has been adapted as the basic concept of humanistic approach which later on received inclusion from other scholars.

Abraham Maslow introduced a concept of hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1956) states that a number of basic needs should be attained in order to respond to the inborn desire of being self-actualized. Abraham Maslow mentioned five basic needs through the pyramid of

needs in a hierarchical order. Lowest levels are built with the basic needs and complex ones are kept at the top.

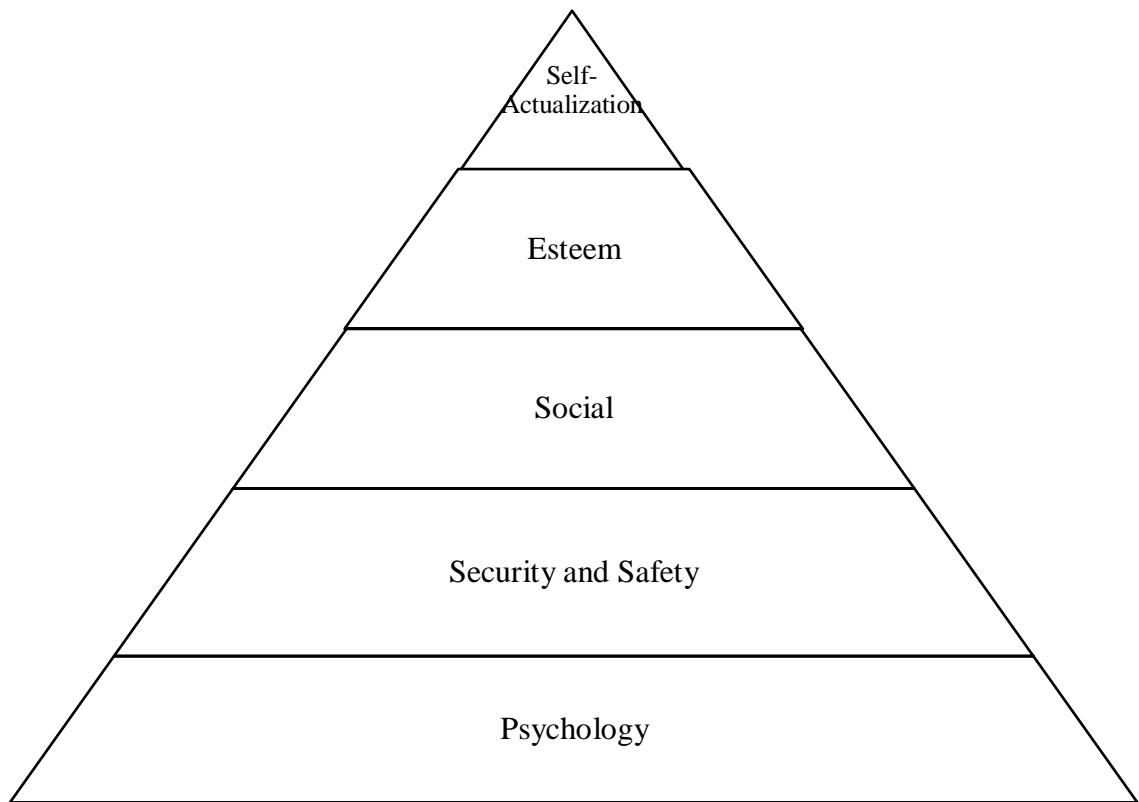


Figure: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

As shown in the pyramid that at the lowest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, there are psychological needs which includes those are vital for survival like food, water, breathing etc. At the second level, the needs are for security and safety needs that talks about financial security, health security and safety against accidents and injury. At the immediate top of it, social needs like friendships, romantic attachments, family relationships, social and community groups are placed. At the level 4, esteem needs have been kept which refers to the need for appreciation and respect. At the peak of the hierarchy, Maslow talks about self-actualization needs. Self-actualization is described as the full use of talents, capabilities, and potentialities and when people fulfill such needs, they can do the best of their capability. However, in 1970, Maslow added three more needs to this hierarchy which are known as

cognitive needs, aesthetic needs, and transcendence needs. Cognitive needs are centered on knowledge. Aesthetic needs are appreciation of beauty and form which is fulfilled through enjoying or creating music, art, literature, and other creative expressions. Transcendence needs are the needs that look beyond the physical self which are like practicing spirituality, and connecting with nature. Even after many years, Maslow's hierarchy is still well-known and popular.

The humanistic concept of Carl Rogers' theory encompasses two theories: person-centered theory and self-determination theory (Patterson and Joseph, 2007). Carl Rogers' person-centered approach offers a dynamic, process-focused account of personal development and functioning which implies that everyone is born with an innate motivational drive which is known as actualizing tendency (Patterson & Joseph, 2007, p. 120). Actualizing tendency as defined by Rogers (1959) is that human has an inherent tendency to develop which crawls towards autonomy and is dependent on external forces. This theory suggests that every individual has intrinsic needs which are not dependent on any prior learning. Like every child discovers things from his surroundings while playing in his childhood, they continue to self-discovery learning during their later life too in response to their intrinsic needs. Carl Rogers' concept is similar to Abraham Maslow's in the sense that individuals must satisfy their needs first to be productive. Carl Rogers, also acknowledged the socio-environmental conditions related to satisfying individual's needs. Another humanistic concept comes from Rogers' (1959) self-determination theory. Self-determination theories has three elements: human beings are inherently proactive, human beings have self-organizing systems, and human beings need nutrients from social environment in order to actualize their potentials (Rogers' 1959 as cited in Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). Both the person-centered and self-determination theory has a core concept which is that every

individual has some innate characteristics that may promote or hinder learning (Patterson & Joseph, 2007).

In the recent time, Kazanjian and Choi (2016) proposed three tenets of humanistic psychology that are important for the humanistic teachers and students to follow in the classroom: (1) emphasis on relationship, (2) space for creativity, exploration and growth, and (3) importance of meaning-making and subjectivity. In the exam centered education system, standardization or competition is considered as norms, but humanistic education differs from that, and believes in being empathetic to others. Again, humanistic education promotes creativity which is a process of generating original ideas. Robinson (2011) argues that capacity of creativity is linked with intellectual abilities. So, he who is more intellectual, is more creative. Kazanjian and Choi (2016) argues that humanistic teachers should encourage creative thinking so that students get motivated to work on their intellectual development. The third tenet of humanistic teacher education framework includes meaning making which Frankl (2006) describes as a unique capacity of human being, and it is closely related to motivation, enlightenment and creative intervention in the education system. Kazanin and Choi (2016) states that meaning cannot be obtained from studying something, rather it should be created by a person who is supraordinate to all his parts. Having an existential meaning requires the capacity to disidentify with the cultural myths (Munoz, 1999). Humanistic education believes that students should give a new meaning to education by creating a new norm of education which differs from the “competition” and “standardization” norms of education.

2.1.3 Humanistic Learning Approach as a Critique to Theories

Humanistic approach was originated at the early 20th century which rejected the concepts of behaviorism and psychodynamic approach as they were regarded as dehumanizing by the humanistic psychologists (Mishra, 2000). Based on the stimulus-response behavior, behaviorism is heavily dependent on animal research. On the other hand, psychodynamic approach deals with unconscious irrational and instinctive forces determining human thought and behavior. As a result, both gets derived from the humanistic traits and thus, is regarded as dehumanizing by the humanistic psychology.

Again, Paulo Freire proposed his own concept of humanistic pedagogy by criticizing the banking theory of education. The banking theory views human minds as savings account where the teachers make deposits. So, here the learners are only some passive receivers. Paulo Freire criticizes this theory by proposing a problem posing method of teaching. According to Freire (2005), banking concept of education should be replaced with problem posing methods as such education is concerned with consciousness and communication where learners are not just some mere listeners. Thus, Paulo Freire's humanistic approach criticized the banking concept of education.

2.1.4 The Nature of Humanistic Learning Approach

As stated earlier that the concept of humanistic learning is derived from the concept of humanistic psychology. Lei (2007) referred humanistic approach as one of the most influential pedagogies of second language learning. Again, humanistic learning has been defined as a mixture of cognitive and affective elements (Stevick, 1990). About the nature of humanistic education, Hamachek (1977) comments that humanistic education acknowledges the difference in each individual and encourages self-learning.

Moskovitz (1978) has combined a number of features of humanistic learning approach. According to Moskovitz (1978), activities of humanistic learning classrooms should promote positive focus and avoid negative focuses, should be non-threatening, should provide voice to the students, should encourage peer learning, and should promote vocabulary learning activities. Again, Gage and Berliner (1991) have described some objectives of humanistic approach that includes promoting positive self-direction and independence, developing the ability to take responsibility for what is learnt, developing creativity, evoking curiosity and developing interest in arts. This signifies the self-directive and creative nature of humanistic approach.

2.1.5 The Role of Teachers and Learners in Humanistic Approach

In every teaching-learning situation, teachers and learners are two important stakeholders. So, it is important to discuss their roles.

In humanistic approach, teachers are facilitators, not disseminators of knowledge (Nath et al., 2017, p. 53). This implies that the teachers are not the dominating figures in a humanistic classroom, rather they work just as a facilitator to the students, who facilitates students by providing guidelines and supports to them for understanding the best ways to learn. Teachers are not the one here who do all the talking in the classroom. Instead, they provide plenty of opportunities to the students so that they can build up over the knowledge they provided to them as humanistic approach promotes creative thinking (Gage & Berliner, 1991). Also, humanistic teachers are concerned about their learners' affective needs (Nath et al., 2017) as humanistic approach is a mixture of cognitive and affective elements (Stevick, 1990). It is presided over the humanistic approach that learners can do the best when their affective needs are met. So, teachers should consider learners affective needs according to

humanistic approach. Humanistic teachers believe that attention to students' feelings and aspirations leads to developing students' self-efficacy (Khatib et al., 2013). That's why they put emphasize on the affective needs of their students. Huo (2006) states that the educational administration of humanistic approach is to motivating learners consecutively as humanistic psychology believes that motivation to growth and learning is implicit to the learners. So, humanistic teachers should nurture these traits by motivating them and creating opportunities to them. However, Firdaus and Mariyat (2017) mentions three functions of teachers in humanistic approach: a teacher who is instrumented with mastery of knowledge, a coach for skill development of the students, and a mentor for developing affective aspects, controlling value, attitude etc.

Humanistic psychology views learning as an active process where learners are active participators (Arnos, 1999). This means, learners cannot be just some passive energy in a humanistic classroom. Thus, humanistic approach is different from those exam-oriented approaches where learners are like empty vessels and teachers just fill it up. Here, learners should bring knowledge in the classroom too. Learners should actively participate in all classroom activities, not just do all the listening in the classroom. Zhang and Atkin (2010) argue that the major theme of humanistic learning is that learners should have the authority in the classroom which implies that learner should express their opinion about the learning process, and learning materials. This can be done through discussion. So, learners should take part in discussion of the class. In humanistic learning, teachers as a facilitator gets student acquainted with the learning approach and it is the students' duty to master those approach of learning (Zhang and Atkin, 2010). So, humanistic learning is a self-directive learning where teachers just open up knowledge to the students and the students find way to obtain that knowledge by their own. According to humanistic learning, self-evaluation should be a vital consideration of a learning process (Wang, 2005). So, students should evaluate their learning

process in a humanistic approach of learning. Humanistic approach promotes that everyone should reverse their role in the classroom by turning into teachers from learners, and learners from teachers (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017).

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

This section would discuss the definition of computer-mediated synchronous and asynchronous learning, and also some strengths and weaknesses of them.

2.2.1 Defining Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

The major purpose of using computers in our day-to-day life is to make our life easier and better. Education has also adopted computers for this purpose. Many online learning platforms have been developed using computers which is getting more and more popular day by day. Such online learning is being held in two settings: one is synchronous setting and the other is asynchronous setting. Synchronous learning is the type of learning where a group of learners is getting engaged in learning activity with their teacher at the same time (Duncan et al., 2012). In online synchronous learning, though students are attending the class from a distance, they are getting engaged with their teachers in learning activity at the same time like face-to-face setting. Synchronous learning is such a practice where the students and teachers are in the same platform and in the same time though attending from distance (Hrastinski, 2008). Computer mediated synchronous learning usually takes place in the form of video conferencing using various platforms like zoom, google meet and many other media.

On the other hand, asynchronous learning differs in terms of time and setting (Duncan et al., 2012) which means that in such settings, teachers and learners are not taking part in the class activities at the same time. So, here the teaching and learning do not take place simultaneously. Online asynchronous learning might be a recorded video that the teacher records at a certain time and delivers to their students which the students go through later. Sometimes discussion board are also used for such teachings. So, asynchronous learning is more self-paced learning and less instructor-dependent (Murphy et al., 2011). It is also defined as a geographically independent learning (Clark & Mayer, 2016) as it does not require the teacher-student presence at the same time.

2.2.2 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

The strengths and weaknesses of synchronous and asynchronous learning is a debate. Like every other phenomenon has both positive and negative sides, synchronous and asynchronous learning is no exception.

One of the strengths of synchronous learning is media naturalness (Bleu et al., 2017). It provides almost all the facilities of a face-to-face to learning settings from distance. Like in a face-to-face setting, teachers and students can communicate simultaneously, same can be happened in the synchronous online learning as well. According to Ogbonna et al. (2017), the main strengths of synchronous learning are the real-time interpersonal communication and immediate feedback. So, strength of synchronous learning is emphasized by natural classroom communication. Hrastinski (2008) argues that synchronous learning positively impacts learners' commitment. This means that this type of learning maintains a fixed schedule unlike asynchronous learning.

However, synchronous learning has been negatively reviewed for communication ambiguity. Rapanta et al. (2020) argues on the basis of the interviews with online teaching experts that videoconferencing often hampers the fluency of interaction which results into concentration breaking in the classroom. In the synchronous setting, often it takes time for the teacher to understand who is talking as they are not in the face-to-face setting. This results into communication ambiguity and the participants might get distracted by this. Another weakness has received concern from Smith and Smith (2014) which is that synchronous online learning cannot ensure active participation of the students. As it is a videoconferencing, it often gets tough for the teachers to track who is getting engaged in the activities and who is not. Thus, synchronous online learning endangers students' participation in the classroom.

Asynchronous learning, in contrast to synchronous learning, is geographically independent and less instructor based (Clark & Mayer, 2016). Again, Xie et al. (2018) has described asynchronous learning as "Self-paced" learning. Hrastinski (2008) argues that one of the main strengths of asynchronous learning is that it enables learners to contribute meaningfully and thoughtfully, to be specific, asynchronous learning accelerates learners' cognitive development. Another advantage of asynchronous learning is that it allows a learner to attend the class according to his own schedule (Fabriz et al., 2021). So, asynchronous learning provides learners much flexibility.

However, asynchronous learning has some drawbacks too. One of the major drawbacks of asynchronous learning is communication ambiguity (Blau et al., 2017). As asynchronous learning does not provide the opportunity of simultaneous communication, sometimes it leaves a communication gap between the teacher and the student. Students need to wait for the teachers' response and vice versa which is very time consuming. Again, in some asynchronous courses, students do not get the opportunity to reach their instructor

which is a worse scenario. Also, learning at home by own through asynchronous learning requires enough motivation of the learners (Fabriz et al., 2021). If the learner loses motivation, the learning would not take place properly and learners may drop out eventually. So, this is another drawback of asynchronous learning. Again, students often feel dissatisfied with asynchronous learning as there is lack of social interaction with teachers and peers (Hrastinski, 2008) which is a weakness of asynchronous learning system.

2.3 ONLINE EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

This section would discuss the scholarly works over online education conducted in the context of Bangladesh. Also, this section would try to demonstrate the gap in knowledge that this study intends to bridge.

2.3.1 Stepping Towards Online Education

Since the mid-20th century, the electronic machines like radio, television etc. was being used for educational purposes. Later in 1989, University of Phoenix situated at Arizona state of USA, initiated fully online bachelor and master's degree (Sarkar, 2020). However, at the 90th decade, there had been no institutional setting for online classes in Bangladesh, but some educational programs were being telecasted via radio and telephone that was eclectic. After the use of internet had started in Bangladesh, some online education programs like BBC Janala, 10 Minute School etc. started their journey in Bangladesh. However, after the emergence of Covid-19, the online education started nationwide here.

In the mid of March 2020, the first attack of Covid-19 was discovered. After that, a nationwide shutdown was announced. All the sectors had been stopped for a while which was

also extended later. In the response of WHO's suggestion of maintaining social distance, the educational sectors in Bangladesh were kept closed for more than a year. However, as we were blessed by internet, the government decided to keep running operations virtually following the footsteps of the rest of the world. In the April of 2020, online education was first introduced in Bangladesh (Das, 2021). As described by Mishra et al. (2020), Covid-19 had caused a pedagogical shifting: Offline mode to online mode, real classroom to google classroom, personal to virtual, and conference to webinar. During the time of Covid-19, as social-distancing had been the only solution to tackle the rampage of the coronavirus, online class had been the online alternative to run out the educational operations during that time. Initially, the tertiary level started online classroom activity. Later, all levels, from elementary to tertiary, shifted to online mode. Even the private coaching centers also ran their activities virtually during that time. Google classroom, google meet, zoom etc. had been the daily companion of the students. Then in the October of 2021, when Bangladesh was healing the covid-19 wound, the government declared hybrid mode of education (Uddin, 2022). However, at present educational institutions in Bangladesh are running all the operation in offline mode, but online education did not lose its appeal here. Many private coaching centers are still offering online courses along with offline version. Also, online private tutoring is getting popular here as it facilitates learning from distance. So, the online classes did not lose its existence yet. Rather, its popularity is increasing day by day.

2.3.2 Prospects and Challenges of Online Education in Bangladesh

During the imposed lockdown period of covid-19, online education had been the only means of continuing educational activities for that time. However, it is believed that even in the later time, online education is going to have prospects (Khan, Rahim & Islam, 2021). The biggest

strength of online education is that it provides flexibility and freedom. Sarkar et al. (2021) argues that online education allows the students to attend the class even in any emergency situation as it does not require any preparation like having breakfast, getting dressed or travelling to the school. This indicates that online education is flexible and everyone craves flexibility. Also, attending online class during a hard time like covid-19, had been relieving for the students as they could have meetings regularly with their teachers and classmates which let them being kept in touch with others (Khan, Rahman & Islam, 2021). So, online education has many advantages that reveals that online education has prospects in home and abroad.

At the same time, online education has some drawbacks as well that makes online education challenging too. Scholars have frequently looked into the challenges associated with online education, and noted multifarious challenges of online education in Bangladesh. Gupta et al. (2021) has enlisted some challenges of online education in the context of Bangladesh which includes unavailability of proper device, high cost of data pack, lack of concentration in the classroom, and remote area. Bangladesh is a developing country, and many people of this country is still living below the poverty line. That is why affording a device for accessing online class and also paying internet bill has been very challenging to them. Also, it is very hard for the students to hold their concentration during the class time as online education provides the scope of doing other activities at the same time. Also, poor internet connection creates disruption in the classroom that breaks the concentration of the students (Das, 2021). Again, internet connection is very poor in the remote areas like rural areas where larger number of people of the country is living which has been noted as another challenge of conducting an online class. Rouf et al. (2021) has reported technophobia as another challenge of online education in Bangladesh. Conducting and attending an online class requires technological expertism, and Bangladesh did not have enough technological

experts to train the teachers or the students which has been another dispute with online education. So, these are some challenges of online education detected by the scholars in the context of Bangladesh.

2.4 GAP IN THE STUDY

Scholarly works with online education of Bangladesh have mostly focused the introduction of online education in Bangladesh (Mishra et al., 2022; Khan, Rahim, & Islam, 2021; Das, 2021), and the prospects and challenges of online education of Bangladesh (Gupta et al., 2021; Rouf et al., 2021; Sarkar et al., 2021). At my best knowledge, so far very limited researches have interpreted online education as a humanistic education. Limited work has been done with how much humanistic the teachers had been in the online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms. So, this study intends to fill that gap of knowledge along with identifying some of the barriers of humanistic learning in the online synchronous and asynchronous classes.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to look into the online synchronous and asynchronous education from the humanistic point of view. Also, it would try to provide an idea of what kind of online synchronous and asynchronous courses Bangladeshi students are accustomed to. In this section, there would be a detailed discussion over the method followed in this study, Participants, the procedure of data collection for this study, and also the data analysis procedure for this study. This study would conclude with ethical issues that was taken into consideration during the execution of this study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Choosing a right method for a research study is a crucial part for any research because This study is about investigating students' perceptions on humanistic education in online classrooms. That is why instead of collecting statistical data, I as a researcher felt it suitable to follow qualitative approach because qualitative approach enables finding out "people's attitude, behaviors, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles" (Verma, 2015, p. 414). It is qualitative approach that will help to understand the attitude, behaviors, values, concerns etc. about the humanistic education in their classroom. Nevertheless, there are different methods of collecting qualitative data. Creswell (2016) has noted three methods of qualitative approach: participant observation, in-depth interview, and focus group discussion. For this study, interviewing participants has been selected as data collection method because having individual session with the participants would enable to understand their perception in an in-depth manner. A set of semi-structured questions have

been prepared. Semi-structured interview questions allow follow up discussions. As this study is an attempt to deep understanding of the students' perceptions, so instead of dominating with structured interview questions, keeping open ended semi-structured interview questions fits better with the research goals. That is why semi-structured interview questions have been set for this study. The interview questions have been set in such a manner, so that it guides the participants through the research goals. The questions were divided into three parts: Part one is about the demographic and general information about the students, part two is about the identification of online synchronous and asynchronous courses participated by Bangladeshi students, and the final and the largest part is about finding out humanistic education traits in online synchronous and asynchronous learning. However, the interview session has not been stucked up to the prepared questions only, many follow up questions and discussions have been there as it was a semi-structured interview. Thus, I prepared my research design for this study giving much concentration on the suitability of approaches and methods.

3.2 PARTICIPANTS

For this study, the participants that have been chosen are students from different institutions of Bangladesh. They are English language learning students who are studying in different universities of Bangladesh. A total of fifteen participants have taken part in this study. While choosing the participants, it had been confirmed that they have attended online synchronous and asynchronous learning classes so that they can do meaningful contribute to the research. Some demographic information about the participants is presented in the following table. For maintaining their privacy, pseudonyms have been provided to them and also to the institutions they are from.

S.I	Name	Gender	Age	Institution	Level of study
1	Razzak	Male	23	A University	Tertiary
2.	Nowrin	Female	21	B University	Tertiary
3.	Shefa	Female	21	C University	Tertiary
4.	Humayra	Female	22	D University	Tertiary
5.	Tanvir	Male	22	D University	Tertiary
6.	Sufi	Male	21	B University	Tertiary
7.	Nabila	Female	21	B University	Tertiary
8.	Rafi	Male	23	A University	Tertiary
9.	Nizam	Male	22	A University	Tertiary
10.	Jannatul	Female	22	C University	Tertiary
11.	Nahiyan	Male	24	C University	Tertiary
12.	Tamanna	Female	22	D University	Tertiary
13.	Rayhan	Male	23	D University	Tertiary
14.	Subhan	Male	21	A University	Tertiary
15.	Monisha	Female	23	B University	Tertiary

Individual interview has been taken with each of the participants. During the interview, the participants had been very patient, and tried their best to do contribution to this study. It has been found that the participants have been intrinsically motivated to be a part of this study as none of them didn't ask for any remuneration. In fact, some of them invited their friends to take part in this study. The participants commented that they wanted to gather some idea about the process of conducting research study which is why they were drawn to the participation of this study. Thereby, throughout the study, I had a very good experience with them.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

In this study, data was collected by individual interview with the participants. For collecting data, my first consideration was selecting the right participants. For that, at first, I created a Facebook post seeking participants for my study. In that post I described my research topic in a bit, and also mentioned the criteria for being eligible for this study. Initially, I found twenty responses, and among them I had to choose again. Also, some of them did not make any further response. Later, with the help of the selected candidates, I could reach some more participants. Then in total, I chose fifteen participants.

After selecting the participants, I prepared interview questions for them. It took me almost a week to finalize my set of questions. Then I allocated four dates for collecting data as I had to travel four different destinations for data collection purpose. In the private universities of Bangladesh, outsiders are not allowed. However, my participants had been so supportive to me in such case. They chose a convenient place nearby their campuses so that I can take their interview there. While choosing this, they kept in mind about the calm and quiet environment so that the process does not be chaotic. I took one by one interview of my participants. With their permission taken through a written statement, I recorded our conversation in order to hear it later on for deeper understanding. I assured them of maintaining their privacy in my study. During my session with the participants, I didn't jump into the questions in the beginning. At first, I tried make a friendly conversation with them for making them feel easy with them. After that when I found that they are comfortable with me, I started asking them questions. I believe that the participants can't do meaningful contribution if they are not comfortable which is why I followed this approach. As the interview questions were semi-structured, I tried not to keep long tiring follow up sessions,

rather kept it to the point as required. Thereby, each session took me around forty minutes only. I finished each session by thanking the participants. I stored the recorded sessions on my phone in separate folders for further analysis and interpretation of the data. Thus, I collected data for my study.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

After collecting data by interviewing the participants, the next step was analysing and interpreting the data. There are different methods of analysing qualitative data. Creswell (2016) has described five methods of analysing qualitative data: content analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, grounded theory analysis, and discourse analysis. In this study, thematic analysis has been chosen for interpreting the data. With this view, I heard each interview several times in order to finding out some common major themes. However, there are also different frameworks for thematic analysis of qualitative data. For this study, I have chosen data analysis framework of Saldaña (2015). A four-step process to analyse all the data in the study to answer the research questions of the study as per Saldaña's (2015) guiding principles. The steps of the four-step process were: (1) identifying codes in the data, (2) creating categories of codes, and developing high-level categories, (3) reviewing high-level categories and synthesizing them to generate themes through analytic memoing, and (4) applying emerged themes to the research questions of the study. For this study, Step 1 was coding participant observation and interview. Codes from all these data sources were combined, reviewed, and revised to generate a list of codes across the two data sources. Step 2 was identifying commonalities between codes, grouping codes into more meaningful categories, and developing high-level categories. Step 3 was thoroughly reviewing the high-level categories and looking for themes. Analytic memoing was used throughout this step.

Step 4 involved reflecting on emerged themes and their relevance to answering the research questions of the study. So, this is how I analysed the obtained data in this study which is discussed in the fourth part of this paper.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study abides by the rules and regulations of writing a thesis. In every step of this study, there has been taken special care of not violating any ethic. Like, no one was forced to take part in this study. All the participants deliberately took part in this study. For keeping the evidence of it, a consent form was sent to each of them which they had to sign. The nature of the interview was clearly described in that form including that the session would be recorded on which everyone agreed on. That is why I could record the session. Also, I assured them their identity won't be revealed. So, for maintaining their privacy I used pseudonyms for them in this study. Also, I conducted a hassle-free session with them so that nobody feels harassed. This is how I took care of maintaining ethical codes in every stage of my study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The aim of this paper was to prepare a documentation of online synchronous and asynchronous course that are participated by the tertiary level students of Bangladesh, and also to find out how the students view these courses as humanistic learning. This section would enlist the findings obtained by interviewing the participants. The participant answered the interview questions from both their past and present experience. This section would discuss about some online synchronous and asynchronous courses participated by the students and also students' view about online synchronous and asynchronous learning as a humanistic learning.

4.1 ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING COURSES ATTENDED BY THE PARTICIPANTS

Online learning in Bangladesh emerged before Covid-19, but it became more popular since the Covid-19 popped up in Bangladesh. All the educational sectors rapidly switched to online mode. However, during covid-19, the students mostly attended synchronous online learning courses that was run by the educational institutions they were signed up to. One of the participants namely Rayhan who was a fresher of English department in the university when Covid-19 emerged in Bangladesh stated that:

When I just got enrolled in the university, my classes used to be held online. The teachers used to take our class via zoom meeting, google meet or google classroom. The class time was exactly like as always and it used to happen synchronously when our teachers and us used to join and attend the classes at the same time.

The student here is referring online learning through zoom meeting, google meet or google classroom which are basically open edX courses. Also, other participants from English department mentioned that in their university they mostly used open edX platforms for attending synchronous language learning course. Some of them mentioned about attending courses from British council via open edX like zoom or google meet. Also, another participant Nabila mentioned that she had attended a four month long course on research methodology that was provided by University of Sydney. The classes used to be held via zoom meeting which is an open edX platform. Again, Nizam the other participant mentioned about pursuing IELTS course from a local English language training center via open edX platforms. So, open edX language learning courses in synchronous setting is very popular in Bangladesh.

Apart from that, the participants also mentioned about some asynchronous setting of open edX courses. One of the participants namely Subhan said:

Sometimes our teachers skipped one or two classes, and for compensating that, they used to upload recorded lecture on google classroom. We could access them at any time.

From this statement, it is evident that open edX was used asynchronously as well in the university.

However, another language learning course named “Coursera” is found to be popular asynchronous course apart from the open edX asynchronous courses. Almost one-third of the participants confessed that they have certificates from Coursera. They informed that the courses were session-based which they could complete at their own pace but within a limited time frame. They signed up for Coursera because it was suggested by their teacher for improving the writing skills.

Again, another participant Tanvir expressed that he used to score very poor at the writing part of his introductory level course at the university because of his poor grammatical knowledge. Later he decided that he needs to improve this area, and now he is learning English grammar through “Udemy” as suggested by one of his university seniors. Regarding his experience with Udemy, the student shared that:

One of the seniors from my department suggested me to watch Udemy courses for improving my writing skills. So, I created one account in Udemy. There are number of videos about different subjects. From there I am searching for course videos that contains lessons on English grammar, and I go through them during my leisure time.

The course the student here mentioning about is an online asynchronous course which he can access at any time. So, Udemy is another asynchronous language learning course navigated by the students of Bangladesh.

However, another participant Nowrin mentioned about attending an online platform “10 Minute School” for taking preparation for IELTS. 10 Minute School is a Bangladeshi online educational platform. The students mentioned that she had plan to study abroad which did not succeed later. During that time, the participant purchased an IELTS course from the 10 Minute School platform. After purchasing that course, he downloaded the course videos and used to go through them at her own pace. This refers that 10 Minute School is another asynchronous online learning program that is participated by the students of Bangladesh.

It has been revealed that synchronous and asynchronous online courses are quite popular in Bangladesh as students are well aware of them, and participating in different such courses for various purposes. Here in Bangladesh, tertiary students are mainly participating these courses for academic purposes, none of the participants has mentioned any job training

purpose of their attending online synchronous and asynchronous courses. However, they mentioned some skill development purposes like developing writing skills and developing English language skills for IELTS. In the peak time of Covid-19, when all the educational institutions were kept closed, all the students of Bangladesh had to attend their institutional classes in online synchronous or asynchronous setting. Now, when the covid-19 situation is getting under control gradually, all the educational institutions are reopened, and on-site classes are taking places all over the country. While in many other countries, like Australia, USA, UK etc. are keeping both the options of on-site or online attending for some courses, Bangladeshi universities are only running on-site courses. Still, students are intrinsically motivated to attend online synchronous or asynchronous courses for their academic skill development purposes.

4.2 EMPATHY IN THE CLASSROOM

The major theme of humanistic learning is “Empathy”. Humanistic learning being an offspring of humanistic psychology promotes that empathy is an important part of education and teachers and learners should be empathetic to each other. While investigating on online synchronous and asynchronous learning with the theme of empathy, different insights were revealed. For instance, in online synchronous classes, teachers show empathy to the students. Greet exchange happens between the teachers and the students where both shows empathy about each other’s state. Regarding this one participant namely Nahiyen mentioned that:

At the beginning of the classes, we greet each other. One day I had a presentation but I was sick. I still was ready to attend it but at the beginning when I informed my teacher about my sickness, my teacher proposed rescheduling my presentation which I found so kind of her.....

Such response from the participant implies that his teacher had been empathetic to him by showing concern to his health conditions. On the contrary, another participant stated that:

Well... once I was having seasonal fever, and due to that I was unable to attend a quiz in the university. That time my teacher refused to reschedule that quiz for him because I failed to provide medical documentation as evidence of my sickness with the application letter. Nevertheless, later on I submitted medical evidence, and then the teacher gave me another opportunity to supplement my quiz with an individual assignment....

So, there are some certain requirements so that the teacher can rely on the students, and when they get assurance, they do not lag behind in showing empathy.

Also, the participants informed that the teachers show concern about their cognitive ability in the online synchronous classrooms. For instance, if any student does not understand any topic, the teacher repeats that in the class or provides student extra consulting hour. This implies that the teachers in the classroom tries to maintain a good understanding with the students by showing empathy to them.

However, the participants think that in online asynchronous classes, as the communication is one way, the theme of empathy is less found there. Regarding this, Razzak, one of the participants expressed:

As the communication is one way, if I ever needed more clarification, I did not get that because I could not communicate with the teacher about that. So, I had to research more about that by my own.

This reveals that in asynchronous class, students are deprived of teachers' empathy because of the communication gap caused by asynchronous learning.

One of the key points of empathy in the classroom is that through synchronous communication, empathy is emphasized in the classroom. That is why students mostly reported synchronous classes to be more empathetic than asynchronous courses. Students received empathy when they had not been physically fit. Also, their teachers had been empathetic to them when they were struggling to understand any topic in the classroom, and did repetition of the topics for their better understanding. This is cannot but to be mentioned that empathy is one of the major themes of humanistic learning approach. However, one of the pioneers of humanistic learning approach Abraham Maslow enlisted affective and cognitive needs in his hierarchy of humanistic needs. Again, Stevick (1990) stated humanistic learning to be a mixture of cognitive and affective elements, so it can be said that here the teachers are playing the role of a humanistic teacher by showing concern to the affective and cognitive needs of their students. Likewise, one of the participants mentioned that when he was sick, his teacher rescheduled his presentation. Here, the teacher played humanistic role by responding to the affective needs of her student. Again, other participants mentioned that if they had felt trouble of understanding any topic, the teacher provided them extra consulting hours after the class. Apart from that, they mentioned about repetition of the topics by their teachers where they faced problem to understand that. This also emphasizes empathy where the teacher shows respect to the cognitive ability of his student. However, the participants did not mention about getting bullied when they informed their teachers about their struggle of understanding anything, but one of the participants mentioned that his sickness was not excused once, and the teacher refused to reschedule his quiz as he did not submit medical documentation initially. Later on, when he submitted medical documents to the teacher, the teacher assigned him something else as an alternative. Here, trust issues appear as a prerequisite to showing empathy to the students.

A humanistic teacher gives priority to the needs of their students, and tailors their teaching as per their needs. Responding to the student needs is a form of empathy that the participants received from their teachers in their online synchronous classes. So, from the students' point of view, online synchronous learning gets positive review about being humanistic because of the presence of empathy in the classroom. However, the students mentioned that as they received empathy from their teachers, they also tried to show it return to them by exchanging greet with them, and showing sympathy to them when they shared any personal suffering to them. Another point to be noted that students reported limited opportunities of showing empathy in the asynchronous courses due to synchronous communication gap. This might need a solution like pre or post session or any other alternative way so that empathy can be emphasized in online asynchronous classes as well.

4.3 PROMOTING CREATIVE THINKING

Humanistic learning approach encourages creativity in the educational settings. While investigating about this trait with online synchronous learning, it has been revealed that the teachers surely follow a certain syllabus, but at the same time they encourage creative activity in the class. Regarding this, Jannatul, a university fresher expressed:

I think things are quite different in university than schools and colleges because here we are having different classroom activities even in online classrooms which I find very creative.

This implies that the teachers encourage creativity in the classroom by planning different classroom activities. Again, another participant namely Nizam commented:

In our syllabus, sometimes different creative projects are included. Like in one course, we had to prepare comic over certain literary themes. Many such creative projects are assigned to us.

So, creative thinking is encouraged in the online synchronous classroom in the form of various projects and assignments. Same sort of elements is found in online asynchronous classes as well. The participants informed that they are assigned with different creative projects. Also, they informed that the quizzes they attend after certain lessons, that are not bookish always, sometimes they are creative as well which reveals the presence of creative thinking element in such sort of learning. Another interesting response came from another participant Nowrin who attended an asynchronous writing course. What she stated is that:

As I already mentioned that I attended an Udemy writing course. In one lesson of that course, the teacher taught about creative writing. The teacher taught the steps of creative writing. Also, provided creative writing task as homework.

Here, the participant is referring about creative writing which she was taught in an online asynchronous course. By providing a guideline to creative writing and assigning creative writing, the teacher promoted creative thinking in his class.

As mentioned by the participants, in both online synchronous and asynchronous classes, creative thinking is encouraged to the students by their instructors. Gage and Berliner (1991) argued that one of the major roles of humanistic teacher is to promote creative thinking to the students so that they might build over the knowledge they were provided. It is found that sometimes the teachers indulge their students into creative activities like projects, assignments, or sometimes teachers directly teach ways of creative thinking as mentioned by one of the participants that her teacher taught about creative writing which teaches how to think creatively and emphasize that in writing. Here, the teacher is teaching their students,

and at the same time they are engaging them into different types of activity so that they can think out of the box, awaken their innate creativity, and do something productive. Regarding this, Carl Rogers, one of the pioneers of humanistic psychology insisted that human beings are inherently proactive, and needs to be nurtured (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004) which basically implies that with proper direction, human beings can bring out the creativity. Likewise, the projects and the assignments are working as a stimulator for the students to bring out their creative self. Thus, the teachers are playing humanistic role by inspiring and nurturing their students to impose creative thinking on them. Another pioneer of humanistic, Abraham Maslow, enlisted creative thinking under the aesthetic needs of the human beings. According to Maslow (1970), aesthetic needs are fulfilled through enjoying or creating arts, music, literature or any other creative expression. Like one of the participants mentioned about being assigned with preparing a comic book with literary devices. This implies the combination of art and literature to do something creative. So, creative thinking is one of the core elements of humanistic learning approach, and in both of the online synchronous and asynchronous classes, the participants reported the presence of creative thinking elements.

4.4 LEARNING AT OWN PACE

Humanistic learning approach supports the idea of self-paced learning as it is concerned with comfort and flexibility to the learners. In the response of view regarding online synchronous learning as a self-paced learning, the participants expressed that their online synchronous learning does not provide them the self-paced option because they have a certain syllabus to follow and deadlines to meet which collides with the idea of self-paced learning. The concept of self-paced learning is built upon the ideology of learning at own schedule which online synchronous classes fail to provide as it follows a fixed schedule. On the other hand, the

students reported online asynchronous learning to be more of a self-paced learning. The participants could navigate the course videos at any time. After that they had to attend certain quizzes. The quiz had auto evaluation system. Numbers used to show on the screen after the quiz participation. The participants said that once they signed up for a certain course, they could go through the contain videos at their suitable time and could finish the course at their own pace.

The participants rated asynchronous learning as more self-paced than online synchronous learning. Undoubtedly, online classes provide more flexibility and freedom than on-site classes. However, online synchronous classes that the participants attended is just another version of on-site classes. So, they got very little opportunity to learn at their own pace because they were liable to a certain syllabus and some certain deadlines. While following these, they did not get the opportunity to learn of balancing the time frame by their own. They had no control over the time frame of their learning. Their teachers could not help them with that as well because they are also liable to following a syllabus, and finishing it within a limited time span. Also, they are to maintain a fixed class schedule. So, allowing their students learning at their own pace becomes a boundary line for them. On the other hand, in asynchronous classes, there were less boundaries. The participants could go through the content videos at any time they preferred, and they could attend the quizzes after going through certain number of lectures in their own schedule, or sometimes there was no test that opens door to self-evaluation. So, in the online synchronous classes which is conducted as a supplement to on-site classes the teachers are tied with syllabus, and time scale. On the contrary, asynchronous classes are less rigid there due to not having any hard and fast time line. That is why asynchronous learning is found to be more self-paced than synchronous learning as per the perception of the students.

4.5 INSIGHTS OVER LEARNER AUTONOMY

Humanistic learning is against the traditional concept of teachers doing all the talking in the classroom, rather it speaks for learner autonomy. Learner autonomy is defined as taking charge of own learning. Such trait of learners' taking charge of their own learning has been found both in online synchronous and asynchronous learning setting. The online asynchronous learning is about the teacher making instructional videos, and it is up to the students how to excel the contents. Regarding this one of the participants, Tamanna stated:

I think learner autonomy is present in asynchronous learning because in asynchronous learning, no one pushes us to sign up for the course. It's people's own choice to sign up for the course. Also, we need to find our own way about how to learn those contents.

Here, the participant is emphasizing over motivation of finding way to learn in an asynchronous setting. This clearly reveals that asynchronous learning promotes learner autonomy.

Again, in online synchronous setting, many of the participants indicated the presence of learner autonomy. According to one participant, Rafi, their teachers used to deliver lecture over a certain topic, and then they used to inspire the students to read more about it by their own. However, another participant, named Tanvir showed similar response but in a different direction saying that:

Well... Many times, it happened that the topic the teacher is talking about I can't understand that. Then I go to google or take help of the book for better understanding. Thus, I learn about that topic clearly by my own.

This reveals that sometimes the students used to learn by their own from their motivation, not from the teachers' inspiration. So, it is promoting learner autonomy, though is there, but it is indirective.

Another important characteristic of learner autonomy is self-assessment or peer assessment. However, the participants mentioned that they have not done any self-assessment neither in their online synchronous nor in online asynchronous learning, but they mentioned about peer-assessment which was conducted in online synchronous class. What Sufi, one of the participants, said regarding this is that:

In one of our classes, there was a speaking delivery task, and teacher provided us a rubric for marking. Then, we were instructed to distribute marks for each participants following that rubric.

This reveals that in online synchronous class, teachers inspired learner autonomy by providing scopes of peer-assessment for their students. Similar response came from other participants as well who mentioned about attending peer assessment in their online synchronous, sometimes as a fun though. So, learner autonomy in the form of peer assessment is quite popular in online asynchronous learning.

Here, it is found that in the classroom, the learners do not sit idle, rather they take part in various classroom activities which means that they are active in the classroom. Also, outside the classroom, they are not just some mere receivers who only receives lessons from their teachers. Rather, they find their ways and approaches to excel the topics they are taught in the class. Scharle and Szabó (2000) emphasizes that one of the core requirements of autonomy is active engagement, and autonomy is interrelated with active engagement. So, when the learners are actively participating in the class, and actively finding ways of learning by their own, they are showing autonomy. Also, the learners are finding their own ways to

excel a certain topic with the help of internet or other supporting materials. This is what learner autonomy is, taking the charge of own learning. Also, the learners finding their own ways to learn reveals that they are motivated learners. Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) noted motivation as the trait of learner autonomy. Here, the motivation and the urge of learning more is driving learner autonomy into the students. Again, the peer-assessment which is quite popular in online synchronous learning, Shen, Bai, and Xue (2020) reports that peer assessment increases learner autonomy in the classrooms. So, when the participants are taking part in the peer assessment, they are possessing some authority inside the classroom which are paved away for them by their teachers. Nevertheless, such learner autonomy is an important part of humanistic education. Hamachek (1977) stated that humanistic learning encourages self-learning which the participants here have accomplished by finding ways of learning with the help of supporting materials. Gage and Berliner (1991) also enlisted learner autonomy as a form of humanistic learning as it promotes the self-directive nature of humanistic education. So, humanistic learning in the form of learner autonomy is emphasized in both of the online synchronous and asynchronous classes by the teachers. Sometimes the teachers cultivate it in the students in constructive ways like by inspiring them to read beyond the class lecture or planning activities for them where they can show some autonomy or sometimes in other indirective ways like not providing all the clearance for a certain topic so that the students take the charge of excelling it by their own.

4.6 BARRIERS OF HUMANISTIC EDUCATION IN THE ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS CLASSES

In online synchronous and asynchronous classes, many characteristics of the humanistic education is found. However, such online learnings have received criticisms as well from the participants for having shortcomings of humanistic traits. For instance, the participants felt

that there is very limited opportunity to show empathy in the asynchronous classes as the communication is one way during the class. The teachers and the students are unaware of each other states due to the communication gap which restricts them from expressing empathy in the classes. Empathy is one of the key features of humanistic education, and absence of it reported by the participants is indeed a shortcoming of online asynchronous class. Apart from that another flaw as a humanistic learning comes from the absence of self-paced learning in online synchronous learning. Regarding this, Rayhan stated:

The idea of self-paced learning does not go with our synchronous classes because there is a fixed schedule which both the teachers and the students cannot but maintain.

The participants think that in the synchronous online classes they attended, they had to follow certain deadlines which collided with their learning at own pace. Thus, the participants criticized online synchronous learning as a humanistic learning.

Empathy is an important characteristic of humanistic education, and practice of it is a need of every education system as it keeps the students motivated to learn. When students are motivated enough, they can learn better. Also, showing empathy to the students increases their self-awareness and confidences which brings positivity among the learners.

Unfortunately, online asynchronous learning is failed to serve enough empathy to the students. Empathy is emphasized through communication, but asynchronous classes are about one way communication which is why showing empathy in the classroom becomes impossible in such setting. As a result, due to lack of empathy, students might approach asynchronous classes negatively which might end up into losing interest in it. So, securing empathy in the classroom should be taken under consideration, and different techniques should be applied in online asynchronous classes for this purpose. As the setting is designed in a one-way communication system, teachers should express empathy in different parts of

the recorded lecture. Also, any pre or post session might be kept for facilitating the teachers to show empathy to their students. Again, Zhang and Atkin (2010) argue that the major theme of humanistic learning is that learners should have the authority in the classroom which implies that learner should express their opinion about the learning process, and learning materials. In the online synchronous classes, the participants took part in peer assessments where could express some opinions. Also, it is possible to have a session between the teachers and the learners about the learning process or learning materials in online synchronous classes as it provides the opportunity for back-to-back conversation. On the contrary, online asynchronous classes fails to serve the scope for such kind of authority because only one way communication is possible here. Expressing opinions requires a discussion which is not possible without synchronous communication. However, discussion board might be a solution there, but unfortunately many of the asynchronous courses do not pay attention it. So, this should be taken into consideration.

Humanistic learning advocates for learning at own pace, and preaches that learners should have some opportunity to learn at their own pace. If they need extra times, and if it is truly required, they should be granted that. Humanistic education believes that education should be flexible for the wellbeing of the learners. So, giving learners the opportunity to have their own pace of learning should be considered as well as without its humanistic education lose its true essence. Unfortunately, the participants mentioned that they do not get any such opportunity in the online synchronous classes. There are fixed schedules and fixed deadlines which everyone needs to maintain. In such cases, if any student needs some additional time, he can't be granted that. So, this is another barrier of humanistic education in online synchronous classes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

From the research about students' view regarding humanistic education in online synchronous and asynchronous classes, multiple facts came into light which are summarized below:

5.1.1 The Status of Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Classes in Bangladesh

It is apparent that the students of Bangladesh are highly familiar with online classes, and they use various platforms for their online learning. Open edX, Udemy, 10-minute school etc. are some popular online language learning platforms here. They use these platforms in both synchronous and asynchronous setting.

However, as the covid situation is getting better here, the national curriculum is followed by a shift from online to in-person classes. Still, many private teaching organizations have kept options for online classes for their courses. Apart from that, students are attending various international courses for developing their skills which indicates their intrinsic motivations of attending online classes.

5.1.2 Humanistic Roles Played by the Teachers in the Classroom

From the discussion with the students, it has been found that in the online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms, teachers play a multifarious humanistic role. For instance, teachers are found to be empathetic to the health condition, intellect etc. of their students. By providing guidance, solution, and necessary supports, the teachers show concern for the needs of the students which is one of the major characteristics of a humanistic teacher. Apart from that they also cultivate creative thinking among their students which is another

important role of a humanistic teacher. Sometimes they are directly teaching creative thinking skills to their students, again sometimes they are inspiring creative thinking to their students by involving them in various projects and assignments. Another humanistic role of a teacher is providing the opportunity of self-paced learning to their students. However, in online asynchronous classes, the teachers can allow their students learning at own pace because such classes are designed to be in such a manner where there is no fixed class schedule and rigid deadlines, but in online synchronous classes the teachers cannot play such humanistic role because there is a fixed class schedule and some deadlines which everyone are obliged to maintain, and such fixed schedule collides with the idea of self-paced learning. Nevertheless, the teachers promote learner autonomy in the classrooms by motivating them and planning various classroom activities for them. Sometimes the teachers preach it among the students in constructive ways like by inspiring them to read beyond the class lecture or planning activities for them where they can show some autonomy or sometimes in other indirective ways like not providing all the clearance for a certain topic, and thus providing rooms to the students of taking the charge of excelling it by their own. So, these are some humanistic roles the participants affirmed that their teachers play in the online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms.

5.1.3 Barriers of Humanistic Education in Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Classes

The participants enlightened about some barriers of humanistic education in the online synchronous and asynchronous classrooms as well. First of all, it becomes very challenging to emphasize empathy in the online asynchronous classrooms because of the communication gap caused by one way communication in the classroom, and empathy requires back-to-back communication. Moreover, very few asynchronous classes take pre or post discussion session

into consideration which is why showing empathy becomes difficult for them. Also, learner autonomy gets slightly demolished in online asynchronous classes because it fails to provide the learners with the authority of giving opinion. Apart from that in online synchronous classes the teachers are unable to play a humanistic role by giving the opportunity of learning at own pace to their learners because such classes are to maintain a fixed class schedule and some certain deadlines. In such case, allowing learning at own pace to the students becomes challenging for them. Thus, for several barriers, implementing humanistic education in the online synchronous and asynchronous classes become difficult.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon the findings of this research, few things might be recommended:

- Humanistic education is very much learner-centered. It speaks about various facts to ensure a healthy learning environment for the students. Moreover, in this post pandemic age, when the students are going through stress, trauma, sickness etc., it is necessary that their education does not become a burden to them. The philosophies of humanistic education are learner friendly and work for the well being of the learners. That is why the awareness of humanistic education should be increased in Bangladesh. Also, teachers might be trained so that they can implement them in the classroom properly.
- Due to asynchronous classes being about one way communication, back-to-back conversation is not possible in such setting. As a result, it becomes very challenging for the teachers to implement some of the humanistic characteristics in the classroom. So, this thing needs to be fixed. Techniques like discussion board or any other discussion platform might be kept for asynchronous courses so that the teacher and

the students can communicate with each other because communication is a prerequisite of the implementation of humanistic education.

- From the research, it has been found that online synchronous classes follow a fixed schedule which collides with the “Learning at Own Pace” concept of humanistic education. To implement humanistic education in such setting, it is necessary to allow some flexibility to the students regarding the schedule. Discussion or survey might be a solution to this where learner needs would be assessed, and if it is found that majority of the students need changes in the schedule, they should be allowed that. Thus, the facility of learning at own pace might be served to the students though in a limited edition.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study acknowledges some limitations as well. One major limitation was geographic boundary. The study was conducted only in national context which made the findings generalized as it could not include international context. As online teaching is a worldwide phenomenon, facts are different in different corners of the world. So, not reaching to international participants has been one limitation of this study. However, as it was a short study conducted over a short period of time, and also it was a descriptive qualitative research, so only fifteen participants could be included in this study. If there was some more times, more participants could be included in this study. So, time limitation had been another limitation of this study.

5.4 FUTURE SCOPES OF THIS STUDY

This research is about Bangladeshi students' view regarding humanistic education in online synchronous and asynchronous classes. Throughout this study, it was investigated how much humanistic roles the teachers are playing in online synchronous and asynchronous classes, and also some barriers of humanistic education in such classroom settings. To my best knowledge, very research studies have concentrated on these areas which motivated me to work with that. Thus, this research study paves the way for further scholarly works. Such research might be done into different contexts. Also, other kind of researches like action research, quantitative research, experimental research etc. might be done with the humanistic education in online classes. Over all, this study acknowledges the presence of the concept of humanistic education in online classrooms, and thus it opens door to many more opportunities in the field of humanistic education.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF CONSENT FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

I agree to take part in one interview session held on my university premise. I am willing to follow the ethics while taking part in the interview.

I am aware of the process that the interview session would be recorded and I give my consent to that. I deliberately give my consent to include my contribution in this study..

I agree that the interview session may be re-scheduled at a later date due to unavoidable inconvenience.

Signature

Date

Contact Number

Contact Email

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your name and where are you studying?
2. What are some synchronous and asynchronous language learning courses you have attended?
3. Would you please brief about the activities of the synchronous and asynchronous courses that you attended?
4. Did your instructors of synchronous and asynchronous courses ask you problem posing or thought-provoking questions during the class?
5. Do you think that your synchronous and asynchronous learning courses encourage creative thinking?
6. Has your teacher ever encouraged you to study beyond the syllabus of the course?
7. What kind of interactions do you have in both your synchronous and asynchronous learning classrooms?
8. Who speaks more in the classroom of your synchronous and asynchronous learning?
9. Do your teachers encourage classroom participation in the class?
10. Do you take part in classroom activities in your synchronous and asynchronous classroom?
11. Can you describe some of the classroom activities that you did during your online synchronous and asynchronous classes?
12. Do your teachers show empathy to you during the class?
13. Have your teachers ever adjusted their teaching with your pace of learning?
14. How much exam pressure do you feel in your synchronous and asynchronous learning courses?

15. How will you view synchronous and asynchronous learning as a self-paced learning?
16. Can you give some insights about the feedback policy of your synchronous and asynchronous learning course teachers?
17. Do you get motivation for self-learning from your synchronous and asynchronous learning?
18. What are some things that you like and dislike about synchronous learning?
19. What are some things that you like and dislike about asynchronous learning?