

**Influence of Gender Roles in Language
Choice: A study on male and female students
of private universities in Dhaka city.**

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BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Dhaka city.**

A Thesis

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Abstract

Influence of gender roles in language choice has become a very regular issue in day to day conversation. When we speak in a conversation, differences are created automatically between men and women. Now days, a variation in using a language is seen mostly among the young people of Bangladesh. This paper examines the differences and reasons behind difference of language use among the students of private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh. Questionnaires were given to fifty students of five private universities of Dhaka to conduct the survey. It was found that there are differences in case of language use between the two genders- male and female and their way of expressing any feeling through a language is also dissimilar.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Language is a significant factor in any culture and society. The basic and most important factor that distinguishes human being from animals is our way to communicate with each other by using language. We can express our emotion, our ideas, our needs and many things by using our language. Words are constructed in a specific way and the way of expressing those words has become different in each language. With the passage of time society has gone through great changes which eventually have influenced our languages. New words and vocabularies have been added to different languages and at the same time some traditional and old-fashioned words have been replaced. Each language has their different characteristic which reflects the culture and society in a large extent.

Gender variation has entered into English studies as a linguistic variable a long time ago. In sociolinguistics, the relation between language and gender had become one of the major issues since early 1970s. It might be apparent in our modern society that men and women are equal. But the harsh reality shows us the truth that women are not considered and provided with an equal opportunity as men even for discussions. It is also clear that the two sexes respectively own different communication styles. To say in a simpler way, the language used by men is different from the language used by women.

The use of language is different between men and women in the sectors like vocabulary, voice and tone, syntactic structure and style, in way of expression and conversational style. In each of the part gender role differs in a large extent. While using a language, the difference between men and women is being noticed in every sphere of life. In context of our country, the influence of gender role in language use is noticeable in a very wide range. Here, in case

of speaking a particular language, men differ from women in a great extent which is notable. Among the whole population of Bangladesh, the difference of language uses amongst adult people is considered greatly.

Among them if we survey on the male and female students of universities of Bangladesh, we may get a very clear view about the influence of gender role in language use and how it is different. The research has been done from five private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh. The universities are BRAC University, North South University, Daffodil International University, Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) and Asian University of Bangladesh. In most of the private universities English is used as the medium of their instruction (Rahman, 2005, p.3-4). Almost all the students of private universities use English in the classroom to talk with their teachers and friends. When they are out of the class and in an informal situation, they tend to use both Bangla and English in their conversation. The pronunciation and expressing style of every single word differs from person to person. The gender difference is noticeable in a great extent from the usage of both the language. In present time, gender difference has become an important factor and it influences the way of using a language greatly.

So, the main purpose of this research paper is to go through their way of using language and to find out the common differences and effects of gender role in language use among the students of private universities in Dhaka city. In addition, while finding the differences, the reasons behind the differences will also be apparently found.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter contains the literature review which will provide the background and historical knowledge about my research topic. My discussion of the knowledge gained from the history and significance of the literature begins with a brief idea about language and gender. Then the discussion will move to the four key factors of language and gender: Deficit, Dominance, Difference and Discursive (White, 2004). The focus will then move to the differences in the language use as used by male and female students of private universities from Dhaka city.

2.1. Language and Gender

Men and women have been interacting with each other as social beings. Language is a significant means for the people to share their views and ideas with each other. Use of language has some basic differences just like the mankind has gender difference. There are some certain differences in language use by men and women. As a recent branch of linguistics the study of how gender is reflected in language has developed research findings in the early 1960s. The research on the relationship between language and gender developed on the following levels:

- 1) The gender difference in language form and structure,
- 2) The gender difference in utterance style and
- 3) The reasons for gender difference in language.

There remains a deep rooted belief within our culture about how men and women behave and are supposed to behave. A major part of this is based upon how we speak and it has developed into the field of “folk linguistics”. (Broadbridge, 2003). One has to go back in time and look at the historical background in order to find out some possible answers about gender differences in language use. Old letters, novels, diaries and poems provide us the evidences of folk linguistic beliefs regarding gender differences in language. It is significant to discuss about the approaches and different theories to get more evidences about the gender differences in language use which will actually give a certain overview.

2.2. Theories of Language and Gender

Some renowned linguists like Lakoff, Taneen, Cameron explored the reflect of gender differences in pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary and discourse style from the perspective of sociolinguistic research, and analyzed the newest reasons of these differences, development and changes.(Wenjing, 2012). Besides, these renowned writers like Robin Lakoff, Deborah Taneen have given their own point of views about the theories of language and gender based on some certain approaches. Among the writers Robin Lakoff is a well-known writer who has discussed four approaches regarding language and gender. The approaches are: deficit approach, dominance approach, difference approach and discursive approach. Linguists have engaged in writing, in order to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the works of the respective authors, and to offer a personal viewpoint on the most useful approach. The goal is to discuss the approaches elaborately and to point out the main strengths and weaknesses of those approaches based on the authors’ point of view.

2.3. Deficit Approach

The Deficit Approach by Robin Lakoff (1975) presents male language as stronger, more prestigious and more desirable. She argues that “women are socialized into behaving like ladies (linguistically and in many other ways) and that this in turn keeps them in their place because ladylike precludes being powerful in our culture.” (Transcript of the deficit model).

The first approach of the language and gender is the deficit approach which was initiated in the early 1970s. This approach considers women as a disadvantage on being a language user, as their language have been developed from an implicit male norm. Robin Lackoff was the protagonist of this theory. Her work was discussed by Finch (2003, p.137): “The overall pictures which emerges from Lakoff study is that women’s speech is generally inferior to men’s and reflect their sense of personal and social inferiority.”

Lakoff describes the way women’s speech style includes features which are expressive of uncertainty, lack of confidence and excessive deference or politeness” (Lakoff in Finch: 2003, p. 137). These features include: tag questions, rising intonation and hedges.

2.4. Dominance Approach

Robin TolmachLakoff presented *Language andWoman’sPlace* (1975) “less as the final word ... than as a goad to further research” (Lakoff 1975, 40). In this she promoted the dominance approach, which assigns language differences between men and women to the dominance of men within a society.

Dominance approach is the second approach of language and gender. Talbot (1998, p.131) criticized this approach as “manifestations of a patriarchal social order”. Talbot (1998, p.132) concluded that this approach can easily be sighted along with the difference approach and both of them provided an early model for the analysis of

language and gender in the social sciences.

2.5. Difference Approach

Tannen undertook this study further and so popularized the difference approach with *YouJust Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1990). This approach develops the "Two-culture" model of "men" and "women", where children are socialized within two separate groups. A situation which Tannen suggested produced "miss-communication". Tannen distances herself from the Dominance approach by eliminating blame: "Taking a cross-cultural approach to male-female conversations ... without accusing anyone of being wrong or crazy" (Tannen 1990, 47). Moreover, she stated six points for male and female language. Those six points are:

- Status vs. Support
- Independence vs. Intimacy
- Advice vs. Understanding
- Information vs. Feelings
- Orders vs. Proposals
- Conflicts vs. Compromise

Talbot (1998, p.131) claimed that, "behavior previously perceived as men's efforts to dominate women, which is reinterpreted as a 'cross-cultural' phenomenon". According to Johnson and Meinhof (1997, p.9), the difference approach can be criticized because it fails to address why women and men belong to different subcultures.

According to Crawford (1995, p.1), “men and women...are fated to misunderstand each other unless they recognize their deeply socialized differences”. Crawford described how the

“Fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk”. The key importance of this approach is the method by which men and women develop themselves in different subcultures.

2.6. Discursive Approach

Deborah Cameron, a well-known linguist from the “Discursive” field of language and gender studies, demonstrated (from feminist perception) how versions of gender stereotypes can change according to responses to shifts in the economic climate. She portrayed how these shifts are taken and who actually influences the reproduction of patriarchal ideology. Power structures inherent within patriarchal society create gender behaviors which are explained by that power, as Sattel explains: “the starting point for understanding masculinity lies, not in its contrast with femininity, but in the asymmetrical dominance and prestige which accrues to males in this society” (Sattel in Thorne *et al* 1983, 119). Sattel’s statement discloses the “discursive” element to the analysis of gender; a step forward from the binary and towards a broader conversation.

Cameron points out that “earlier females were considered as inexpert communicators (as in the Deficit/Dominance approach), more lately men have been ascribed this characteristic not because the actual communicative behavior of men and women is thought to have changed but male behavior has been re-framed as dysfunctional and damaging” (Cameron 2006, 138). Cameron’s essay shows how the discursive approach considers sociological factors within the study of language and gender.

The three approaches- deficit approach, dominance approach and difference approach, consider how gender differences expressed through language use were visible within the physical manifestations of different gender: men and women. The more recent approach which is the discursive approach looks at how gender is constructed through language within a cultural framework.

2.7. Gender Differences in Language Use

It may seem like that women are equal with men in the modern era. But the harsh reality is women are not considered as equal as men yet. Moreover, they do not even get equal opportunities for discussion. One of the reason is the two sexes respectively possess different communication styles. In simpler words, it can be said that the language which is used by women is unlike the language used by men. Variances in how they use their language and how they behave in conversational interactions will be discussed in details in the following part.

Vocabulary is the most dynamic element in language. So, the vocabulary difference clearly can show the relationship between gender difference and language use. According to Wenjing (2012), there is no rule for female in English pronunciation rules, vocabulary structure and syntax, but the differences between male and female in vocabulary use is often encountered in daily life, and also overlooked. Robin Lakoff (1975) stated as an explanation that in this society, woman usually spend much more of their time on color-related activities such as choosing clothes than men do.

They often use color terms borrowed from French, such as azure (blue), mauve (lavender), aquamarine (blue-green) etc. These words are not common to them but they can show their elegance through the use of these words. These words are unusual for men.

According to Wenjing (2012), women always use a word with exaggerated significance and expression with words like gorgeous, lovely, cute, divine, adorable, darling, precious, sweet, charming, and so on. For example, your earring is lovely. While men only use the basic words to emphasize the effect, like good, very, really and so on. Jerpersen (1992) found that women use “so” to show emphasize on tone and express attitude more than men. For example: It was so interesting.

Lakoff (1975) found that female are seen using more intensifiers in their regular conversation than male, such as “so”, “awfully”, “pretty”, “terribly”, “quite” and so on. Labov (1966), Levine & Crockett (1966) and Trudgil (1972) have theorized that men use more slang expressions than women. According to Wenjing (2012), women pay more attention to language elegance. The expressions like Shit! /damn weather! / The hell with him! - are usually avoided by women. They don’t use abusive words or language in their conversation. According to Lakoff (1975), women use more tag questions than men and also they use more hedges in their conversation than men as well.

According to Wenjing (2012), in case of pronunciation, women utter more standard pronunciation than men. That means standard form of pronunciation and elegant accent usually come from women’s language instead of men’s. Women keep sensitivity on their tone while speaking and they usually use the standard and authoritative manner of articulation. On the other hand, men use non-standard forms of voice or language more than women. Moreover, female tone is higher than males. After analyzing and researching many language materials, Linguists found that women often use the interrogative tone while speaking. In addition, it is found that women use the reverse stress, which means that men often put the highest pitch and emphasize on the most important word. On the other hand, women use the lowest pitch on the most important word in a statement.

According to Ning & Dai (2010), differences have also been found between men and women in case of topic selection. For example, politics and economics are most common and major topics selected by male for discussion. On the other hand, education and family are the most commonly discussed and major topics selected by women. Just as LydieMeunier (1996) states in his article, “The topics such as sports, politics and cars which are seen as ‘serious’ are preserved for men only, the choice for women are the topics such as child-bearing and personal relationships which are labeled as ‘trivial’”.

The amount of words used while talking is another field where men and women have the differences. According to Ning & Dai (2010), usually men talk much more in public communication than women. On the other hand, women talk much more in their family discussions than men do.

There are some differences between men and women in the choice of syntactic structure. Wenjing (2012) stated that, syntactically, women like to use tag questions more. They prefer to speak indirectly and use rising tone which is used to express consult and uncertainty. On the contrary, men prefer to speak directly and that is why they always use declarative and imperative sentences to express the tone to express orders and requests.

According to Karlsson (2007), there is a discussion about the differences in characters used by female and male. The characters are given below:

The female character uses:

- Intensifiers: so, such
- Hedges: I think, you know, I really, I mean, I suppose
- Tag questions: You didn't- did you?

- Minimal responses: yeah, hmm, right
- Words which are supposed to be used more often by women than men: oh, my goodness.
- Polite language: please, sorry
- Formal language: I cannot....

The male character uses:

- Strategy in order to control the conversation
- Minimal responses in order to convey to woman that he is not paying attention or interested in what she has to say
- Taboo words: the man uses taboo words and slang language which are supposed to be more frequently used among males than females. The words are: Shit! God damn it!
- Commands: “give me today’s paper”, “Hand me the sport magazine from the dining room!”

2.8. Reasons behind gender differences in language use

According to Wenjing (2012), the gender differences in language use is a tremendously complex social, cultural, psychological and physiological phenomenon, which involves the language of politics, ideology, social status, roles, relationships, language, attitude, level of education, social interaction and many other factors.

Lakoff (1975) stated that the differences of language between men and women are caused by some social factors, not only the language itself. These social factors are discussed below:

1. The social role of men and women is different. Because of the sex difference, men and women's social responsibilities, social interactions and social activities are different. At the beginning of Bible, one thing is clearly stated that women's social status is ruled, manipulated and dominated by men. Moreover, women lack confidence while speaking because they have low social status and own no power (Lakoff, 1975).
2. The society is men-centered and dominated by men. Women are derived from men. People have reached to an agreement that men are superior to women. The women are being considered in a lower status in the society.
3. Value is another factor. Value is the core of any culture. Different values also persuade men and women's vocabulary selection.

According to the physiological factors, it is said that natural biological differences between men and women decide that men and women are different. According to the latest medical research on the development of language skills the women's left hemisphere develops earlier than men's. This means, the girl speaks more frequently and emotionally than boy from the beginning. On the other hand, the latest voice and tone experiment proved that the male and female's voice tone quality on the resonance peak is very different because of their gender. Moreover, women's vocal cords are shorter, thinner and relaxer then the men's (Wenjing, 2012).

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter contains the research methodology that was followed by the researcher to conduct the research. A short discussion on the objectives of the research, the significance of the study, instruments, participants and process of analysis has been included here. Questionnaires consisting of both multiple choice and open ended questions were distributed to the students of five private universities in Dhaka city.

3.2. Research design

This research has been conducted with a small-scale, quantitative survey on the influence of gender role in language use.

3.3. Research objective

The core objective of the research is to find out the effects of gender role in language use among the students of private universities in Dhaka city.

3.4. Research Questions

Do male students and female students use language differently?

What are the most common differences among them?

3.5. Significance of the study

Young people tend to have variation in language use more than people from other age group. This study will find out and show how the male and female students of private universities differ from each other in terms of gender while speaking and using their language. It will present an insight of students' perception on the effect of gender variation in language use.

3.6. Participants

The participants of this research were fifty students from five private universities in Dhaka city. The subjects were randomly chosen from BRAC University, Independent University Bangladesh (IUB), North South University, Daffodil International University and Asian University of Bangladesh. Among the participants, twenty five of them were male students and the rest twenty five were female. The age range of the participants is 20-25 years.

3.7. Instruments

The participants were given questionnaires for conducting the survey. The survey was conducted by Google forms online. All the questions were made understandable by the researcher. Therefore, the main source of information of this research is Survey (see appendix 1)

3.8. Survey Questionnaires

A form that includes several questions on which respondents are expected to write their own thoughts and beliefs is known as a questionnaire. Consultation with the supervisor and the literature review of the research were taken into consideration while designing the questions to ensure the questionnaire's validity and reliability. The questionnaires included 13 multiple choice questions consisting of 2 options and 2 open ended questions. In each of the multiple

choice questions students had to choose one specific answer and they had to write few sentences to answer the open ended questions.

3.9. Methods of Data Analysis

Collected raw data from the survey were analyzed by Microsoft Excel 2007. It has also been used to create tables, drafts and calculating percentages and ratios. Moreover, Microsoft Word 2007 has been used to arrange the data in several tables and explain it.

3.10. Procedure

The research was administered in the five private universities of Dhaka city. Then the survey questionnaires were distributed among randomly selected students of different departments of the private universities.

3.11. Limitations

The research was conducted among the students of five private universities in Dhaka city. There are also other private universities as well as public universities inside and outside Dhaka. But it was not possible to make contact with all the students of those universities because of timelimitation. Also this research was only done on a limited number of participants and the explanations that are given are also limited. The researcher wished to survey on more participants for her research. But shortage of time has concluded the research with fifty people only.

Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

This chapter contains the findings of all participants' multiple choice questions and the analytical explanation of the answers. The survey was conducted among fifty students from different departments of private universities in Dhaka city. Among them 25 were male and the rest 25 were female students. Here, the findings will be discussed with tables and short descriptions.

Table 1: Tag Questions

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	14 (56%)	16 (64%)	60%
No	11 (44%)	8 (32%)	38%

In table 1, we can see that 60 percent of the total participants use tag questions while using their language in a conversation. Among them male are 56 percent and female are 64 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 38 percent of the total participants do not use tag questions. Among them, male are 44 percent and female are 32 percent. The table depicts the extensive use of tag questions among the private university students of Dhaka City. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female use more tag questions than male in their regular conversation. The total percentage of the answers on question number 1 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

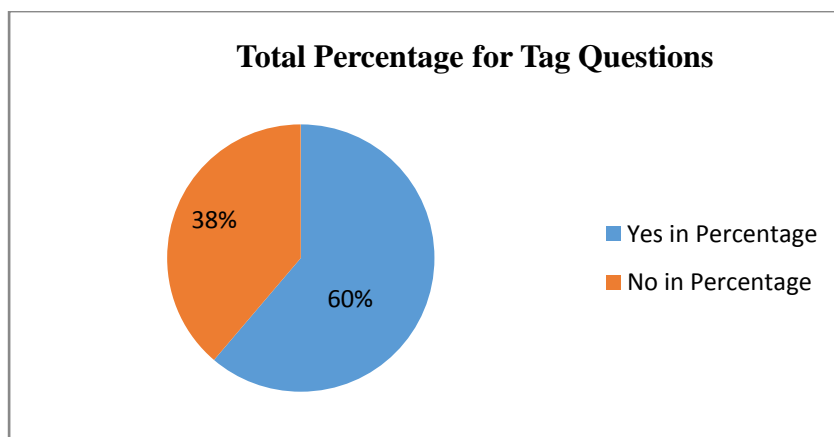


Figure 1: Total Percentage for tag questions

Table 2: Tone of talk

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Talk loudly	7 (28%)	9 (36%)	32%
Talk softly	18 (72%)	16 (64%)	68%

In table 2, we can see that 32 percent of the total participants talk loudly in a conversation. Among them male are 28 percent and female are 36 percent. On the other hand, 68 percent of the total participants talk softly. Among them male are 72 percent and female are 64 percent. The table depicts the extensive use of talking softly among the private university students of Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that in case of talking softly male percentage is higher than female. The total percentage of the answers on question number 2 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

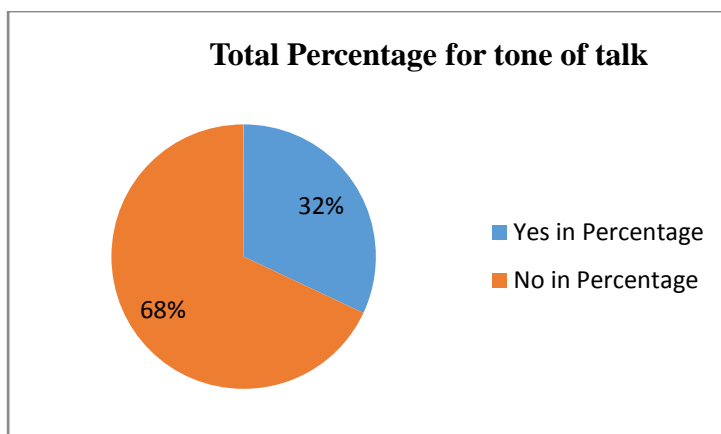


Figure 2: Tone of talk

Table 3: Using Hedges

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	17 (68%)	21 (84%)	76%
No	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	24%

In table 3, we can see that 76 percent of the total participants use hedges while using a language in conversation. Among them male are 68 percent and girls are 21 percent. On the other hand, 24 percent of the total participants do not use hedges. Among them male are 32 percent and female are 4 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of hedges among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female use more hedges in a conversation than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 3 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

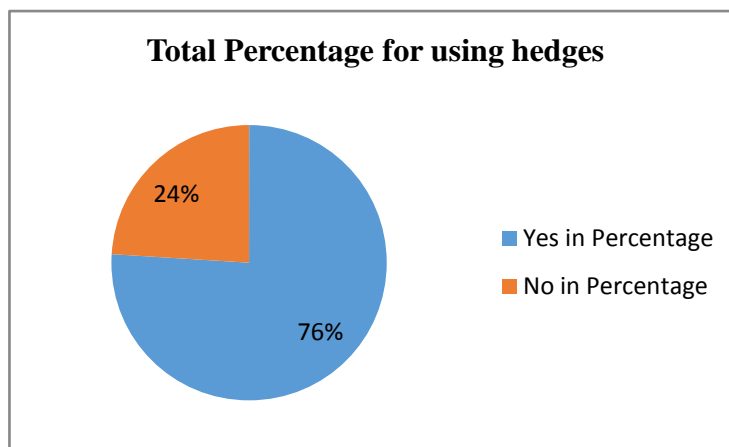


Figure 3: Using Hedges

Table 4: Use of taboo words and slang language

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	15 (60%)	18 (72%)	66%
No	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	34%

In table 4, we can see that 66 percent of the total participants use taboo words and slang language while using language in a conversation. Among them male are 60 percent and female are 72 percent. On the other hand, 18 percent of the total participants do not use taboo words and slang language. Among them male are 40 percent and female are 28 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of taboo words and slang language among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female use more taboo words and slang language in a conversation than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 4 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

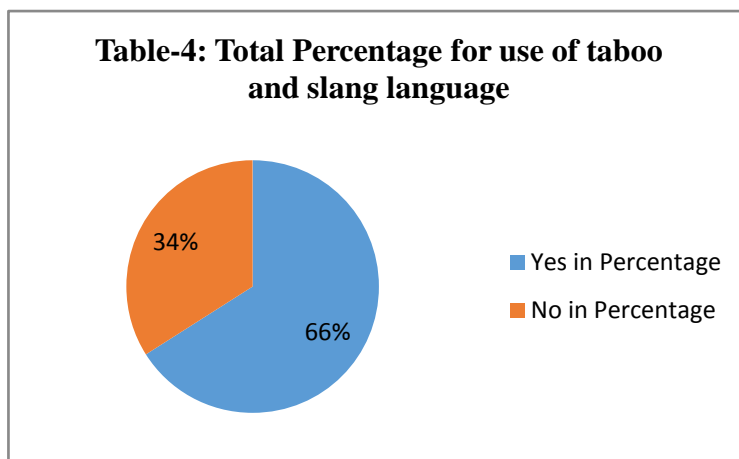


Figure 4: Use of taboo words and slang language

Table 5: Way of language (Direct/Indirect)

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Direct Speech	24 (96%)	19 (76%)	86%
Indirect Speech	1 (4%)	6 (24%)	14%

In table 5, we can see that 86 percent of the total participants use direct speech in their conversation. Among them male are 96 percent and female are 76 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 14 percent of the total participants use indirect speech while speaking. Among them male are 4 percent and female are 24 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of direct speech in the language among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that male use direct speech in a conversation more than female do. The difference is very little though. The total percentage of the answers on question number 5 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

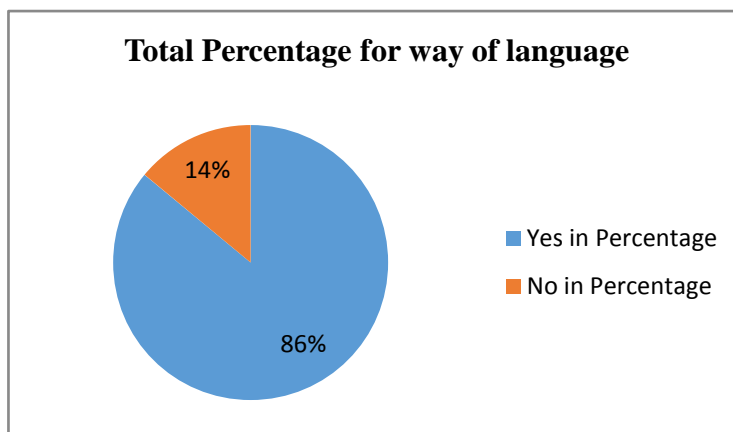


Figure 5: Way of language (Direct/Indirect)

Table 6: Mixing two or more languages

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	12 (48%)	15 (60%)	54%
No	13 (52%)	10 (40%)	46%

In table 6, we can see that 54 percent of the total participants’ mix two or more languages in a conversation. Among them male are 48 percent and girls are 15 percent. On the other hand, 46 percent of the total participants do not mix. Among them male are 13 percent and female are 40 percent. The result of the table depicts that the extensive habit of mixing two or three languages among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female tend to mix two or more languages while speaking in a conversation more than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 6 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

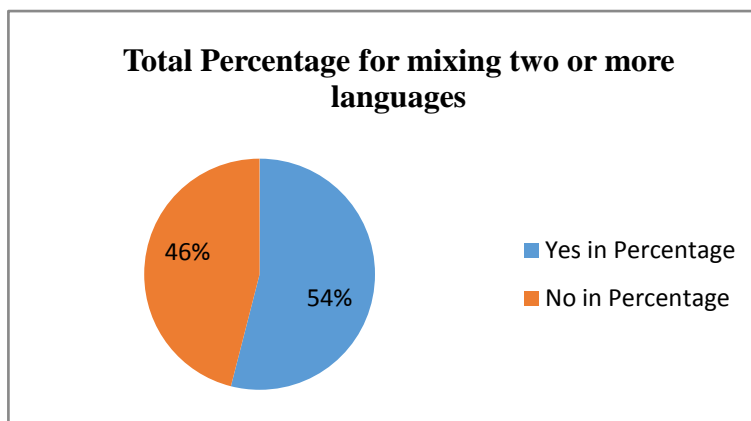


Figure 6: Mixing two or more languages

Table 7: Use of “so”, “such”, “তো”

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	17 (68%)	21 (84%)	76%
No	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	24%

In table 7, we can see that 76 percent of the total participants use “so”, “such”, “তো” in a conversation. Among them male are 68 percent and female are 21 percent. On the other hand, 24 percent of the total participants do not use “so”, “such”, “তো”. Among them male are 8 percent and female are 4 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of those words among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female tend to use those words in their languages while speaking more than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 7 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

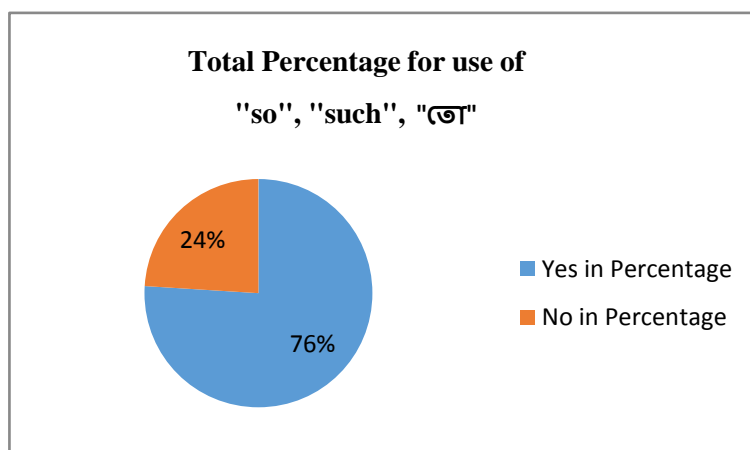


Figure 7: Use of “so”, “such”, “তো”

Table 8: Use of minimal responses

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	22 (88%)	84%
No	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	16%

In table 8, we can see that 84 percent of the total participants use minimal responses in their conversation. Among them 80 percent are male and 88 percent are female. On the other hand, 16 percent of the total participants do not use minimal responses while speaking. Among them male are 20 percent and female are 12 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of minimal responses among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female tend to use more minimal responses while speaking more than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 8 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

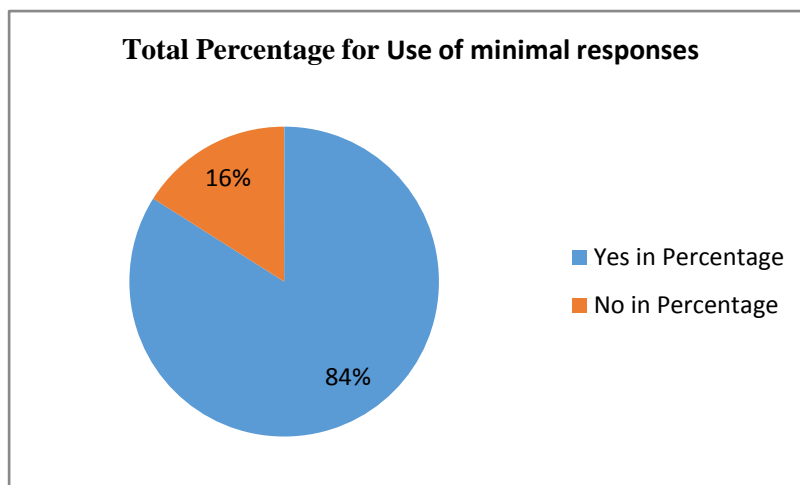


Figure 8: Use of minimal responses

Table 9: Using language like “I think”, “You know”, “Actually”

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	25 (100%)	21 (84%)	92%
No	0 (0%)	4 (16%)	8%

In table 9, we can see that 92 percent of the total participants use phrases like “I think”, “You know”, “I really” in a conversation. Among them 100 percent are male and 84 percent are female. On the other hand, 8 percent of the total participants do not use those phrases while speaking. Among them 0 percent are male and 4 percent are female. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of those phrases while speaking among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that male tend to use these phrases more than female. The difference is very little though. The total percentage of the answers on question number 9 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

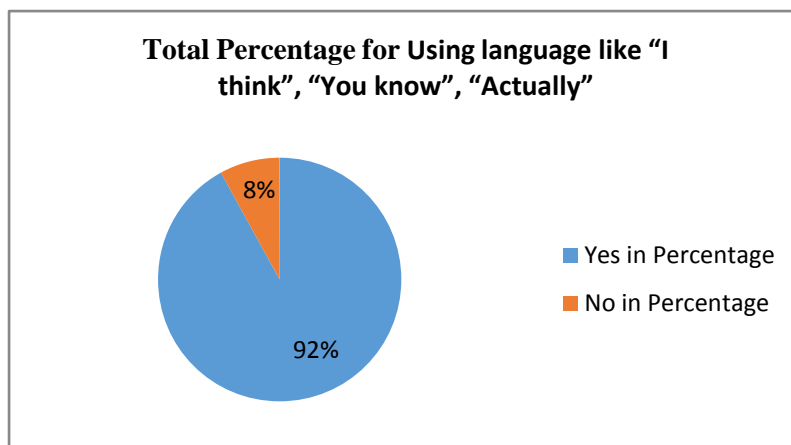


Figure 9: Using language like “I think”, “You know”, “Actually”

Table 10: Occurrence of interruption in between a conversation

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	3 (12%)	5 (20%)	16%
No	22 (88%)	20 (80%)	84%

In table 10, we can see that 16 percent of the total participants interrupt in a conversation. Among them 12 percent of them are male and 20 percent of them are female. On the other hand, 84 percent of them do not interrupt in a conversation. Among them 88 percent are male and 80 percent are female. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female tend to interrupt in a conversation more than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 10 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

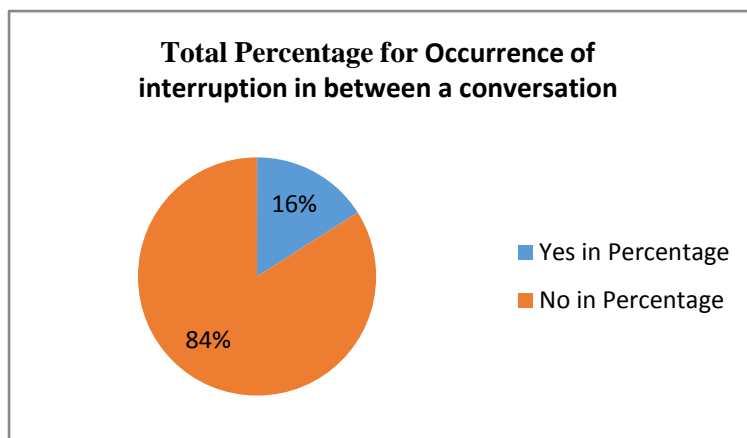


Figure 10: Occurrence of interruption in between a conversation

Table 11: Using adjectives like “Beautiful”, “Charming”, “Sweet” and “Lovely”

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	18 (72%)	19(76%)	74%
No	7 (28%)	6 (24%)	26%

In table 11, we can see that 74 percent of the total participants use words like “Beautiful”, “Charming”, “Sweet” and “Lovely” while speaking. Among them 72 percent are male and 76 percent are female. On the other hand, 26 percent of the total participants do not use those adjectives. Among them male are 28 percent and female are 24 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of adjectives among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female use more adjectives in a conversation than male do. The total percentage of the answers on question number 11 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

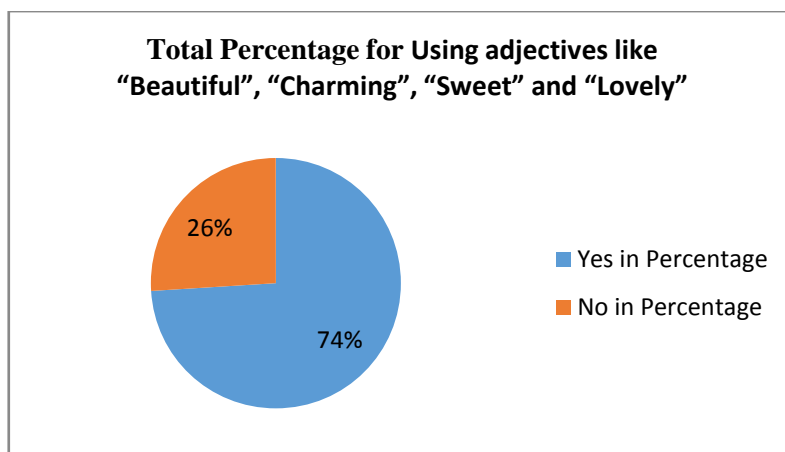


Figure 11: Using adjectives like “Beautiful”, “Charming”, “Sweet” and “Lovely”

Table 12: Using exclamation words like “Wow!”, “Great!”, “Cool!”

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	21(84%)	82%
No	5 (20%)	4 (16%)	18%

In table 12, we can see that 82 percent of the total participants use exclamation words like “Wow!”, “Great!”, “Cool!” while speaking. Among them 80 percent are male and 84 percent are female. On the other hand, 18 percent of the total participants do not use those words. Among them male are 20 percent and female are 16 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of exclamation words among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female use more exclamation words in a conversation than male. The total percentage of the answers on question number 12 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

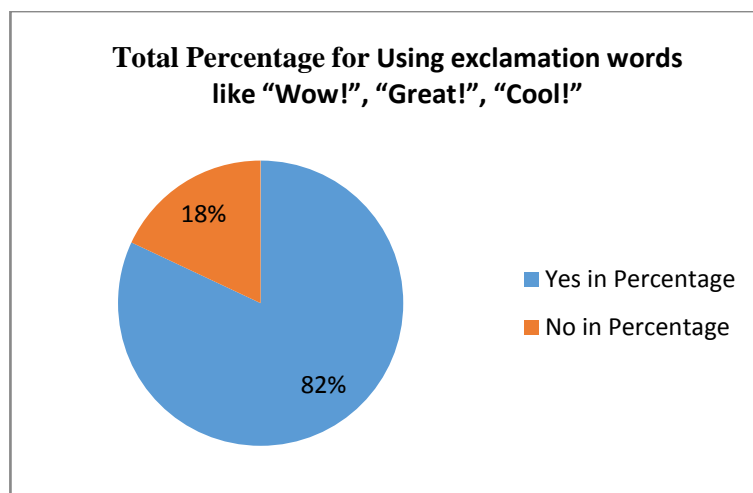


Figure 12: Using exclamation words like "Wow!", "Great!", "Cool!"

Table 13: Using words like "Joss", "Jhakkas", "Jotil"

Options	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	15 (60%)	15(60%)	60%
No	10 (40%)	10 (40%)	40%

In table 13, we can see that 60 percent of the total participants use words like "Joss", "Jhakkas", "Jotil" while speaking. Among them 60 percent are male and 60 percent are female. On the other hand, 40 percent of the total participants do not use those words. Among them male are 40 percent and female are 40 percent. The result of the table depicts the extensive use of these words among the private university students in Dhaka city. It can be interpreted from the data of this table that female and male simultaneously use these words in a conversation. The total percentage of the answers on question number 13 has been portrayed in pie chart below:

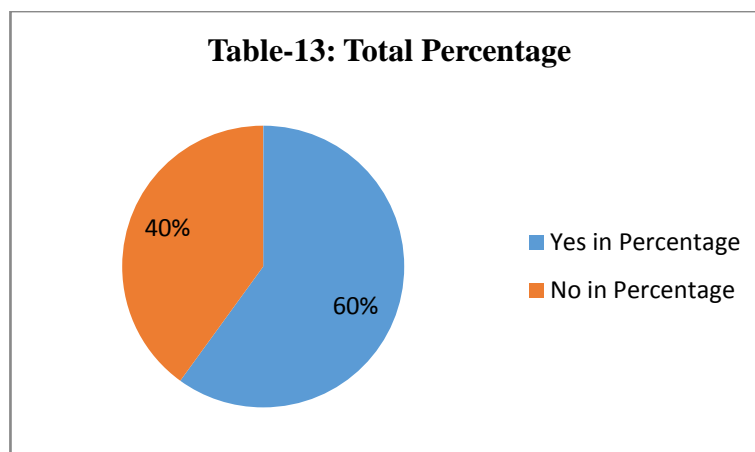


Figure 13: Using words like “Joss”, “Jhakkas”, “Jotil”

Apart from thirteen multiple choice questions, there were two open ended questions for the participants to answer. The first question was-

Suppose, you have witnessed a severe road accident while going to University. How will you share your shocking reaction and your feeling for the victims with your friends?

In answer to this question male are found to use Bangla language more than female. Almost all the answers from the females were in English. Some of them used indirect speech but none of the male participants used indirect speech in their answer. Female were expressive than male and the length of the answer was short in male participants; answers.

The second open ended question was-

Suppose, you went for shopping to New Market. Suddenly you notice someone is trying to steal your wallet very cleverly. You catch the pickpocket red handed. What will you say to him?

In answer to this question again female participants' answers were in English where male participants preferred using Bangla. In case of using slang language, here, male participants

have higher percentage than female. Again, the answers of female participants were longer than male.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter contains the discussion and explanation of the data collected from the research and interpretation of the findings from last chapter. The main focus of the researcher was to find out the influence of gender role in language use among the participants in private universities of Dhaka city.

Holmes (1993) found out, regarding the uses of tag questions, certain types of tag questions are used more by women than by men, i.e. modal tags, and certain types are used by women, i.e. facilitative tags (Nemati& Bayer, 2007). Here, facilitative tags are addressee-oriented which expresses the speaker's solidarity or positive attitude to the addressee. On the other hand, modal tags are speaker-oriented and signal speaker's desire for confirmation. From the starting of the research including the responses of the participants, it has been found that while speaking in a conversation, 60% of the total participants use tag questions. On the other hand, 38% of the total participants do not use tag questions in a conversation. Here, in case of using tag questions in a conversation majority are female (64%) and in case of not using tag questions majority are male (44%). So, from this data and finding it can be interpreted that there are gender difference while using tag questions in a conversation.

In case of tone of talk in using a language the research shows that 32 % of the total participants talks loudly. Among them 28% are male and 36% are female. On the other hand, 68 % of the total participants talks softly. Among them male are 72% and female are 64%. From this data, it can be said that the gender difference in case of talking loudly or softly is

not that much prominent. Here, it is clear that most of the participants answered softly and among those male percentage is higher than female which means male tend to talk softly than female in a conversation.

Lakoff (1975) stated that women use more hedges than men do (Nemati, A. & Bayer, J. M., p. 198). The data of the study shows that 76% of the total participants use hedges while using a language. Among them male are 68% and female are 84%. On the other hand, only 24% of the total participants do not use hedges while speaking. The finding shows that female use more hedges than male in a conversation and the uses of hedges are increasing among Bangladeshi young generation.

In case of using taboo words and slang language, the evidence of the study shows that 66% of the total participants use taboo words and slang. Among them male are 60% and female are 72%. On the other hand, only 34% of the total participants do not use taboo words and slang language. The result shows that in modern era female use more taboo words than male and the use of taboo words and slang is increasing day by day. The percentage shows the gender difference in this particular sector.

In case of using language with direct speech or indirect speech, it is stated that “the males studied were generally more assertive and directive than the woman” (Haas, 1979). The evidence of the research shows that 86% of the total participants use direct speech while in a conversation. Among them male are 96% and female are 76%. On the other hand, 14% of the total participants use indirect speech while in a conversation. Among them female are 24% and male are only 4%. The result shows that there exists gender difference in case of using direct or indirect speech in a language. It can be interpreted that men tend to use direct speech in a conversation more than women.

In case of mixing two or more languages, the study shows that 54% of the total participants mix two or more languages while speaking. Among them male are 48% and female are 60%. On the other hand, 46% of the total participants do not mix two or more languages where male are 52% and female are 40%. The result shows that there exists gender difference in case of mixing languages. Apparently women tend to mix two or more languages in a conversation more than men.

In case of using some specific words like “so”, “such”, “ତୋ” in a conversation, the evidence of the research shows that 76% of the total participants use those words while speaking. Among them 68% are male and 84% are female. On the other hand, only 24% of the total participants do not use those words in a conversation. The finding of the study shows that women tend to use these kinds of words while speaking more than men which points out the existence of differences in language use between male and female.

Regarding minimal responses, the evidence of the research shows that 84% of the total participants use minimal responses like “hmm”, “yeah”, “right” in their conversation. Among them 80% are male and 88% are female. On the other hand, only 16% of the total participants do not use minimal responses while using a language in a conversation. The result of this data shows that female use more minimal responses while speaking than male and it reflects gender difference in language use.

Another evidence of the study shows that phrases like “I think”, “You know”, “I really” are used by 92% of the total participants. Among them male are 100% and female are 84%. On the other hand, only 8 % of the total participants do not use those terms while in a conversation. The result of the study shows that male use phrases like these more than female and despite of a little difference there still exists gender variation in case of using these kinds of phrases in a conversation.

Regarding the occurrence of interruption in a conversation the evidence of the research shows that only 16% of the total participants' interrupt while in a conversation. Among them male are 12% and female are 20%. On the other hand, 84% of the total participants do not interrupt. The result of the study shows that female interrupt more than male and it indicates the gender variation among them in language use.

In terms of using adjectives like "Beautiful", "Charming", "Sweet" and "Lovely"- the evidence of the research shows that 74% of the total participants use these words where male are 72% and female are 76%. On the other hand, 26% of the total participants do not use adjective words while speaking. Here, the finding of the study shows that female use these adjective words more than male which show the gender difference in a large extent.

In case of using exclamation words like "Wow!", "Great!", "Cool!"- the evidence of the research shows that 82% of the total participants use these words while speaking. Among them male are 80% and female are 84%. On the other hand, only 18% of the total participants do not use exclamation words while speaking. Here, the finding of the study shows that female use more exclamation words in a conversation than male and this proves again the existence of gender difference in using language.

In modern time, young people of Bangladesh are seen to use some words like "Joss", "Jotil" or "Jhakkas" very frequently while speaking. These words are often called "Djuice Language" In terms of using these words - the evidence of the research shows that 60% of the total participants use these words in a conversation. Among them male are 60% and female are 60%. On the other hand, 40% of the total participants do not use these words while speaking. Here, the finding of the study shows that female and male simultaneously use these words in a conversation.

In terms of the open ended questions the evidence of the study shows that male and female express their anger and sympathy in a different way. The two open ended questions needed the expression of anger and sympathy from all the participants. In case of expressing sympathy female were more expressive than male. Also female are found to write longer answers whereas male participants just expressed in one line. Female used sentences like “It was dangerous”, “I am so sad”, or “I am shocked” more than male in the answers. So, It can be said from this finding that in case of expressing sympathy female are more expressive than male.

The second question needed expression of anger from the participants. In this case, male were more expressive than female. Some of the male participants used slang language for expressing their answer but no female used such words. Female used the tone of philosophy like “You should follow the right path”, “This is not the right way to earn money” etc. Whereas male participants mostly scolded the thief to express their anger like, “I will kill you”, “How dare you” etc. This finding portrays that men are more expressive in terms of expressing anger than women.

In both the open ended questions, there were differences found in the answers of the male and female participants. It can be said that in expressing a feeling with a language male and female do differ from each other.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

A language itself does not contain any difference. It is the people who use it to achieve a particular purpose and while using they change it which reflects the personal perception and social values. Mostly, the social norms, restriction of the use of language and tradition of a society cause gender variation in case of language use. From the study it is clear that the language of male and female are quite different. This difference is seen mostly in vocabulary use, voice and tone, syntactic structure and style of delivery in using language. Moreover, with some common differences there are also some common similarities in using language between male and female. While speaking a language male and female use different ways to express their thoughts through a language and that reflects the gender difference. The influence of gender role in using language also creates many variations in communication.

To conclude, it should be remembered that the differences are still endless for researchers to find out more explicit and detailed differences between male and female in their way of using language.

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Appendix

Survey Questionnaire

Age:

Institution's Name:

Gender:

(The questionnaire below has been created for a research paper. The purpose of the study is to find out the differences and impact of gender variation in language use. Please give your frank opinion to the questions. The researcher is thankful to each participant).

1. In a conversation, do you often use tag questions like "...isn't it?", "...don't you?" ?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. How do you talk usually in a conversation?
 - a) Talk loudly
 - b) Talk softly

3. Do you often use hedges like, "Whatever", "For example", "তাই না", "আসলেই"?
 - a) Yes
 - c) No

4. Do you use taboo words like "Shit", "Damn", "Hell", "ধুরশালা" etc. in your regular conversation?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

5. What type of speech do you use in a conversation mostly?
 - a) Direct speech
 - b) Indirect speech

6. Do you often mix two languages in your conversation? Example of mixing Bangla and English or Hindi: “I need to complete my assignment আজকে.”

a) Yes

b) No

7. Do you use words like “So”, “Such”, “তো”?

a) Yes

b) No

8. Do you use minimal responses like “hmm”, “Yeah”, “Right”, “ঠিক”?

a) Yes

b) No

9. Do you use language like “I think”, “You know”, “Actually”?

a) Yes

b) No

10. Do you interrupt often in a conversation?

a) Yes

b) No

11. Do you use words like, “Beautiful”, “Charming”, “Sweet and “Lovely”?

a) Yes

b) No

12. Do you often use exclamation words like “Wow!”, “Great!”, “Cool!” in a conversation?

a) Yes

b) No

13. Do you use words like “Joss”, “Jhakkas”, “Jotil” in a conversation?

- a) Yes
- b) No

14. Suppose, you have witnessed a severe road accident while going to University. How will you share your shocking reaction and your feeling for the victims with your friends?

15. Suppose, you went for shopping to New Market. Suddenly you notice someone is trying to steal your wallet very cleverly. You catch the pickpocket red handed. What will you say to him?
