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THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT CONSIDERING BENGALI LANGUAGE CLASSROOM USERS, AND OTHERS USING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WHICH IS A BARRIER TO LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This paper determines and analyses the problems faced by Bengali Medium students, and how Bengali medium students are treated negatively and thus affect their outcomes, at university. This research paper has been made based on secondary and primary data which the researcher analyzes and graphical representation. The researcher structured a survey questionnaire on a sample size 30. The researcher focused on the actual problems that are being faced by Bengali medium students at university. Also, the researcher tried to find out why Bengali medium students were treated negatively by many faculty members and tried to find out whether these problems are affecting the student's achievement or not; the researcher also tried to take some suggestions from the students about how can we reduce the problems. A mixed-method approach was considered in writing this paper. With the use of a Likert scale for collecting the primary data from the students was collected. After analyzing these data, the researcher focused on collecting secondary data. Secondary data were collected from different sources i.e. online journals, online articles, and some web pages.

KEYWORDS: *pedagogical practices, language proficiency, multilingualism, linguistic identity, language barriers*

The curriculum of most universities is fully English medium based that is why faculties are bound to take all the academic things in English for that Bengali medium students face different types of problems when they come to university. First one or two semesters they don't cope with the system. Questions of the exam, everything is written in English. The class lectures are also conducted in the language English. It can be tough for newly admitted students to catch all the lectures which are given by instructors. "Even Bengali medium students are not able to communicate with faculties, even when faculties ask them questions, they are not able to answer them, and that impacts their results. And it affects students' learning and achievements" (Rahman, et al., 2020). This research will find out the actual problems of the students and also, its solution.

In our country, all well-known private universities are fully conducted in the English language. Their curriculums are also English-based, and NSU is the best university in Bangladesh and this university follows the North American curriculum. To maintain all these things, NSU maintains language issues. "In private universities, English is not only a language it is also a modern style as well, if someone knows then the person will be considered a smart one otherwise the person will be treated negatively" (Rahman, & Pandian, 2018). At the SSC and HSC levels, there were only 2 basic books "English for Today" and "English 2nd Paper with Basic Grammar" Thus it is enough for a student to learn English? Our Bengali medium student has basic English ideas and it is not enough for higher education. "This deficiency makes them nervous and leads to their whole university life guilt" (Lambert & Penney, 2020). This makes them treated negatively; therefore, Bengali medium students are not only treated negatively at NSU but also in all well-known universities as well.

Many researchers show there is a communication gap between students and faculty, I mean those students from Bengali medium backgrounds. "This communication gap leads a bad impact on their career and affects them negatively and this research will give a solution to this matter and how they can cope up with faculty" (Saha, 2023). In this research, there will be several questions with absolute rules. This research will give an idea about how Bengali medium students face problems, how Bengali medium pupils are treated negatively, and how this affects their learning and their solutions. "In most of the cases, researchers found that Bengali medium-background students are somewhere confused" (Lee et al., 2022). They also remain less confident in comparison to

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English-medium students. "For this reason, Bengali medium students cannot interact with faculties, and faculties take them negatively, along with faculties thinking they are less attentive in class; that's why teachers don't give focus to them" (Rahman et al., 2019). Even if a Bengali-medium student doesn't understand a topic, they can't even ask their faculty to help them because of their language barrier. Between Bengali-medium students and their teachers, this issue causes a communication gap. Bengali-speaking students often find themselves unable to respond confidently and despite knowing the answer when a teacher poses a question to them in class due to language barriers. "The lack of enough good friends, poor relationships with faculty, and a general lack of good relations with anyone in varsity cause Bengali medium students to suffocate during their time in college" (Canagarajah & Ashraf, 2013). They are unable to express their feelings to both friends and teachers. For this reason, Bengali-medium students are overlooked and treated poorly, which has an impact on their time in college, their academic career, and their academic life outside of it. Additionally, Bengali-medium students have a detrimental effect on their extracurricular activities. "Since all academic and nonacademic work is completed in English at the majority of private universities" (De Jong et al., 2016). Bengali-medium pupils would need to be confident or have English communication skills to join a club for that purpose. "They are treated unfairly in every aspect of university life, which has an impact on their brain and mental health" (Haque, 1989).

This research has also found that there are some common problems for Bengali medium students. One of the major problems is coping with the university's educational environment. Most of the universities follow the American curriculum, that is why all the academics are conducted in English. "In university, all the classes, presentations, exams, quizzes, assignments, and all the activities are conducted in English" (Hamid & Ali, 2022). But when non-English medium students join university and face this curriculum and medium of studying, they become hopeless and shocked. They face huge problems in coping with the environment. A Bengali medium student comes from a Bangla background. From the start of education life until joining the university, they study everything in Bangla. All the academics are done in the Bangla language. They only have a single subject that is called English for today, and that does not cover anything that helps a student to cope with the university academic system. "A Bengali medium student studies for 11 years in Bangla and just has a simple idea about the English language then how can Bengali medium students cope with the English medium curriculum? That is why when Bengali medium students join in university, they face troubles in adapting to that culture as well as their system"(Rahman, 2022). Even Bengali medium students can get anything in the classroom when their faculty takes class, Bengali medium students can't even understand what their faculty is teaching. Additionally, they can't make good friends then so they can't get any help from their teachers as well as their friends. Thus affect their whole outcomes of that semester.

Another one is using English continuously in speaking and writing. The most common problem is giving presentations in English. When a Bengali-medium student notices most of his friends give good presentations and can interact with teachers, then the student feels a lack of confidence to cope with that university culture as we as the student start feeling shy to talk with others. A Bengali-medium student doesn't even have many friends because of their communication skills, which leads to a negative role in their academic life. "Even most of the Bengali-medium students are not satisfied with the study materials, which are in English, and I am also not used to using the English language continuously in my studies" (David et al., 2009). Bengali medium students don't understand class lectures properly, which are conducted in English. For all of these, Bengali-medium students are having trouble with their studies; even they are not able to take proper preparation for their exams. These problems influence their abilities for the rest of their lives.

Another major problem that faces Bengali-medium students is adaptation. The adaptation of English-medium students's culture. "Bengali medium students have their own culture and traditional style of dressing, but English medium students wear different cultured dresses that also separate them. Even both backgrounds have different gestures and behaviors" (Shende, 2023). Most of the faculties, like the gesture of an English medium student, that's why they get concentration; on the other hand, a Bengali medium student gets avoidance, which is also a reason for not doing well in the result. "Bengali-medium students try to adopt the culture that has English-medium students, but they can't adopt the culture because they don't have that ability, and they don't get support from their friends and their faculties" (Curran, 2023). Even sometimes faculties ignore them when they understand that the student is from a non-English background. They can't interact with them. These problems make a Bengali medium student's mind tiny; they can't even think broadly. "Except for enjoying the varsity life, they take it as a pain and burden. They try to find a solution on how to get rid of this life" (Ferreyra, 2023).

This can be hypothesized that Bengali medium students face problems in university because there is a communication gap between Bengali medium students and faculties, which affects their study and learning outcomes negatively, Bengali medium students face are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU, and thus it affects the students learning and achievement.

In this research, the researcher plans to investigate all the factors. This research will address the following questions:

a) Why the Bengali-medium students miss-treated and how does it affect their studies, as well as other activities?
b) How Bangla medium students can face the problems of educational environments.
c) What is the underlying problem of Bengali medium students at NSU and how does the communication gap with faculty exacerbate these problems?

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Bengali Medium student faces different types of problems in terms of English listening, writing, reading, and speaking. For a language, these 4 parts are very important, if one of the four in missing then it will create problems in learning that language. "Writing is the most used skill in evaluating students' performance in almost all levels of education" (Yang & Jang, 2022). Bengali medium student faces numerous problems in English. "The proficiency level of English among students is very low due to their educational background" (Lee, 2019). Because of our passion for Bangla, English was never recognized as the second language though it is widely used, side by side, with our mother tongue. "But the problem was terming English as a subject, not a language, and for this reason, the nation has not yet an English-speaking generation" (Altavilla, et al., 2023). For taking English as a 'subject', the students of SSC and HSC do not have to face listening and speaking tests, though these are language skills. Every language has 4 skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Our English education tests only Reading and Writing skills. For this reason, "the learners do not pay heed to Speaking. We know that speaking skills are a crying need for working at home and abroad" (Carvajal Regidor, 2020). That is why Bengali medium students suffer a lot in English in their whole life.

Because of a lack of skills in English, Bengali medium background has to suffer a lot from the communication gap with teachers and other students. Especially when we are talking about NSU this scene is very common here. This is the reason to not understand class properly. And simply this reason leads to bad results. And bad result leads to depression. And the stresses and depression that a student faces during exam time. "Depression and stress lead to behavioral problems and this is the cause of getting bad results (Ricker)" (Chang, 2022). "A report published by the *Centre for Enterprise and Society (CES)* has revealed that 62% of undergraduate students in Bangladesh are under extreme stress. 3 in 5 undergraduates 'stressed out'" (Ilieva & Waterstone, 2013). The research findings conclude that undergraduate students are stressed with their student life despite being satisfied with the overall university experience. In our country Bengali medium students are really dominated, sometimes they are dominated by English medium mates, and sometimes they are dominated by faculty. "The peer pressures from the English medium students who seem to be more advanced make the Bengali medium students less confident" (Çakmak et al., 2023).

MATERIALS & METHODS

For my primary research quantitative, the researcher conducted a survey of a representative sampling of the students in North South University Dhaka from Bengali medium. This was an online survey via Google Forms. The questionnaire consists of different type of questions to get a range of useful data which will help me to answer my research question. Total thirty students responded to this survey.

As for the secondary research qualitative approach, the researcher used an online research paper, book, and documentary. Mostly considered the fifteen peer-reviewed journals and other sources relevant to this topic. The whole paper is cited in compliance with the APA 7 professional paper format. Also, two interviews from the specialists in this field.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Quantitative Research Findings

The survey conducted for my research had some presentable data that added significant insights and value to the research. The researcher collected a sample of 30 students and put all the information correctly to make the analysis perfect. The researcher explained the results that the analysis brought me. The researcher also explained all questions with their results. In my survey, there were ten close-ended questions and two open-ended ones and all of the questions were closed questions that were related to my hypothesis.

When the question asked why Bengali medium students do not get class lectures properly. And 56.7% agreed with the option weak in English. So, 17 students out of 30 claim that weakness in English is the main factor in not understanding class properly which is conducted in English. And 20% of students agreed that faculty makes classes harder, according to these 6 students, faculty makes class harder which is why Bengali medium students do not understand class properly which is conduct in English. 17.7% did not agree with the statement. 5 of 30 think Bengali medium students understand class properly. And 2 students 6.7% out of 100 thinks that because of concentration Bengali medium students do not understand class properly which in conducted in English. Weakness in English was the main reason why Bengali medium students do not understand class properly which is in English.

Then researcher proceeded to second question researcher have to ask to the interviewees, do they think Bengali medium students facing problems coping with the environment of the NSU campus, 19 students 63.3% went with the option in the first few semesters, that's meant to cope with English medium institute Bengali medium students takes few semesters. This affects their CGPA, and that leads to feeling down. While 30% of students which means 9 students out of 30 said sometimes Bengali medium students face problems coping. And 6.7% claim that Bengali medium students never face problems coping with the environment. The good news is that not a single student out of 30 said that Bengali medium students always face problems coping with the environment. Then it means that after some semesters they can cope with the environment. So 63.3% of students claim Bengali medium student faces problems in the first few semesters.

When the question asked about the main factors, why Bengali medium students are facing problems with their faculty in terms of communication which purpose was to find factors creating problems between Bengali medium students and faculties in

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terms of communication. The data in the pie chart illustrates that 50% of people agree that less proficiency in the English language is the main factor. 33.3% of students said Bengali medium students were afraid to communicate with faculty. 10% claim because of shyness. And 6.7 % state that Bengali medium students don't get the proper environment to communicate with faculty. This survey proved that less proficiency in the English language is the main factor to why Bengali medium students are facing problems with their faculty in terms of communication. When a student has less knowledge about a language then the student would not have the confidence to communicate with faculties. When they have less confidence, they will feel shy as well as afraid to talk then there will grow a communication gap between students and teachers. This survey question answer states the same concept.

When the question asked whether Bengali medium students are satisfied with the study material which is in English the main purpose of putting the question in this survey is to know are Bengali medium students satisfied or not with their study material which is in English. From this question 56.7% of students go with neutral, they are not satisfied and dissatisfied. 26.7% were satisfied with this study material. 13.3% of people are dissatisfied.3.3% people are satisfied. So Bengali medium students don't have that much problem with their study material and find that around 57% of them are neutral, they have no problem with this material. Even 8 out of 30 are satisfied with the material, and 1 student out of 30 is very satisfied with the materials. But 4 of 30 were not satisfied with the material that's a lesser amount than the satisfaction rate. This question gives the idea that most Bengali medium students have neutral opinions in terms of study material that is in English, and then most of them are satisfied with the smaller number of students who are not.

When the question asked do you think Bengali medium students are neglected by English medium students. The reason for choosing this statement as a part of this research is that the researcher wanted to bring up the fact that, Bengali medium students are also neglected by English medium students. 36.7% of people state that sometimes Bengali medium students neglected by English medium students. 23.3% of people say always neglected. 20% people said yes they neglected and 20% not really. This question it's proves that Bengali medium students are neglected by English medium student because most of the students claim that they are dominated by English medium students. 80% of students go with the Bengali medium students treated negatively while only 20% students oppose of this statement. This question states that most of the Bengali medium students around 80% are negatively treated by their friends those who are from English medium backgrounds and few students don't agree with the statement.

When the question asked do English Medium students get favors from teachers. This question was to find out do English medium students get a favor. And this survey gives the proper idea and answer to it. 46.4% of students agree with this statement they said often English medium students get a favor. 25% of people directly agree with this statement. They said yes, English medium students get favors from the faculty. 21.4% said not really, like that can happen or not. 7.1% of people are against this statement. Most of the students think English medium students get favor from faculty, around 71% of students accept that English medium students get favor from faculty whereas only about 29% of students claim not really.

When this question is asked do, they think Bengali medium students get bad grades in English courses? The purpose of putting the question in this survey is to know do Bengali medium students get a bad grades in English courses. In this question 50% of people mean 15 people out of 30 go with sometimes, they said sometimes Bengali medium students get a bad grade in English courses. 23.3% means 7 out of 30 said often, they directly agree with this statement. 23.3% means 7 people said no. and 1 of them directly disagreed with this statement. 15 students say that sometimes but 14 of 30 agree with the statement that Bengali medium students get bad grades in English courses on the other hand only 1 student doesn't agree with this statement.

When asked to opinion on Bengali medium students get confused about the meaning of some words during lectures. This sole purpose is to find out do Bengali medium students get confused about the meaning of some words during lectures. 66.7% of people agree with this statement and 16.7% of people strongly agree with this statement. 13.3% of people state not really. And 3.3% said directly did not agree; therefore, during class 66.7% got confused about the meaning of some words during the lecture. That refers to the weakness of the understanding of Bengali medium students. About 83% of students agree that they don't understand or get confused about the meaning of some words during lectures whereas only 17% of them say that they don't get confused to understand any meaning of a word during classes.

When the opinion is asked in Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU. The purpose of this question was to acknowledge the fact of whether Bengali medium students were treated negatively or not. 50% of people agree with this statement. 33.3% of people do not agree or even not with disagree. 13.3% of people do not with this statement. 3.3% said always Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU. So, it is proved, that Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU. 16 students out of 30 agree that Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU, opposite of it 14 students out of 30 don't agree that Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU. So, it is proved that Bengali medium students are treated negatively by many faculty members of NSU, while English medium students get favor from the faculty.

When the question asked should Faculty members need to use easy words during their lecture**?** This question is to find out, do faculty members need to use easy words during their lectures,

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60% of people said always faculty need to use easy words during class. 36.7% said sometimes need to use it. 3.3% said no need to use easy words. The researcher asked this question to find the solution, here 29 students asked for a simple word or easy word while only 1 student opposed it. It also hints that faculties use tough words and Bengali medium students don't get them properly they need easy words to get the topic.

Qualitative Analysis

There were two open-ended questions. One is, do you think that Bengali medium students struggle in interacting with their faculty members and why?

Most of the interviewees said yes, they think Bengali medium students struggle in interacting with their faculty members. Some suggestions are:

Yes, because they are scared most of the time by thinking that what if the faculty is mean or won't pay attention to the student. Because they are not efficient in English...so they want to interact. They have a constant fear of getting mocked by students of English medium background. That's why they hesitate, and cannot make the right choice of words when they try to interact with their faculty members. They sometimes utter something negative that they don't even mean or fail to make their faculty members understand what they want to say. In this case, faculty members sometimes may misinterpret their words. Some students know English well, but during the time of speaking their passive vocabularies do not work.

They should speak Bangla to their faculty members. For their class lectures and slide creation, professors ought to use simpler synonyms. For a group discussion in English, their faculties should allot them ten to twenty-five minutes. Finally, they believe that by practicing their English with friends, they can become better people and that their faculties will be able to assist them in solving this difficulty.

2nd open-ended question: How Bengali medium students can cope with NSU and faculty members, in your opinion? First, the students have to practice speaking English and the faculties also have to have simple English language so that the students can understand**.**

Students should try to improve their proficiency in English and a friendly attitude from faculty members can be helpful in this regard. To make good relations with faculties, they need English skills. Make good friends with English medium background students. Who can guide you well to overcome this problem? So, these were the suggestions most important suggestions or short answers from the researcher's interviewee.

There were two interviews in this research. Two teachers of the English department who took the introductory level courses give their valuable input on this issue. In the first question researcher asked, do you believe the communication in the English language between you and your students matters a lot while you grade their script? In this response, two teachers agreed with this part. Senior lecturer claimed that without communicating in English, he did not allow his students to raise anything in the class, and students who were fully in the English language got more edge in terms of grading as they marked themself positive vibes in the classroom. Another instructor said that he also does not allow his students to speak in other languages in the classroom in terms of communication. He also added that during his offer hours, he also maintained this. In addition, while grading he also takes it as a factor. In the second question, teachers are prioritizing the communication medium rather than the context of the lesson. In this part, both teachers said that it is part of the learning. Even if the students are falling and demotivation; they will not change any form of teaching method because this has a connection with their grading system. After that, the researcher asked the teacher whether they do anything when they find students are struggling to following this lecture. They said they did not bother about it. It's the student's responsibility to deal with it. Further, the researcher also interested to know if they have any suggestion to solve this problem. Both of them said it varies from students to students. They suggest that students should spend more time on language and communication skills, this will help them to achieve proficiency in the language. After conducting the interviews, it is a clear indication that students are struggling and they are not treated negatively.

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATION

After analyzing the data, the researcher can surely say that Bengali medium student faces problems in university, and they are negatively treated by some faculty and English medium students as well. And it affects their learning. This research helps me to find out some of the problems of Bengali medium background students at NSU. Most of the students are not that much fluent in using English. So, they are having problems with speaking, writing, listening and reading. Some of the students are having problems understanding the class lectures, some of the students are having problems with their exam scripts, some of the students are having problems with their study materials and most of them are having problems with giving presentations. The Bengali medium background students are facing more problems in speaking and presenting. In NSU every student needs to present every semester no matter from which department the student is. Most of the Bengali medium students are having trouble. Bengali medium faces problems in choosing major courses. "They choose those courses where they have to participate in fewer presentations" (Seargeant & Erling, 2011). Bengali medium student faces all of these problems in their varsity life and for this reason; their studies and outcomes are getting affected.

After collecting the survey data, the researcher thinks the students are seeking help from the faculties. If the faculties help them they will overcome this fear of English. In most of the cases, the researcher found that students avoid asking questions because of the fear of using English while talking to the faculties. Even when they do not understand any topic properly they never asked that to that faculty. For this, they are having problems with almost

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every topic. Their results are also hampering for this reason. They cannot answer the questions properly in class or even in exams. It is a very common problem. The viewpoint of the researcher is to use easy synonyms during the class lecture and sometimes using Bengali words is necessary for the faculties. If the faculty uses Bengali words, then the students won't be afraid to ask questions or to communicate with the faculties. It will be really helpful and beneficial for Bengali medium students of NSU. The researcher believes that varsity faculties will be concerned about this problem and take the proper easy steps to reduce the fear. Besides these, the students should also take some steps such as, increasing vocabulary, trying to use English for a whole conversation with their friends, and practicing more writing and reading. Additionally, every university ought to start a group like this where students who speak Bengali and English can join together and support one another. Additionally, a teaching member ought to be able to mentor them in effective communication and coping mechanisms. A student can quickly adapt to the surroundings and culture if there is this kind of group. Anyone is welcome to join the club and discuss anything there. If this kind of environment persists, Bengali-medium students will feel comfortable speaking out, expressing themselves, and interacting with peers and teachers. Every university also should take steps to reduce the problem. In the academic curriculum, they can add some free courses that are based on English. Where they can teach a non-English-medium background student English. They can conduct this course before the main academic journey starts. It will boost a Bengali-medium student lot. They can get the confidence to do well in academic life. By doing all these things, the researcher thinks Bengali medium students can be good in English which is the main problem they are facing at university. Secondary data were gathered from a variety of websites, online journals, and papers, among other sources. However, because there isn't much research in this area, gathering secondary data was challenging. On this subject, no books existed. The researcher therefore devoted all of my attention to reading articles on the internet, which was also extremely uncommon.

CONCLUSION

After conducting this research, the researcher can conclude that the researcher's hypothesis has been proven correct that most of the time Bengali medium students are treated negatively by faculty members and English medium students as well and thus affecting their results. Throughout the whole research researchers have found lots of problems that Bengali medium student faces among them most important thing is that they are less confident of using English while speaking or writing. Because they did not get much option to practice English or they did not. If they properly practice English then they might be able to get the confidence of using English in every sector. "Researcher does not get much secondary data to access my entire paper is based on the primary data" (Seargeant et al., 2017). The researcher collected the data from the students who are having trouble at NSU. According to the students, practicing English and their faculty might be a great option to help them. Faculties have a lot of options to help those students. Those students are helpless at some point especially those students who are newly admitted to NSU. Faculties should be more careful towards them. Also, the students should hard be working at the same time. "Students should be able to overcome this issue with the support of extracurricular activities and a language club and other extracurricular activities" (Goldshtein et al., 2024, June). Additionally, there is a counseling session for all students. Students from English-medium backgrounds can learn how to accept those from non-English-medium backgrounds, as well as how to act and support them. Faculty members can also teach Bengali-medium students coping mechanisms. "Pupils can communicate with professors and all pupils will benefit from that" (Çakmak, et al., 2023). Then the students will be able to cope with all the problems. Throughout the paper, researchers found the problems Bengali-medium students face problems in an English-medium university, and also the researcher suggested some ideas on how to get rid of this problem. If the non-English medium students work hard with the support of faculties and English medium students, Bengali medium students can overcome this issue.

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