

Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh:

A Study in Khagrachari District.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a rich description of the role of languages, especially indigenous languages in the secondary curriculum in Bangladesh. Through this research I seek to identify the role of mother language in education. The role described from the perspectives of the Head Teacher/ Principal, Bangla language Teacher, Curriculum planner, Community leaders (from Chakma, Marma and Tripura community), and Tribal Students from the three tribal groups. Drawing on an understanding of curriculum as a tool for the social control of knowledge, I show how the secondary language curriculum promotes social inequality by the intellectual domination of Bangla and English over less prestigious tribal languages by not including indigenous languages, culture and values. This is particularly important for my position as a teacher educator in Bangladesh, and working along with school teachers. I used qualitative methods to interview tribal leaders, students and their teachers and analyse curriculum documents. My findings show that because the medium of instruction in schools is Bangla, it is difficult for tribal students to speak or understand Bangla language, as it is not the language used in their homes and communities. Tribal students are often unclear about school lessons, and the knowledge they acquire in schools cannot be related to their family and social life. Indigenous students do not involve themselves in classroom activities and quality education is not achieved for their life success. Findings reveal that the role of mother language is important in identity and learning for tribal students, and needs to be encouraged and valued both in policy and practice for the educational achievement of tribal language students to improve.

Table of Contents

Page No.

• Acknowledgements	1
• Abstract	3
• Table of Contents	4
• Definition of Key Terms	9
Chapter-1: Introduction	11
1.1 Statement of the Problem	11
1.2 Rationale of the Research.....	12
1.3 Languages of Bangladesh.....	15
1.4 Language Policy and Ideology.....	17
1.5 Research Objectives	20
1.6 Research Question	20
1.7 Significance of Research	21
1.8 Organization of the Research	22
Chapter-2: Literature Review	24
2.1 History of Bangla and English Language Development in Bangladesh	24
2.2 Significance of Instruction in One's Native Language.....	28
2.3 Language and Identity	29
2.4 Addressing Indigenous Language Losses in India and New Zealand.....	32
2.5 What can Bangladesh Learn from Other Countries?.....	40

Chapter-3: Theoretical Frameworks	44
3.1 Post-structuralism.....	44
3.2 Understanding the Dominance of Languages.....	45
3.3 Understanding Curriculum as a Political Text.....	47
Chapter-4: Methodology	52
4.1 An Overview of Qualitative Research.....	52
4.2 Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Research Approach.....	53
4.3 Research Design – the Case Study Approach.....	54
4.4 Participants and Settings.....	56
4.5 Data Collection Tools.....	59
4.5.1 Semi-structured interview.....	61
4.5.2 Focus groups.....	63
4.5.3 Document analysis.....	64
4.6 Data Analysis.....	65
4.6.1 Transcripts.....	66
4.6.2 Analytical memos.....	67
4.6.3 Document analysis.....	68
4.7 My Position as a Researcher.....	68
4.8 Rigour and Trustworthiness.....	69
4.9 Ethical Issues.....	70

Chapter-5: Findings and Discussion – 1	72
5.1 Disjunctures between Tribal Students' Home Knowledges and School Knowledges.....	73
5.1.1 Disjunctures between home and school knowledges disadvantage the learning of tribal students.....	73
5.1.1.1 Issues of tribal language loss in Bangladesh in terms of disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal students.....	75
5.1.2 Why is the disjuncture between home and school knowledges a problem?	81
5.1.2.1 Importance of mother languages in education.....	82
5.1.3 Effects: short term effects on learning for tribal students	87
5.1.3.1 Truancy of tribal students in education	87
5.1.3.2 Unable to understand the subject content.....	91
5.1.3.3 Lack of participation of tribal students.....	93
5.1.4 Long term effects on learning for tribal students	95
5.1.4.1 Individual students fail and drop out from education.....	95
5.1.4.2 Tribal groups' identities	97
5.1.4.3 Disjunctures between what Bangladesh as a country is not doing what it says it is doing	100
5.2 Summary of This Chapter	102
 Chapter-6: Findings and Discussion – 2	 103
6.1 Disjuncture between Operational and Intended Curriculum in Relation to the Significance of Mother Language Learning	104

6.1.1 What the disjuncture between intended and operational curriculum looks like and how it happens.....	104
6.1.2 Why the disjuncture between intended and operational curriculum is a problem	107
6.1.3 Effects: short term effects of the disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning.....	108
6.1.3.1 Tribal languages and students are seen as having deficits	108
6.1.3.2 Language and power.....	109
6.1.4 Long term effects of the disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning	110
6.2 Analysis of Language Curriculum of Bangladesh.....	111
6.2.1 The silence of tribal languages in the curriculum document.....	113
6.2.2 The dominance of Bangla in the Bangla language curriculum document.....	115
6.2.3 The politics of Bangla in the Bangla language curriculum document	117
6.3 Summary of This Chapter	122
Chapter-6: Summary and Recommendations	123
6.1 Summary	123
6.2 Recommendations	124
6.3 My Undertakings	127
6.4 Finally.....	127
Supervisions	128

References 129

Appendices 147

Definition of Key Terms

Secondary curriculum: In Bangladesh, secondary curriculum means a structure of pedagogy and content knowledge, and it indicates the facts that have been added in different subjects which are implemented for grade six to twelve. This curriculum is intended curriculum, because it is the National curriculum which is planned (McGee, 1997). In the present research, secondary curriculum will mean the intended curriculum which is planned/set for classes nine and ten.

Language curriculum: Language curriculum is a part of the National Curriculum. There are two types of language curricula in Bangladesh, such as Bangla language curriculum and English language curriculum. Here, language curriculum will mean only Bangla language curriculum which is planned for classes nine and ten in both the intended and operational level.

Curriculum planner: Curriculum planner refers to the person who is involved in curriculum development.

Tribal Community leader: In my research, tribal community leader refers to the individual who leads the tribal community and makes decisions on their behalf.

Tribal student: There are 46 ethnic groups in Bangladesh. Here, by tribal students I refer to those students who come from three ethnic groups which are Chakma, Marma, and Tripura.

Indigenous language: Indigenous language is a language that is used by a group of people or community in a particular region or place. In Bangladesh, people of Chakma, Marma, and

Tripura use a particular language in their own community. In this research, indigenous language sometimes refers as tribal language or ethnic language or tribal students' mother language.

Minority language: Minority language means a language that spoken by a minority of the population of a country. Only two percent of the population speaks Chakma, Marma, and Tripura languages in their community in Bangladesh. For this reason, these languages are considered as minority languages in this thesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Bangladesh has a centrally designed and controlled curriculum which does not focus on local knowledge and languages, and teachers follow that curriculum in the classrooms. According to McGee (1997), teachers engage with both the intended curriculum and the operational curriculum. The centrally designed and planned curriculum is intended curriculum, and the operational curriculum is what happens in the classroom (McGee, 1997). Both at the intended and operational level, Bangla and English are considered as the main instructional languages in the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. As a result, the Bangladesh education system does not help to explore local and indigenous languages and cultures. Indigenous people in Bangladesh are treated by the Bangla speakers as 'minority groups'. Bangla is the State language as well as the mother language for 98% of the population (Ministry of Planning, 2009), and it is the main instructional language in education. Tribal people are unable to read, write, or use their mother languages outside their communities, so when they attend school, get a job, or run a business, they have to use Bangla to communicate with others. Because they have to read and write in Bangla, which is not their native dialect, they fail to achieve the aims and objectives of education. Most of the tribal students cannot go beyond the periphery of the primary schools and for those who go to secondary level, achievement rate is low. From my own experience, I have seen that the prospects for these tribal students are unsatisfactory, as they tend to gain very little opportunity in academia, and in life generally. Therefore, it is necessary to take initiatives to reform the language curriculum of Bangladesh, because the minorities are entitled to Educational

Language Rights (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2001), and it is important for them to be taught in their mother language.

1.2 Rationale of the Research

My own experiences have borne witness to this reality. I lived in Khagrachari, one of the hill districts in Bangladesh, from 1986 to 1996. I was a student then and had a lot of tribal and non-tribal friends there. I observed that my tribal friends were never enthusiastic to participate in the classroom activities, and their tests scores were not as good as the non-tribal students. As a friend, I asked them why they were reluctant to be involved more in classroom activities. They replied that the lessons were hard to comprehend to them because of the language barrier. They would memorise the lesson and reproduce the content in the exam-papers without proper understanding. As a result, they did not do well in examinations. If they had the opportunity to learn in their own language, they would have been able to understand the lesson. During my teaching from 2006 to 2007 at the Khagrachari Government College as a lecturer, I had the experience of teaching both the tribal students whose mother tongues were *Chakma*, *Marma*, and *Tripura* and non-tribal/Bangali students whose first language was Bangla. I observed that the Bangla speakers did better in academic activities than the students whose first language was other than Bangla. Consequently, I wanted to know why the tribal students did not show more active involvement in academic activities. They told me that learning in Bangla, which is totally different from their own languages, did not reflect their culture, values and world-views. As a result, it was quite hard for them to understand the subject knowledge and increase their thinking capacity.

Even now, the language curriculum does not include indigenous languages, cultures and values. According to Uddin (2010), tribal students have to learn Bangla language from the very beginning to follow the national curriculum, and "the national curriculum of education is in Bangla and based on Bangali society and the instructors are mostly from among the Bangalis" (pp. 32-33). Therefore, the tribal students are unable to understand the instructions and the contents because of their deficiency in Bangla language. As a result, it seems to me that the tribal students are neglected by the National Language Curriculum in Bangladesh. Since tribal languages are not included in both the intended and operational curriculum, it affects the classroom teaching practices. As the instructional language is Bangla, the cultures, identities and past experiences of the tribal students are not valued in daily classroom learning activities. Moreover, their cultures and identities are not reflected through curriculum in their own ways of knowing. As a result, the indigenous students do not feel interested in education, and are not equally focused in it. Thus, indigenous languages are suppressed by the dominant languages through curriculum by de-prioritisation. Bangla and English are the most important languages in Bangladesh, reflecting the dominant groups' whose languages have more prestige and a better quality of life. In Bangladesh, the people who use highly prestigious dialects (e. g. Bangla and English) enjoy high status in society whereas indigenous dialect users are deprived of these social opportunities. The facilities of dominant languages in society can encourage those people who are affected by highly valued languages to give up their own ancestral languages to speak the dominant language (Dorian, 1998). This linguistic difference is also present in the secondary language curriculum with the same principle which contributes to the possible extinction of the tribal languages, cultures and identities. This linguistic discrimination made me interested in conducting research to examine the understanding of curriculum planners, teachers, students, and

community leaders about the role of languages, particularly indigenous languages, in the curriculum.

On the other hand, at the intended and operational level, curriculum focuses on the knowledge, culture and identity of the dominant groups in Bangladesh, because they have political power and social status. Due to the influence of dominant languages, the minor languages are becoming endangered, which contributes to the loss of culture, heritage and human knowledge systems. The UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003) focuses on the ideology of dominant languages and cultures which create language loss. The same principle also functions in Bangladesh.

Bangla and English are recognised as the mainstream official languages in the central curriculum documents. Minority languages may eventually become extinct, because they have no official recognition in education. Therefore, indigenous people and their worldviews are maltreated through the assimilation processes in the educational context. As a result, the minorities do not get the benefit of education. The curriculum creates a gap between non-tribal and tribal, rich and poor, and dominant and minor groups, and produces social inequity in Bangladesh. This social inequity also made me interested in the perception of the participants about the significance of languages in schooling and curriculum design. It might be anticipated that if indigenous languages are included in the curriculum, this would accelerate the learning of tribal students. For tribal students, learning in their own language would be a way of maintaining their tribal identity and heritage. For non-tribal students, learning a local indigenous language would provide them with cultural enrichment and a sense of inclusiveness. Besides, it is important for

one to get instruction in his/her own native languages. In the literature review section, I will discuss the significance of one's native language.

1.3 Languages of Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the majority of the people speak, read and write in Bangla (Bengali) as their first language, and English is given equal importance to Bangla in education. In Madrasa education (religious based institutions where students are sheltered, nourished and taught the ways of Islam by Islamic priests), Arabic plays a significant role as a language of instruction. In addition, Bangladesh has almost 45 tribes who live in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Rajshahi, greater Mymensingh, Sylhet, Patuakhali and Barguna along with Bangla speaking people, and they have 45 distinct languages (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009; Sagar and Poulson, 2003). The historical background, economic status, social construction, religious values and festivals make indigenous people distinct from Bangla users. With some exceptions, from about two to three million tribal people are speaking their own languages (Banglapedia, 2006). The noticeable tribal languages are Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo, Khasia, Manipuri, Rajbangshi, Kachhari, Kuki, Munda, Hajang, Oraon, and Santali.

I have conducted research on the Chakma, Marma, and Tripura languages, because these are the well-known tribal languages in the Khagrachari hill-district in Bangladesh. The Chakmas are the largest indigenous group in the central and northern parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. There were about 2, 53,000 Chakmas in Bangladesh according to the 1991 population census, but the number of Chakmas might have increased by this time, and more than 90 percent of them are living in the Rangamati and Khagrachari districts (Bangladesh News,

2010). The Chakma language has its own alphabet and a rich body of literature. The Chakma language belongs to the Southeastern Bengali branch of the Eastern Indo-Aryan group which has its origin in the Indo-European language family (Wikipedia, 2010).

The second largest ethnic group in Bangladesh is the Marma. There were about 1, 57,301 Marmas in Bangladesh as stated in the 1991 population census report (Bangladesh News, 2010), although according to the population trend, it is believed that the number of Marmas is greater than before. Most of the Marmas live in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari which are the three hill districts of Bangladesh. Some of them live in the coastal districts of Cox's Bazar and Patuakhali. The Marmas descended from the Mongoloid race. The Marma language is related to the Burma-Arakan group within the wider classification of the Tibeto-Burma linguistic family, and it contains the Arakanese dialect which is written in Burmese characters (Bangladesh News, 2010, and Wikipedia, 2010).

Another large indigenous group in the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) region is the Tripura, who live especially in Ramgarh and Khagrachhari. They initially migrated from the Indian state of Tripura, and there were about 80,000 Tripuras in the CHT according to the 1991 census (Bangladesh News, 2010). There is no doubt that the number of the Tripuras has increased considerably during this time, because the population growth rate of Bangladesh is increasing day by day (Chakma, 2002). The name of the Tripura language is Kokborok which came from the Assam branch of the Tibeto-Burma family of languages (Bangladesh News, 2010).

1.4 Language Policy and Ideology

According to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliament, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh (1999), regarding language, Article 3 of the Bangladesh Constitution states that 'The state language of the Republic is Bangla' (p. 3). Apart from this constitutional statement, I did not find any document on language policy and ideology for secondary education sector in Bangladesh. In fact, there is no language policy in Bangladesh (Kosonen, Young, and Malone, 2006). Six education commissions were formed by the Government of Bangladesh to reform the education sector, and published the reports of those commissions after the independence (1971) of the country. However, no education policy was implemented completely due to donor influence on our education system (Ministry of Education, 2005) and lack of political will of our Government. Only Dr. Qudrat-e-Khuda education commission among the six education commissions, mentioned Bangla as the medium of instruction at all level education, and indicated that English would enjoy similar status to Bangla (Ministry of Education, 1972). Thus, the demand of tribal people for learning in their mother languages was ignored by the help of education commissions' report. Although many of the tribal students "could cross the primary education cycle due to flexible promotion system; many of them are caught in secondary level" (Kabir and Nath, 2005, p. 4).

Moreover, no significant research has been conducted so far on indigenous languages in Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC, one of the leading NGOs in Bangladesh) conducted a research project on education for indigenous children. In this program, BRAC developed materials in the indigenous students' mother tongue, and used indigenous languages as the medium of instruction (Sagar and Poulson, 2003). Without BRAC,

some other NGOs like Save the Children and Zabarang Kalyan Samity are promoting pre-primary activity based learning centres for tribal students where they can use their mother tongue and gradually transition into Bangla language (Chakma, 2002). But these NGOs do not emphasise the language policy and language ideology of Bangladesh. Although Bangladesh has no official language policy, there are studies in other countries that talk about the ideologies of language and the prestige of dominant languages. Due to the paucity of material, it is necessary to rely on other studies conducted in different countries similar to Bangladesh, because the principles are the same.

Western ideologies create and contain the European heritage through political and economic power, and have continued to steadily dominate and suppress ancestral languages of different ethnic groups throughout the world (Dorian, 1998). This trend has been said to threaten indigenous languages and to encourage a movement towards monolingualism (Phillipson, 1992). Dorian (1998) contends that European people are encouraged by the social Darwinism of language, which advocates 'linguistic survival of the fittest' (p. 10), to adopt or dominate minority languages. This European ideology helps to explain linguistic differences between high and less prestigious languages, in which indigenous languages become lost. The linguistic differences are also present in Bangladesh with the same principle contributing to the extinction of tribal languages and cultures. The indigenous languages are considerably smaller than the languages that the majority speaks in Bangladesh. For this reason, minority languages suffer and are neglected with great discrimination, and the dominants have the highest literacy rates. Therefore, minority language users generally maintain the notion of language shift to Bangla like Chinese parents encourage the shift to English in the USA. In the USA, some Chinese parents support the notion of a language shift to English so that their children can succeed in mainstream

society and benefit from greater social opportunities (Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe, 2009). The same authors also showed that a similar trend has occurred where English has been the dominant language in the USA, and the value of minority languages is challenged. Immigrant children have adopted English instead of maintaining their heritage language when they have perceived their own language as creating a barrier during English-medium courses. In the same way, tribal students are adopting Bangla, because it affords them greater social opportunities in Bangladesh. The ideological principle is the same for the Chinese language and tribal languages, both having been suppressed by the dominant languages. Due to the influence of dominant languages in Bangladesh, minor languages are becoming endangered which is contributing to the loss of culture, heritage and human knowledge system (UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages, 2003). The local communities and national governments can play a major part in creating awareness about language loss and language diversity among minority languages. To address language attitudes and policies, the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003) advocates that the promotion and loss of non-dominant languages are controlled by the dominant linguistic culture. Therefore, it is essential to protect the minority languages to maintain linguistic diversity in the world. In Bangladesh, the tribal languages are controlled by the dominant linguistic culture. Due to having no language policy recognising the importance of minority languages and recognising Bangla as the mainstream and official language in Bangladesh, minority languages may eventually become extinct. According to the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003), there are two reasons for language endangerment which are external forces and internal forces. Military, economic, cultural and educational subjugation play a significant role as external forces whereas communities show an internal negligence toward their own languages and cultures when they do not transfer their linguistic and cultural traditions to the next generation. These two forces also

play a major role in destroying minority languages and cultures in Bangladesh. The ideology of dominant languages (Bangla and English) and cultures creates language loss.

1.5 Research Objectives

The most important objectives of this research are to create the awareness of the importance of the position of indigenous languages in the curriculum at the policy planner level. At another level, the next objective is to create the awareness of the importance the position of indigenous languages in the curriculum at the school level. Subsequently, another research objective is to examine the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum by recognising the position of indigenous languages in schooling through the use of single case study and focus groups. After that, the next objective is to investigate the importance of indigenous languages in schooling from the point of view of students who are left behind in classroom activities. Finally, the last research objective is to ascertain the greater social representation and participation in pedagogical approaches for the tribal students so that they can achieve equity in education.

1.6 Research Question

The main research focus of this study will be to assess the role of languages, particularly tribal languages, in a secondary school in Bangladesh in relation to Bangla language curriculum and practice. Focus questions include:

- What might be the perceived importance of teaching in different languages within the secondary language curriculum?

- How do the Chakma, Marma, and Tripura community leaders perceive the role of language, particularly their native languages, in schooling?
- How do curriculum planners perceive the importance of multiple language teaching in education, particularly the role of indigenous languages in education?
- What do the students think about the role of different languages in their learning?

1.7 Significance of Research

The result of this study emphasises the importance of secondary language curriculum planners to include indigenous languages into the National Curriculum. This is because in past it has been observed that curriculum policy planners tend not to recognise the importance of minority languages in the curriculum. Moreover, at the school level, it is hoped that this research would provide a sense of awareness in teachers about the existence of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction. Consequently, it is hoped that teachers would embrace their own subjective position, and construct their instructional approaches in such a way that recognises all students' knowledge, cultures and identities. Another implication for the teaching-learning process is that teachers would be able to address the issues of diversity and differences, and provide a culturally responsive environment in the classroom so that all students are equally valued, and can share their experiences, ideas and feelings freely. Ultimately, research from this study may contribute to bringing about the inclusion of indigenous languages in the secondary language curriculum of Bangladesh in terms of engaging with cultural diversity.

1.8 Organisation of the Research

This research paper is organised around six chapters. **Chapter 1** describes the statement and rationale of this research. Three main tribal languages at Khagrachari district are described in previous section (1.3: languages of Bangladesh). Current language policy and ideology of Bangladesh is described in a previous section (1.4: language policy and ideology). Research objectives and research question are also included in this chapter.

Chapter 2 highlights some of the literature that has informed and underpinned the study in relation to history of Bangladesh, significance of instructions in one's native language, the position of indigenous language rights in education, language loss, and language and identity. Literature on indigenous language and curriculum focuses on the importance of the mother language in education.

Chapter 3 describes the theoretical framework of this research study.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology, methods and data collection procedures which are used for this study, ethical consideration, and data analysis.

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the research's findings using three main concepts that are structured by the research questions. The concepts include teachers' perspectives of the significance of indigenous language for tribal students, teaching and learning in one's native language within the educational context, and curriculum development.

Chapter 6 emphasises the implications that have emerged from this research and explores wider issues indicated in the literature. This chapter also discusses the implications for my own practice, and suggests few proposals for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will explore the five extensive parts of literature into which the study fits, and they are the history of Bangla and English language development in Bangladesh, significance of instructions in one's native language, language and identity, addressing indigenous language losses in India and New Zealand, and what Bangladesh can learn from other countries. The literature on indigenous language learning explores the significance of instruction in one's mother language in education, because "children *become literate* more quickly and easily in their mother tongues" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002, p. 179) than they do in another language. I observed that most of the tribal children of Bangladesh are deprived of the facilities of mother language learning by the present education system. Apart from that, tribal children usually do not feel interested in education, and the main reason is that the curriculum and textbooks do not recognise their language, culture or identities. Therefore, the literature on the importance of mother tongue in education is important for me to support the data analysis and to explore the answer of my research question.

2.1 History of Bangla and English Language Development in Bangladesh

When Bangladesh was a part of the Indian subcontinent, English language was used as a tool of divide-and-rule there during the colonial period (1747-1947), and dominated there not only economically and politically but also as a result of Christianisation. Rohmah (2005) mentions that the British rulers also maintained their direct rule through the religion, because the missionaries' work not only saved souls' but also helped to spread the English language. At the

time English was necessary for academic purposes, for business, and for other jobs. In 1947, after British rule, this situation increased and is still continuing, though in a different way. After 1947, when Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan, the people who knew English and Urdu (the state language of Pakistan) well had opportunity to get jobs and business. Hence, a conflict over language arose between East Pakistan (former name of Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (former name of Pakistan), because the native language of East Pakistan was Bangla, not Urdu. Moreover, English was used at that time "as a means of communication in various contexts such as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system" (Rohmah, 2005, p. 108) because of the two different languages, cultures, and identities. During Pakistani rule in Bangladesh (1947-1971), education was used to indoctrinate Bangali students with the Urdu language. Rahman, Hamzah, Meerah, and Rahman (2010) explained that at that time "Urdu was adopted as its national language and therefore became the medium of instruction in most of the public schools" (p. 117).

However, the vast majority of people in Bangladesh did not want to learn Urdu, because learning Urdu was seen as the obligation to submit their rights to the Pakistanis. According to Imam (2005), at that time in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) the nuisance and obligation of Urdu was a tremendous shock, and "it was akin to a second process of colonisation" (p. 473). In 1948, Mohammad Ali Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan) stated that "*Urdu and Urdu only, will be the state language of Pakistan*". After hearing this statement, the people of Bangladesh, especially the students of University of Dhaka University protested against Jinnah's arrogant declaration, and promoted the Bangla language movement against West Pakistan (former name of Pakistan). In 1952, when the Pakistan Government again declared that the national language of East Pakistan shall be Urdu, the situation "sparked a second wave of language agitation that

broadened into a movement against domination by West Pakistan" (Imam, 2005, p. 473). The Pakistan Government tried to control the revolt of Bangali students against them. For this reason, the Pakistan Government declared a strike (Emergency Act 144) on 21 February 1952, but the students and people of Bangladesh rejected the ban order. The riot police lobbed tear-gas on the students' procession, and the students resisted the police with bricks and shoes. Due to the aggressive actions of Pakistani armed police, the students destroyed the wall between the Arts Faculty of Dhaka University and Dhaka Medical College. As a result, the collision between Bangali students and Pakistani police became spread to medical college areas as well as other universities and colleges of Bangladesh. To control this struggling people, the armed police opened fire, and a number of students were wounded including Salam, Barkat, Jabbar, Rafiq and Shafiur. These young people are renowned in Bangladesh, because they sacrificed their lives for the Bangla language. Thus, the fight of the students against the Pakistani riot police created a sense of great sacrifice of human lives for the defence of a mother language in human history. After that, in 1956, the Pakistan constitution recognised Bangla as a national language, but it did not happen in reality. Imam (2005) opined that "Bangla was formally recognised as a provincial language in the first constitution of Pakistan which came into effect on 23 March 1956, but the nation had already been politically fractured" (p. 473). Thus, the sacrifice for the Bangla Language Movement led people to win in the nine-month independence war in 1971, and Bangladesh attained the acknowledgement of the world as an independent country. Moreover, UNESCO declared 21 February as International Mother Language Day in 1999 to award the Bangladesh language movement 1952, when many Bangali people sacrificed their lives for their mother language.

After the 1971 Liberation War, "Bangladesh emerged as a new nation on the basis of Bangali nationalism" (Kabir and Nath, 2005, p. 4). Moreover, in 1974, the Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission report emphasised on only Bangla as the medium of instruction in education to improve educational achievement. In the perception of Imam (2005), the Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission report explicitly acknowledged that Bangla would be the instructional language in learning. In 1988, realising the socio-economic context from the world's perspectives, the Bangladesh Government became concerned about teaching English along with Bangla, and declared that English could be incorporated from either grade 3 or grade 6 (Ministry of Education, 1988). After that, in 1977, the Shamsul Haque Education Committee suggested that English should be taught from grade 3 (Ministry of Education, 1997). At present, the "Bangladesh government has become more concerned in promoting English language education" (Imam, 2005, p. 477). Thus, Bangla and English languages developed in Bangladesh, and the demands of small tribal groups for schooling in mother language have been relatively unnoticed in education (Kabir and Nath, 2005).

In this section, I consider the history of Bangla and English language development in Bangladesh, because it needs to be seen how and why these languages became dominant in Bangladesh. This has led to conflicts and dilemmas for all languages in Bangladesh especially indigenous languages. While history showed that the people of Bangladesh fought against the Pakistani rulers to maintain their language and identity, the minority languages that are still disregarded in Bangladesh education. As a result, a number of tribal students face difficulties in learning due to different languages, similar to those the Bangali faced during Pakistani era. Actually, students' academic achievement and learning outcomes are closely linked to the

fluency of their mother language. In the following section, I discuss the importance of one's mother language as an instructional language in learning.

2.2 Significance of Instruction in One's Native Language

At this point, it is important to briefly discuss the importance of instruction in indigenous languages, and the rights of tribal students to maintain their culture and identity in a society of Bangladesh's context where they are the minority. Different languages have different styles of presentation. It becomes easier for one to understand what is meant through a particular word, phrase, idiom, or colloquial expression in one's own languages. When the same presentation is in the second or the third language, it becomes difficult and sometimes impossible to follow the speaker. We construct our understanding through communication with others, and this construction is well-accomplished when the communication is in the same language as the speakers. This is also true in classroom situations, because 'the child structures or scaffolds learning on what has gone before' (Goldring 2006, p. 13).

Although, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to meeting the goals of *education for all by 2015*, the role of ethnic languages has not been recognised in Bangladesh education (Kosonen, Young, and Malone, 2006). The instructional significance of ethnic languages would undoubtedly be of great help to tribal students in understanding the insights of lessons, and developing their sense of culture and identity. In Bangladesh, the backwardness of tribal students in education proves that they are either unclear about the lesson, or the knowledge they acquire in schools cannot be related to their family and social lives. As a result, the majority of them lose their interest in education. Uddin (2010) contended that most of the tribal children of

Bangladesh from different "ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged by an education system that does not recognise their language, culture or future livelihood realities" (p. 34).

The medium of instruction in schools is Bangla which is totally different from the tribal students' own languages. If the educational instruction is in one's native language, he or she can understand the meaning of the lesson, construct his/her knowledge and can participate in the sense making process. It is clear that knowledge is pervasively linked with language, because language constructs our identity, knowledge, and worldviews (Popkewitz, 1997). In addition, teachers do not speak in their tribal languages in the classroom, and the curriculum does not allow the use of ethnic languages. According to Jha and Jhingran (2002) cited in Gautam (2003), students "face problems wherever teachers do not speak their dialect at all. From the perspective of language, it is desirable to have a local teacher from the same tribal community" (p. 4). Focusing on the importance of the mother tongue in primary education, policy makers emphasised on the majority speakers' language, which refers only to Bangla (Kosonen, Young, and Malone, 2006). As a result, indigenous students do not always involve themselves in classroom activities, and this can severely jeopardise their life opportunities.

2.3 Language and Identity

According to Crystal (2000), only 4 percent of the world's languages are spoken by 96 percent of the population. The meaning of this line is that a few languages are dominating on minority languages that are spoken by 4 percent of the population. The reason is that most of the languages are not recognised formally, used in a community, and have no written scripts (Romaine, 2002). This is not only a concern for linguists but also for the whole world. This is

because culture and identity of a group will be lost if a language is lost. Language helps to represent one's cultural identity, because "language is a product of culture, transmitted from one generation to the next in the socialisation process; it also moulds culture, that is to say, our cultural representations are shaped by language" (Hamers and Blanc, 1989, p. 199). In fact, one's individual identity is demonstrated by how others identify them, not how they identify others (Goffman, 1963), because the listener generates the speaker's identity according to his speech. Schmidt (2008) mentioned the role of language of minorities as a marker of ethnic identity, and emphasised the trend towards a growing awareness to protect the cultural rights and maintain their distinctive identity, because culture and identity are interlinked with language. Wurm (1991) points out that language is a tool that reflects -

a unique world-view and culture complex mirroring the manner in which the speech community has resolved its problems in dealing with the world. With the death of the language.....an irreplaceable unit of our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view has been lost forever (p. 13).

Actually, language is a tool that helps to build a person's self-esteem, confidence and identity among the groups or communities by making them conscious about their cultural heritage. Many scholars (Adger, 1998; Bucholtz, 1999; Fordham, 1998; and Toohey, 2000) argued that language constructs peoples' identity and culture, and education helps to promote their cultural heritage through language. Norton (1995) points out that language and identity both are dynamic and depending on the time and place. Indeed language is part and parcel of an individual's culture and identity.

In Bangladesh, tribal students face a chain of language inequalities in institutional settings, particularly in schools. Although some of tribal students try to be proficient in Bangla and

English, they usually do not feel comfortable to use the mainstream languages. The reason is that tribal children are more fluent in their mother language than in other languages and they perceive their own language to be an effective communication tool. Moreover, they are unable to express themselves in the classroom and their desired identity collapse. Beer and Jacobs (1985) said that while a "certain subordinate groups break out of a traditionally subservient position and improve their situation relative to others, the likelihood is that there will be conflict" (p. 217). There is a feeling among the Bangladesh tribal peoples that "they are continuously being overlooked in favour of the majority group in all facets of life" (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009, p. 204). Therefore, this issue has led to a profound sense of social uncertainty in Bangladesh. According to Uddin (2010), Bangla "culture and Bangla language-based nationalism of Bangladesh has been applied to achieve national integration in its very unitary nature where non-Bangali culture, language and identity was not integrated" (p. 26). As a result, tribal people of Bangladesh rapidly shift away from their heritage languages to Bangla "as a consequence of competition from the majority language and from the lack of language maintenance support from the (Bangla-speaking) authorities who are responsible for policy making and language planning" (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009, p. 204). According to Hansen & Liu (1997), language is a prominent sign of one's identity, and an individual "may face linguistic adaptations that may result in subtractive bilingualism or even language erosion" (p. 568). Lippi-Green (1997) defined this situation as the "last backdoor to discrimination" in language using context. Linguists agreed that people's identity and culture are certainly linked with their language. In actuality, language is not a "uniform that can be put on when they arrive at work and removed at the end of the day, but is integral to their being, in the way that religion or political affiliation is to others" (Gibson, 2004, p. 5-6). Recently, tribal people adopted the mainstream languages rapidly to develop their social and economic condition, and therefore they are anxious about the assimilation of their

languages into Bangla. Although the education policy makers include several elements of tribal culture into the mainstream, these tribal people are deeply concerned about their linguistic and identity assimilation (Uddin, 2010). In brief, the present unequal education system and the existing job market of Bangladesh are responsible in shaping the politics of language for the tribal people, and thus tribal people have to shift to Bangla language and culture to maintain their livelihood.

Bangladesh has ratified several international human rights agreements such as the ILO Conventions on Indigenous and Tribal Populations (Convention No. 107), the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Roy, 2010). All of these provisions are relevant to the rights and cultural heritage of indigenous people. Although Bangladesh ratified these human rights treaties, the implementation of the provisions in those treaties has not been undertaken. Therefore, my next part looks at the contexts of India and New Zealand in relation to the development and implementation of indigenous languages.

2.4 Addressing Indigenous Language Losses in India and New Zealand

Here, I discuss the position of indigenous languages in the contexts of neighbouring country India and New Zealand to look at how these two countries tackle the indigenous language loss issue. Furthermore, I discuss how these countries develop and implement different educational initiatives for minority students' learning to value their mother language. This is because there

are no studies on educational initiatives for tribal students in Bangladesh, and so I want to look at what Bangladesh can learn from these countries.

The Indian Constitution allocates special status for indigenous people who are traditionally referred to as Scheduled Tribes (STs), adivasis, vanbasis, tribes, or tribals. There are 573 STs, having their own languages, living in different parts of India which constitute about 8-9 percent of the Indian population (Bagai and Nundi, 2009; and Gautam, 2003). In India, the State language Hindi and second language English are used in the major public areas such as business, education, national and international communication, whereas most of the tribal languages are used only in tribal community and at home. There are above 273 tribal languages that exist in India (Gautam, 2003). Only 22 of these tribal languages out of them are recognised as official languages in India, along with Hindi and English on the basis of speakers number (MacKenzie, 2009). According to Bara (2005), the three main tribal groups such as Mundas, Uraons and Hos of Chhotanagpur, an obscure area of east India under the Presidency of Bengal, are "physically and socially on the fringe of Indian society" like other tribal groups in this country. Therefore, most of the tribes are deprived and marginalised with respect to education. Moreover, tribal children are still lagging significantly behind in academic achievement including reading and writing in comparison to their non-tribal peers. MacKenzie (2009) said that,

Some of the reasons for this deficiency are that education is conducted in a language the children do not understand, that it is set in a cultural context that is not their own, using teaching methods which are unrelated to the ways in which tribal children gain knowledge within their own communities and measured only in terms of the content of a curriculum and textbooks which bear little relationship to the reality of tribal children's lives. (p. 369)

Realising that Scheduled Tribes are marginalised in education, the Government of India began different programs such as Janshala Programme, the 5th Five Year Plan (1974-1979), the 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007), Multilingual Education (MLE) programs, and Sarva Siksha Axiyan after the independence of India. Becoming conscious about the significance of mother tongues, the Indian constitution recognised several tribal languages as mediums of instruction in education. In addition, the Constitution of India adopted several rules such as Articles 29(1), 30, 347 and 350 as safeguards to protect linguistic minorities in the country so that they have the right to use their languages in administration and education (Pandharipande, 2002). Gautam (2003) points out that learning of tribal children are considered significant in India "not only because of the Constitutional obligation but also as a crucial input for total development of tribal communities" (p. 2). According to Pandharipande (2002), for secondary education, the Central Advisory Board of Education in India promoted the "three-language formula" in 1961, and the main aim of this formula is to implement three languages such as national language (Hindi), English, and regional language (Assamese, Bangla, Bodo, Gujarati, Maithili, Tamil, Oriya/Odia, Marathi, and Telugu). This circumstance is still in effect with unstable degrees of implementation (Pandharipande, 2002).

Conversely, the implementation of these programs and policies is not always triumphant in the Indian educational context for many causes. Among these is that tribal languages are underdeveloped, in the sense that they are only spoken in their respective communities, and have no written form or literature. Therefore, these languages are unable to get recognition in education or the tribal children might mix their mother languages with other languages and therefore they will not be fully competent in any (Agnihotri, 2009). Having the constitutional

and other policy related provisions that mention tribal students' education through their mother languages, their languages are denied in formal schooling in practicality. As a result, many minority languages are ignored in the case of schooling, and most of the tribal groups' children do not have the rights to education in practice. Moreover, the language and classroom atmosphere is unfamiliar to those tribal children and "curriculum materials, classroom interaction and instruction are all in a foreign language and teaching methods are unrelated" (MacKenzie, 2009, p.370) to their ways of cultural learning. Millions of tribal students from different minority groups in India are forced to study in the State language or International language that is entirely unfamiliar to them. Therefore, while the tribal children "cannot understand the content of science or social sciences because of linguistic difficulty, they are unfairly dubbed as dull and incompetent"(Agnihotri, 2006, pp. 193-194). Additionally, when tribal children see that their mother languages are missing out of classrooms, the difficulties in schooling grows and their academic and life successes are irreversible for them (Mohanty, Mishra, Reddy, and Gumidyala, 2009). There are a lot of tribal groups that are losing their mother languages through the assimilation process with the help of dominant languages such State language, foreign language, and regional language in different parts of India. In most cases, tribal people use their languages at home and the dominant languages at educational institutions and other public places. The paucity of educational amenities such as textbooks, teachers, and tribal languages as the medium of instruction curtailed the nourishment of tribal languages (Pandharipande, 2002). Mohanty et al. (2009) also argued that language barrier of tribal children is the main factor in their educational performance, resulting in their socioeconomic deprivation.

However, research (Pandharipande, 2002) has shown that 13 percent of the Indian population are bilingual and more than 42 percent of the minority population gets the opportunity for

bilingualism. Gautam (2003) presented in his research, *The education of tribal children in India and the issue of Medium of Instruction: A Janshala experience*, tribal students who got the opportunity of learning in their mother languages are "neither culturally inferior nor cognitively less competent than the children of other groups.....many of their skills and abilities are highly developed and extremely sophisticated" (p. 6). Mohanty et al. (2009) found that mother tongue based Multilingual Education (MLE) programmes in two States, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, of India for tribal children demonstrated a possible way out of the brutal surroundings of disadvantage. They also explained:

The MLE programmes in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa clearly provide a better quality of education than the traditional programmes of submersion education in a second language. However, systematic formative evaluation of the state programmes seems to be necessary to make them more effective in dealing with the language and content barriers that tribal children face in the mainstream schools. (ibid, 2009, p. 291)

These MLE programmes in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa provided a good opening of hope for the tribal students to come out from the hazardous cycle of language disadvantage in India, and ensure a quality education for them. Moreover, the three-language formula or trilingual formula has contributed to the high rate of educational initiatives for minority linguistic communities (Pandharipande, 2002). Pandharipande (2002) explained that the three-language or trilingual formula is the policy of the State to promote education in the official languages (Hindi and English) along with the third language which may be either a minor language, or a scheduled language or even a regional language of the area in which the tribal reside. Bearing in mind the differing context, educational policy makers of Bangladesh need to explore what educational initiatives have been taken for developing tribal children's learning in India and how the

initiatives have been implemented to investigate how the tribal children of Bangladesh could have opportunities to do better in learning.

On the other hand, New Zealand has only one indigenous language, Maori. Therefore, New Zealand does not face a similar problem like India. However, New Zealand struggled differently to establish Maori language in education, and yet they are also fighting to use their language in public places.

The Maori people lived in New Zealand before the 18th century and *Te reo Maori* was the only language which people spoke at that time. According to Wen-Li (2010), James Cook and his crew arrived in the middle of the 18th century, and the Maori people suffered by the harshness of the health problems due to pollution in their living environment by the end of the 19th century. For this reason, the Maori people could not give much priority to preserving their traditional culture or develop their education sector, and also "Maori communities could not invest time or energy into protecting and preserving traditional life ways or language" (Wen-Li, 2010, p. 27). Like other colonised countries, the negative result of colonisation also happened in New Zealand such as the English language gradually replacing *Te reo Maori*, and the Maori culture assimilated by the dominant colonisers. In the 1820s, the English people (colonisers) set up the first formal school in New Zealand, and the aim of it to was the "spread of Christianity and to show the natives the way to salvation" (Barrington and Beaglehole, 1974, p. 2). In this way, a new colonial State was established through subsidising the missionary schools to show they were helping the natives (Barrington, 2008; Walker, 2004). However, behind the scenario of the State policy was a move to assimilate the Maori into the Pakeha (mainstream) society by promoting a native schools system. The people of native schools picked the pedagogy and content of the

curriculum according to the European ways of knowing which consider the European people as superior to the uncivilised Maori people (Barrington, 2008). Education was used as a tool to control the Maori language and identity over the next half-century, and instead of education being seen as "a process of growth and personal development, for Maori children, school became an arena of cultural conflict" (Sheriff, 2010, p. 11).

During 1982, the Maori people began the Te Kohanga Reo movement when they realised that their language and culture faced the danger of extinction. The literal meaning of Te Kohanga Reo is 'language nest', and the aim of it was to preserve the Maori language and cultural heritage and passing them onto next generations (Hohepa and Smith, 1992; Wen-Li, 2010). The primary goal of Kohanga Reo was to create a pre-school environment where Te Reo Maori was the only language of instruction for Maori children so that they could learn language and culture in a traditional native atmosphere before going to primary school. Despite learning Maori language in pre-primary school, the children had to learn English in the primary school as an instructional language, and thus Maori parents "found that their children lost fluency in their Maori language" (Mita, 2007, p. 104) gradually. Therefore, the Maori people promoted the Kura Kaupapa Maori school which is a completely Maori-medium primary school. The Kura Kaupapa Maori school was set up in 1985 (ibid, 2007). The educational philosophy of both Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Maori are not only maintaining the Maori language and culture, but also reinforcing the Maori identity among the Maori children. According to Hohepa and Smith (1992), Te Kohanga Reo plays role as an 'enculturating context' and gives a "culturally structured environment in which children" (p. 13) can develop their own language and culture. In doing so, the figure of Te Kohanga Reo increased rapidly within a few years. According to Campbell and Stewart (2009), in 1991 to 1996, total contribution rates in Te Kohanga Reo "accounted for a massive 51

percent growth in Maori early childhood enrolments, becoming the largest provider of early childhood services for Maori" (p. 6). The Kohanga Reo movement created a Whanau atmosphere, where Maori children could explore the fundamentals of being Maori. The triumph of the Te Kohanga Reo movement created a demand for Maori medium learning which led to Kura Kaupapa Maori schooling and other Maori medium schooling such as Wharekura, referring to Kura Kaupapa Maori secondary schooling, and Wananga, referring to tertiary schooling (Campbell and Stewart, 2009). The prominent success of the Te Kohanga Reo movement was to develop a new structure between Maori Whanau and communities for wider social change.

The success of the Te Kohanga Reo movement and Kura Kaupapa Maori schools created greater opportunities for Maori children within the compulsory schooling sector which led to the establishment of the Kura Kaupapa Maori secondary school or Wharekura. The aim of the Kura Kaupapa Maori secondary school is to meet the educational needs of fluent Maori speakers who completed the Maori medium primary school (Campbell and Stewart, 2009). Thus, Maori language gained equal emphasis in the Maori medium and bilingual schooling system in New Zealand. The experience of the Maori language based schooling of New Zealand helps the Maori students in the development of their own language and culture, and improving their academic performance in Maori medium and bilingual school. In contrast, however, Maori students generally continue their low academic achievement in English medium secondary schools or mainstream schools. Murray (2007) showed that the majority of the Maori students who attended Wharekura were doing better than their Maori peers at mainstream schools. According to Wang & Harkess (2007), Maori students who came from Kura Kaupapa secondary schools were more likely to fulfil University Entrance requirements than their Maori counterparts at English medium schools. These are the positive results of Maori language based schooling for Maori

children. According to Goldring (2006), with government support, the Maori people have effectively instigated many immersion and bilingual programs in New Zealand to "re-establish their heritage (Maori) language after generations where Maori was submerged in the English speaking education system" (p. 17) and this has been the most significant step in valuing and maintaining their cultural identity of students attending those schools.

2.5 What can Bangladesh Learn from Other Countries?

In Bangladesh, there are four main phases in the education system such as primary school/ education (for the students of 6 to 12 years of age), secondary school/ education (ages 13 to 17), higher secondary education (ages 17 to 19), and tertiary and higher education (ages 19 plus). There are two types of schools, which are government schools (funded by the Ministry of Education, and considered as mainstream education system), and non-government schools (funded by non-government organisations [NGOs] which have been shaped with the support of different agencies to develop the educational requirement). Both the government and non-government schools follow the same curriculum. Secondary school courses include Bangla, English, Mathematics, General Science, Social Science, Religious Studies, Computer Studies, Physical Education, Home Economics, and Agricultural Education. According to the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2005), 35% of a total of 240 hours per term (each term consisting around four months including Government holidays) for grade nine of secondary education, which are dedicated to language teaching only. Table 1 demonstrates the time allocation.

Table 1

Time allocation for the teaching of Bangla and English (adapted from Ministry of Education, 2005)

Time allocation	Hours per term	Percentage
Teaching of Bangla	42	17.5
Teaching of English	42	17.5
Other subjects	156	65
Total	240	100.00

The table shows that 35% of a total of 240 hours per term allocated for Bangla and English, and the secondary school curriculum still does not recognise or allocate any hours for the tribal languages.

Crystal (2000) argued that schools could play a role in restoring minority and endangered languages. Minority language speakers can get the equal opportunity of social, political and economic participation if their languages would be integrated into the education system. To say in general, the school is the best factor of progress, and education plays a significant role in developing and maintaining the cultural and linguistic form of a group. However, the Bangladesh Government is still not appointing any teachers who could teach in tribal languages in school or publishing any textbooks for tribal students. Bangla and English are the languages of cultural expression and tribal languages are not promoted by the Bangladesh government. Moreover, tribal-language speakers of Bangladesh are seeking their social, cultural, and economic advancement in the guise of the majority people's language like Bangla. Thus, their language and culture noticeably depends on political and social changes of the majority.

Indigenous people feel that their mother language does not keep pace with current progress and facilities as they need. According to Schmidt (2008), the reasons of language loss appears to be frequently involved with -

unequal power distribution within nation-states, often leading to ethnic minorities either being assimilated into the majority language (main culture) by state pressure, or that they give up their minority language for socio-economic reasons. (p. 12)

Similarly, Lawson and Sachdev (2004) mentioned that tribal languages are used in informal settings, and Bangla is used in official, administrative and educational settings in Bangladesh. They showed in their research that there are two language class periods (Bangla and English) allocated within the Bangladesh Secondary Curriculum, but no indigenous language can truly be classified as a class period for indigenous students in education. Only bits of information about indigenous language, culture and history are portrayed within the Bangla language textbook where the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2007) declared the rights of indigenous languages in Article 15 that supports the use of indigenous languages in education. Article 15 mentions that indigenous people have the right to "establish and control educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning" (OHCHR, 2007). However, the mainstream languages (such as Bangla and English) have been privileged everywhere in Bangladesh. Moreover, literacy rates are very low in Bangladesh particularly among the minority groups (Hossain and Tollefson, 2007). To overcome the low literacy rate, indigenous language speakers "should be accorded at least some of the protections and institutional support that majority languages already enjoy" (May, 2006, p. 265), because education is the tool of preserving indigenous languages in most countries like in India and in

Maori immersion schools in New Zealand. According to Crystal (2000), a minority or endangered language will "progress if its speakers have a strong presence in the educational system" (p. 136). The languages of tribal communities are totally different from the mainstream languages. In the forty years since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, it has become important for tribal languages to be valued with the mainstream languages due to the societal, educational and economic development that is caused by modernisation.

The multilingual situation of Bangladesh and India is similar. Both countries have a lot of tribal languages and cultures whereas New Zealand has one indigenous language. However, India recognises several languages in education and is still planning to recognise other languages as much as possible, whereas Bangladesh does not recognise any tribal languages in learning. Bangladesh can learn from India and New Zealand in terms of recognising indigenous languages in education, especially regarding how these countries face the issue of indigenous language loss in relation to tribal students' learning. In order to provide a quality education for all students in Bangladesh, particularly for tribal students, tribal languages and cultures need to be acknowledged in the curriculum and textbooks.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that has influenced the research design and findings of this thesis. My intention was to explore the perceptions and opinions of the participants about the role of mother language in schooling, and how indigenous language is portrayed in the intended and operational curriculum. With the help of the poststructural paradigm, in this chapter, I will show how the following theoretical frameworks are relevant to answering my research question and sub-questions and considering their implications. I wanted to look at and critique the supremacy of dominant languages which are perpetuated in the secondary language curriculum of Bangladesh through the point of the concept of *understanding the dominance of languages* (Popkewitz, 1997; Apple, 1996; Uddin, 2010; Odora-Hoppers, 2010). I also show how the curriculum employs the power and politics through the point of the concept of *understanding curriculum as a political text* (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman, 1995). The concepts of *understanding the dominance of languages* (Popkewitz, 1997; Apple, 1996; Uddin, 2010; Odora-Hoppers, 2010) and *understanding curriculum as a political text* (Pinar et al., 1995) helped me to see whose knowledge and language are considered as worth knowing and how tribal languages are deprived of the recognition in the curriculum. Therefore, my inclination went towards poststructuralist theories for my research design.

3.1 Poststructuralism

Maclure (2003) opined that poststructuralism critiques the rationalist and humanist world views which perpetuate colonial enlightenment, and addresses diverse cultures and attitudes. Through

the poststructural lens, I intended to investigate participants' perceptions and thematically analyse the curriculum document to see how tribal people and students see the role of languages in learning in Bangladesh. According to Bredo (2006), the poststructural paradigm identifies the marginalisation of different groups or communities, and emphasises the impact of political influences on education. Poststructuralism critiques unquestioned foundations of knowing. It also recognises diverse perspectives, and advocates changing assumptions, structures or beliefs in people's ways of perceiving and doing. In light of this theoretical conception, I wanted to look at and critique how indigenous languages are undermined by the dominant languages, and how these politics are addressed in the secondary language curriculum. This is because "poststructuralism is a theory of knowledge and language" (Agger, 1991, p. 112). This theory helps me to find how the dominance, power and politics of mainstream languages lead to the extinction of tribal languages in schooling.

3.2 Understanding the Dominance of Languages

According to poststructuralism, the intended curriculum reflects the dominants' views and knowledge which is a result of colonial continuation (Apple, 1996; Popkewitz, 1997; and Odora-Hoppers, 2010). Battiste (2008) contended that the dominance of colonial power has resulted in the loss of language, self-esteem and confidence which actually create class division in the society as well as in the education sector, and devastate the minority people's ability to think independently about their own issues. Apple (1996) also criticised the dominants' interest in curriculum, because curriculum helps to prolong the politics of power in education and in society as well. The dominants' knowledge and views are used as official in the intended curriculum. For this reason, this type of curriculum plays a significant role to disorganise people who have no

power in society towards the dominant culture (Apple, 1996). Mariage, Paxton-Buursma, and Bouck (2004) and Odora-Hoppers (2010) raise a very similar issue about power discourses that create unequal relationships between powerful and powerless, policy makers and administrators, administrators and teachers, and teachers and students. In Bangladesh, the power of the dominants reflects through the intended curriculum, and creates discrimination between Bangla language users and minority language users in the schooling context. Moreover, dominant languages and cultures play a vital role in education.

In truth, curriculum is not always legitimate, because the content and taste of the dominant class are reflected and implemented in the texts and classrooms (Apple, 1996; Mariage et al., 2004; and Odora-Hoppers, 2010). In Bangladesh's context, the dominant groups exercise their power to represent their views and to hold their interests on minority groups due to the influence of the historical Language Movement. Due to the dominance of Bangla and English in the curriculum, tribal languages and cultures are disregarded and tribal people, who have no power in society towards the dominant culture in Bangladesh, are disadvantaged in education. The dominant groups think that their knowledge is legitimate, and for this they use intellectual power and ideology to shape human consciousness (Uddin, 2010; and Odora-Hoppers, 2010). According to Pinar et al. (1995), intellectual domination is exercised through curriculum, and class difference is reproduced by the hegemonic exercise of power and politics. In Bangladesh, this hegemonic strategy functions through the curriculum to promote certain sets and orders of the dominant's knowledge over others. Due to the manifestation of the dominant's knowledge and voice in the curriculum, the recognition of tribal languages and cultures has been inhibited. Moreover, the majority of the tribal students face difficulties in learning because of their limitation in mainstream languages. They often do not remember the lessons or the teachers' instructions in

the classroom, and their academic achievements are not satisfactory. The struggles of minority learners in education provide that it is necessary to rethink about curriculum development to maintain their mother languages in the curriculum.

Cavallaro and Rahman (2009) showed the reasons why tribal people shift away from their (minority) mother tongues to the mainstream language, and why minority languages should be maintained in learning. It has been observed that many tribal students in Bangladesh are denied to come in school and study, because they often do not speak fluently Bangla and English (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009). Therefore, the minority people need the opportunity to study in their mother languages along with the two dominant languages, Bangla and English, in the formal education system. The education for the indigenous children through their mother tongue will lead the tribal community on the way to "an improved socio-economic standard of these people and thereby, contributing towards the maintenance of their ethnic language" (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009).

As consequence, I need to understand how the dominance of languages is functioning through both the intended and operational curriculum and how minority languages are affected.

3.3 Understanding Curriculum as a Political Text

With the help of Pinar et al.'s (1995) concept of *curriculum as a political text*, I need to understand how the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum is ignoring and marginalising the indigenous languages in schooling at both the intended and operational level, because the idea of marginalisation helps me to explore the answer of my research question as to why tribal

languages are important for tribal students' learning. I have found that the linguistic discrimination against the indigenous people in Bangladesh education is promoted by the curriculum and State policies (Uddin, 2010). The Bangladesh secondary language curriculum document focuses on the Bangali culture and Bangali nationalism on the basis of Bangla language, and minority languages are not valued where minority students are also getting the same education. Therefore, tribal languages have been assimilated into the mainstream languages (Bangla and English) that are of most worth in the curriculum. Uddin (2010) showed in his research that this linguistic discrimination of curriculum leads to the marginalisation and assimilation of tribal languages, and can alienate indigenous people from their traditional social structure.

Poststructural theories helped me to understand how the Bangladesh secondary curriculum functions as a tool to socially control knowledge. According to Pinar et al. (1995), Apple (1996), and Popkewitz (1997), curriculum is about politics of power and knowledge where the knowledge of the power holders or the dominants is considered as most worth knowing. Popkewitz (1997) argued that if people see the history of a curriculum, they will observe how the curriculum shapes all social order that they have in society. Bangla and English stand as a foremost tool for getting all social facilities and power in Bangladesh, and people realise the intellectual influence and power of these languages in society. Thus, secondary language curriculum document helps to promote the politics of social inequality by the intellectual domination of dominant languages over less prestigious languages. In actuality, curriculum is a moderator of a country which reflects the dominant group's rules, regulations, and politics (Popkewitz, 1997). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the role of curriculum in both oppression and reform.

Both Popkewitz (1997) and Apple (1996) connect the bigger social and historical context of schooling to what has been said in the central curriculum document (intended level) and what is happening in the ground (operational level) in terms of indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing. They also stipulated that curriculum influences to shape the understanding of learning and learners, and reproduces social inequalities. My own experience has borne witness to this reality. When I was a student of grade nine, I observed that teaching and learning relationships were not multifaceted in my school, and we had to do our activities in school according to our teachers' instructions. Our teachers always kept us busy in traditional teaching practices which were responsive to the students who were Bangla speakers whereas they excluded the tribal students whose first language was other than Bangla from the learning process. This situation is still continuing in the Bangladesh schooling system. Therefore, I need to understand the implications of linguistic differences within the curriculum. The reason is that understanding differences in curriculum point to the understanding of diversity in relation to the minority languages and identities (Pinar et al., 1995).

Popkewitz's (1997) notion of the *linguistic turn* is helpful for me to understand how language constructs students' identities and realities through curriculum. According to Popkewitz's (1997), the *linguistic turn* is a scrutiny of language that constitutes the social practices and identities of people. The rules and regulations of curriculum were not accomplished in Bangladesh through brute force but through the principles that were based on Bangali nationalism. Therefore, tribal people become institutionalised by the Bangla, and they generally influenced by the Bangla language and Bangali culture. Due to this transition, tribal students construct their sense and worldviews according to Bangla linguistic grounds, though their home languages are different.

Burr (1995) argues that language is an essential requirement for thought and a 'form of action' (p. 7) to construct people's 'notions of selfhood and personal identity' (p. 46). In school, tribal students' worldviews are influenced by the dominant languages whereas their home knowledges are based on their mother languages. Thus, there is a conflict between home and school knowledges of tribal children. To interpret my data, I want to look at how the *linguistic turn* constructs tribal learners' views and identities.

In light of these concepts of poststructuralism, I want to explore how Bangla and English function as dominant languages throughout the curriculum, and how the curriculum is shaping tribal students' worldviews according to Bangali nationalism. Moreover, I intended to look at whose knowledge and power are considered as worth knowing in curriculum in relation to language, because knowledge, language and power are inextricably connected with each other. Additionally, these theoretical concepts allowed me to see how power and politics of curriculum privilege Bangla and English languages, and assimilate the tribal languages. Some poststructuralists like Pinar et al. (1995) thought that understanding curriculum as a political text is important rather than focusing on curriculum as simply development and implementation. They entitle it as curriculum 'reconceptualisation' which focuses on what count as 'knowledge considered worth knowing' rather than curriculum development and implementation. Since knowledge and language are interlinked, the recognition of tribal languages in learning is important to understand whose knowledge is recognised as legitimate in the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum, and therefore the aim of my research question is also emphasise this issue. During the data collection process, I wanted to know how the participants considered the role of languages, particularly indigenous languages, in the curriculum, and why indigenous

languages are silenced and Bangla and English are considered as worth knowing in the secondary language curriculum.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology that was used for this study. In the beginning, I talk about the overview of qualitative research and rationale for choosing the qualitative research approach. After that I provide a description of the research design, participants and settings, and the rationale for each of the data collection tools that were employed for this study. I also discuss how rigour and trustworthiness, and ethical issues were addressed in this research.

4.1 An Overview of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is extensive and challenging in practice. Creswell (2008) argues that the notion of qualitative research was introduced in education in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The history of qualitative research in education is rooted in American sociology and anthropology, but it also has French and English intellectual traditions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Luttrell (2010) argues that qualitative research emphasises debate about subjects that recognise our collective effort to understand ourselves and the world around us. Qualitative research captures the interaction between the researcher and the researcher's surroundings, what counts as design elements, the process of data collection and analysing the relationship with research participants (ibid, 2010). In addition, qualitative research is a holistic approach which seeks to describe the understanding of people's experiences, conceptions, and behavioural activities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Many authors explain the characteristics of qualitative research in education from a variety of perspectives. Based on several sources (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Luttrell, 2010; and Creswell, 2008) I have compiled the following characteristics of qualitative research which are

relevant for my study, and they are that: qualitative research is flexible, understanding oriented, interpretative, subjective, and inductive; the question format of qualitative research is mostly open-ended; the data gathered through qualitative research is usually collected through audio/video recording, field notes, transcripts and document analysis; qualitative research generates in-depth and comprehensive information; what questions will be asked next always depends on the participants' previous responses; the sample size of qualitative research is usually small, non-random and theoretical; and that qualitative researchers study native opinions and want to reflect reality from native perspectives.

4.2 Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Research Approach

There are a lot of complex and comprehensive issues like educational reform, curriculum reform, pedagogical choice, textbook analysis, and teacher training which need to be explored. Qualitative research plays an important role in exploring those issues. According to Wertz (2005), qualitative research is very helpful to add a new dimension of understanding such as understanding of participants' experiences on education or understanding groups from an insider's point of view. I wanted to know the understandings of head teachers, teachers, tribal students, community leaders and curriculum planners, and listen to their experiences and reflections about the place of indigenous language in the secondary intended and operational language curriculum in Bangladesh. This method of research directs the study towards a qualitative design. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001), qualitative research design is generally used to question and answer about the "complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view" (p. 101). I wanted to talk with my participants directly, and wanted to know their point of view. For

this reason, I used qualitative research methods for my research. Before interviewing the participants, I had no idea about what the participants would say, or why even they would say that. As a result, my analysis was inductive which helped me to explore a research field without setting out to verify or invalidate the research question. Besides, I depended on the information that came from the participants, and the information helped me to understand the research question from the participants' perceptions. Due to this, I think qualitative research was the most appropriate for my research in understanding the experience of participants about their thinking regarding the use of indigenous language in the intended and operational curriculum.

Ngai's (2007) study provided me with a helpful methodological approach for my research design. Ngai (2007) conducted a research study to collect proposals for developing effective indigenous language education which would be possible in rural public-school districts in the USA with a mix of Native and non-Native students. The author used qualitative research methods and took interviews with educators, indigenous community leaders, and policy makers as participants to know their understanding about developing effective indigenous languages in education. The design of the study is relevant for the methodological approach that I intend to follow in my study. I also contacted indigenous community leaders, curriculum planners, teachers and tribal students to find out their views about the significance of indigenous languages in education. As with Ngai's (2007) research, I used qualitative research methods for my study.

4.3 Research Design – the Case Study Approach

Case study is a common methodology in both qualitative and quantitative research. For this research, I have used single case study in terms of understanding the intended and operational

language curriculum, because the enquiry was focused on one situation in one school. It was an institutional case study though it was very limited. Many scholars (Creswell, 2007; Burns, 2000; Bogdan and Biklen, 2007) explained the term case study in different ways. Creswell (2007) contended that a case study approach is used both as a methodology and a product of inquiry where the researcher explores one or multiple cases. According to Burns (2000) and Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999), the case study approach analyses human interest and stories in a more naturalistic way than traditional quantitative research. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the case study approach is also a "detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, a single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 59). Kumar (2005) defines case study as an approach which studies a "social phenomenon through a thorough analysis of an individual case" (p. 113). For these above reasons, a case study approach was appropriate for this research design, because it allowed me to investigate the perceived value of indigenous language teaching from the participants' points of view. Moreover, this case study permitted me to provide the insights into the issue of language curriculum, and indigenous language teaching and learning from a different perspective. In line with Creswell (2007), the case study approach helps to illustrate an issue comprehensively and vividly. This method also enabled me to collect data from different sources and use different data collection tools such as semi-structured interview, focus groups, and document analysis. Through using the case study approach, I analysed the data to provide extensive and comprehensive analysis of themes. However, I have no intention to generalise the findings emerging from this research. As a consequence, this form of research design was suitable for my research study.

The case study approach does have some weaknesses however. Critics have found that the case study approach is time consuming, because it takes more time to select participants and to

conduct interviews. Moreover, this approach produces a vast amount of information which is, in some cases, difficult to categorise and analyse properly.

4.4 Participants and Settings

In terms of this study's design, the interview sample included one head teacher, one language teacher who taught Bangla language in the secondary school, three community leaders, one from each of the three tribal groups (Chakma, Marma, and Tripura), one curriculum planner, and ninth grade students (approximate age: 14-15) from three tribal groups. The area of my research was Khagrachari district, because a large number of indigenous people alongside Bangla speaking people are living there. One secondary co-education school was chosen as the setting for this study. The co-educational school is one out of three schools in Khagrachari region. I choose the co-education school for my research, because it is a leading school in Khagrachari district, having tribal and non-tribal students, and it allowed the study to involve both male and female students from the same school.

I contacted Promi (pseudonym) who is the Head Teacher/ Principal of that school to know her understanding about the significance of tribal languages in the language curriculum. She had an experience of 24 years as a teacher and as an institutional head.

I contacted Shakil (pseudonym), secondary school teacher, who teaches Bangla language in that school, and has experience teaching tribal and non-tribal students so that he could give information about the position of tribal and non-tribal students in educational activities. I also

intended to know the teacher's understanding of including tribal languages in the curriculum as a language of instruction.

Tribal students from three tribal groups were chosen from the school. Grade nine students were chosen because their experience was longer than that of any other tribal student reading at a lower grade. When I went to Bangladesh for data collection, grade ten students were busy preparing themselves for the national standardised examination, which is an additional reason why grade nine students were more suitable. There are usually 20-25 tribal students out of 30-40 students in each class in secondary schools in Khagrachari. For this reason, focus groups were conducted where the students were able to talk about their experiences in school regarding their language, culture and identity.

Three indigenous community leaders from three tribal groups were chosen as participants to identify their insights and expectations about the role of language in extending their children's educational achievement by including indigenous languages in the curriculum. For contacting community leaders, I followed three steps. First, I talked with some of the community leaders who were living in Khagrachari. I found three leaders from the Chakma community, two leaders from the Marma community and three leaders from the Tripura community. I discussed with them at different times in different places regarding the issues of language, language policy, culture, and education. Secondly, I identified three leaders from three tribal communities who could represent their community, culture and identity. To identify three community leaders as participants, I spent 14 days in Khagrachari. Finally, I managed to contact three leaders from three tribal communities who showed their interest about educational issues and who are concerned about their children's learning in their mother languages at school along with Bangla

and English, because they were also relevant to the school. The tribal community leaders were Bodhi (pseudonym) from the Chakma community, Shadhon (pseudonym) from the Tripura community, and Raktim (pseudonym) from the Marma community.

As part of this study, I also went to the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) that was relevant to the school. I contacted the team of people who have been involved with the development of the language curriculum from NCTB. I asked the team for an interview based on their availability and interest, and I saw one team member, Rana (pseudonym), who was willing to do that. Then, I contacted him to know his perception about the importance of mother languages. I knew that it would not be easy for the curriculum planner to share personal opinions and ideas for public knowledge in the beginning of the research process. In order to do that, I took time to develop a friendly relationship with him. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998), familiarity is an advantage in which participants are more likely to act naturally in front of the questions whether they know or do not know them.

For this research, other participants such as the school inspectors and the District Education Officer might be equally relevant, because they can also give me comprehensive and rich information on this issue. However, I did not contact them, because the time of this research was too short. However, I have the intention to take them as participants in my further research.

I got access to the participants through my professional connections. I sent formal letters to the head teacher, school teacher, tribal students and their parents, curriculum planner, and community people describing the purpose of the study. I also invited them to become participants for this research. They accepted my invitation. Before the interviews were

administered, I explained that the participation in the interview was voluntary and anonymous, and their participation depended on their completing the consent form. Participants had expressed a willingness to take part in interviews.

The settings for this research were the participants' houses, schools, and the NCTB office so that the participants could respond freely to the interview questions.

I chose my participants from the different situations such as NCTB, school and tribal community, because they are related with both the intended and operational levels of curriculum. The curriculum planner is related with the intended curriculum, and teachers, students and tribal community leaders are related with the operational curriculum. The perspectives of these different groups of people help me to answer my research question from the intended and operational levels. As a result, it was easy for me to find out what exists in the intended curriculum and what happens in practice in relation to tribal students learning from the perspectives of my participants.

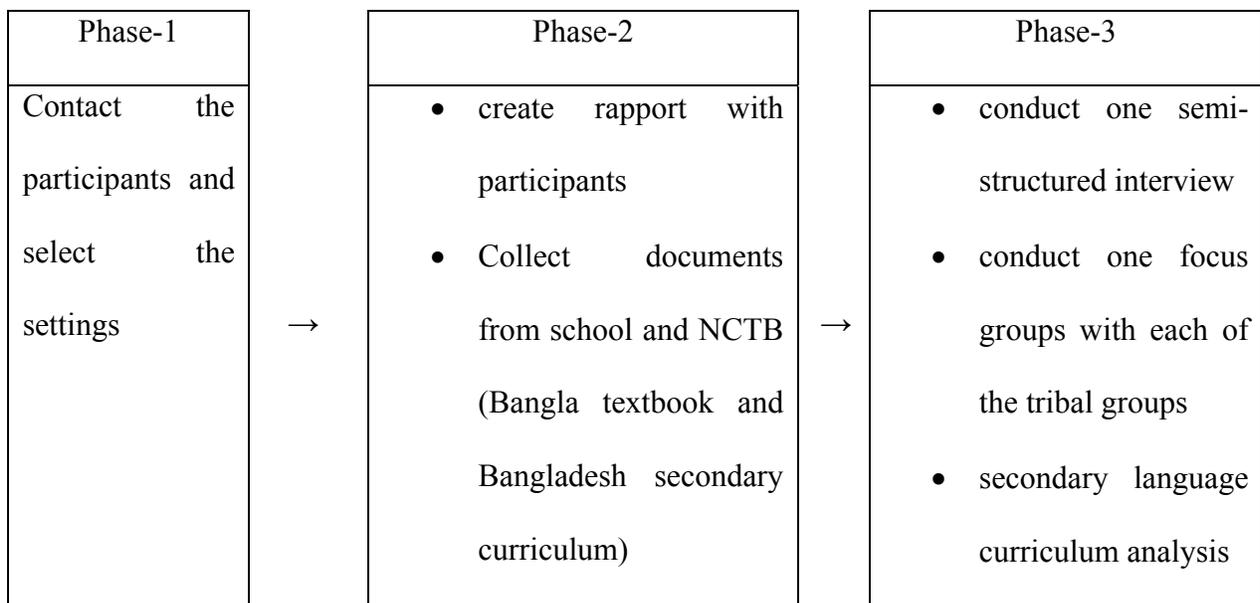
4.5 Data Collection Tools

Arguably, one of the most important aspects of the study would be the data collection process. Creswell (2007) stated that the qualitative researcher engages himself or herself "in a series of activities in the process of collecting data" (p. 118). The data collection process took 5-7 days to undertake in the school. I went to the school to look at what curriculum and syllabus the teachers were following, what they were doing in class, and how much they were devoted to each of the languages. I tried to create good rapport with the head teacher, the teacher and students to

familiarise myself with the settings and participants so that participants could feel comfortable with me, and I also could feel comfortable with the routine and the participants. I went to the classroom to see the involvement of tribal students, tribal and non-tribal students' interactions, and how their knowledge and culture were respected by the teachers. After that, I talked with the head teacher, the teacher and tribal students about what was happening in relation to the development of the secondary language curriculum. I interviewed participants at mutually convenient times and places, and got the maximum information the best way I could. After interviewing the head teacher, the language teacher and tribal students, I interviewed the three tribal community leaders and the curriculum planner. This is because I knew some questions might emerge from the school-situated interviews that could then be discussed with the community leaders and the curriculum planner.

Multiple methods of data collection were employed in this study including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis to investigate what exist in the curriculum policy documents in relation to indigenous languages and what happens in the field level. I used multiple ranges of data collection tools to explore the discrimination of tribal languages, the power and politics of dominant languages in the curriculum from the different perspectives, because my research question was to assess the role of languages, particularly tribal languages, in the secondary school in Bangladesh in relation to Bangla language curriculum and practice. Immediately after data collection, I stored the interview transcripts in computer files so that I could find these easily and use them when I needed. The data was protected in more than one pen-drive as well as in hardcopy for saving these from any damage.

The data collection process of this study was conducted over a period of two months starting from mid-November 2010 to mid-December 2010, and January 2011 to the first week of February 2011. The whole data collection process was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, I contacted the participants and selected the settings. In the second phase, I created rapport with them, and collected documents from school such as the Bangla textbook, and from the NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Board) such as the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. In phase three, I conducted interviews with the participants once, and analysed the secondary language curriculum. The following diagram shows the different phases of the data collection process.



4.5.1 *Semi-structured interview*

According to Smith and Osborn (2007), the semi-structured interview within the case study approach is flexible, and does not involve asking a rigid set of questions. In addition, the

questions within the semi-structured interview do not have to be asked in any particular order. The main usefulness of semi-structured interview is that it provides an interview structure with some questions prepared in advance, and other questions or points come out during the interviews that link together with the pre-established questions (Glesne, 1999; May 1997). Although it is challenging to transcribe interviews structured in this way, richer data is usually generated, and the "respondent can introduce an issue the investigator had not thought of" (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p. 59). For this reason, I used semi-structured interview to know the in-depth understandings of participants about the value of indigenous language and its relevance in the education sector in Bangladesh. I created an open conversational environment for the participants so that they could share their perceptions without any hesitation. The interview was framed so that similar questions will be linked together. Some questions were prepared in advance for consistency, because I wanted to ask the same questions in each interview.

As a novice researcher, I tried to ask non-threatening questions so that the interviewee could feel free to give answers according to the questions. Before starting the interview, I did trial practice four times on my two colleagues to get an in-depth understanding of participants regarding this study. Moreover, I tried to listen more than I talked, to ask the questions in a polite way, and to show myself as if I was enjoying the interview during the interview session. From the semi-structured interviews, I got some points to understand the participants' perspectives of indigenous language uses in their education.

In seeking feedback from the participants, they had the option to explain, change or add on anything that was recorded.

The interviews conducted with the head teacher, Bangla language teacher, curriculum planner, and tribal community leaders lasted for 40-50 minutes each, depending on participants' responses.

4.5.2 Focus groups

According to Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003), the advantages of focus group interviews are portrayed as follow:

If the purpose of your research is to gain an insight to a particular theme or issue, focus-group interviews provide a relatively natural, relaxed and secure setting in which participants are encouraged to share both positive and negative comments. The group setting allows both your own questions and your respondents' answers to be clarified and modified over the course of the interview, which in turn can enhance the group discussion and assist the chain reaction of participant dialogue. From a practical standpoint, focus-group interviews are relatively inexpensive, data-rich and versatile (p. 109).

Focus groups were supplemented with semi-structured interviews where students from each of the three tribal groups were asked about 'how relevant they see their language to schooling', and 'which language is more important for them as a learning vehicle'. Focus groups were necessary to compare students' responses on the role of mother language in education and how they coped with the mainstream's language curriculum, to draw a real picture of other language users in school, and to validate the data collected from teachers and community leaders. Rubin and Rubin (1995) contend that "sometimes a totally different understanding of a problem emerges from the group discussion" (p. 140).

I talked with the tribal students who were present on the day of interview. I used focus groups as the data source, and the focus group interviews approximately lasted for 20-25 minutes. I knew that it is not easy for the students to talk freely with a newcomer. Therefore, I divided tribal students into three groups according to their community, and interviewed the groups one after another so that participants from each group could share their experiences and ideas about mother language learning. Sample questions for focus groups are included in Appendix - P.

During the focus group interviews, I was conscious about students' equal participation so that no one could dominate or bias the conversation. The focus group interviews were semi-structured to explore tribal students' perceptions about their language learning.

4.5.3 Document analysis

According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), documents are the main source of information that is rooted in the setting and language in which they occur. Mutch (2005) postulated that document analysis is "an easily accessible way to gather data to answer a question" (p. 128). Therefore, I used document analysis because one of my sources was written material and it "opened up new source of understanding" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 130). I analysed the secondary language curriculum of Bangladesh to find out the nature of claims, provisions and prescriptions about different languages. Moreover, I intended to see how indigenous people and the majority people (Bangla speakers) are portrayed in the curriculum. The language curriculum as the main source of documents provided crucial data for this study, because it contains evidence of the policy as intended by the curriculum policy makers. May (1997) said that documents as a tool of data collection can help the researcher to look at the correspondence between the written document

and the actions in the field level which it refers. Through the analysis of these documents, I tried to explore what perspectives of culture and identity of Bangla and indigenous language users are reflected in it.

To understand the obligatory requirements within the secondary language curriculum, I used the document analysis method. The Bangladesh secondary language curriculum as a formal document is designed to form and guide the learning activities in daily classroom practice. Therefore, document analysis was also employed in this study along with semi-structured and focus group interviews. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), documents are useful to understanding the administrative perspectives and "to better use if you know something about who produced them and for what reasons - in other words, if you know the social context" (p. 137). Thus, the secondary Bangla language curriculum assisted me to identify the role of mother languages in relation to tribal students' learning according to the concepts of *understanding the dominance of languages* (Popkewitz, 1997; Apple, 1996; Uddin, 2010; Odora-Hoppers, 2010), and *understanding curriculum as a political text* (Pinar et al., 1995).

4.6 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, there is no single and simple way to analyse the data. It requires intellectual rigour and comprehensive effort. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), data analysis is a procedure of "systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to enable you to come up with findings" (p. 159). In addition, the word 'analysis' involves collecting and gathering data, "breaking them into

manageable units, coding them, and searching for patterns" (ibid, p. 159). Following this process, I endeavoured to maintain systematic rigor during the data analysis.

4.6.1 Transcripts

In the first stage of data analysis, I transcribed all the interviews (both semi-structured and focus groups), and simultaneously translated these to avoid participants' unnecessary lengthy, halted and paused conversations (Sharma-Brymer and Fox, 2008). I recorded all the interviews digitally (audio recorded) which helped me to review, to transcribe and to reflect on emerging themes. The transcription process took a long time. Although the transcription process took much longer than I anticipated, it helped me to interact with the data and clarify it. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) argued that the crucial part of data analysis is creating a list of coding categories after data collection, and due to do this they advised researcher to carry out the following:

You search through your data for regularities and patterns as well as for topics your data cover, and then you write down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns. These words and phrases are coding categories. They are a means of sorting the descriptive data you have collected..... Some coding categories will come to you while you are collecting data. These should be jotted down for future use. Developing a list of coding categories after the data have been collected and you are ready to mechanically sort them is, as we shall discuss, a crucial step in data analysis (p.173).

Therefore, I read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the data. Then, I split the data into chunks. I used a coding system within the transcripts to explore the themes and sub-themes. The codes were identified by using school codes (e. g. KGHS for Khagrachari Govt.

High School). Following this, interview numbers were used (such as interview with head teacher referred to interview-1 or interview with the language teacher referred to interview-2), and theme numbers were identified (for example, language barrier=1, and tribal students' inability to understand the contents of the lessons=2) to analyse the data. This process helped me to organise data into possible categories in computer files so that I could trace similar data quickly when necessary. The interview transcripts were read again to check whether any important codes were overlooked during the previous reading. After becoming confirmed about the coding categories, I photocopied the interview transcripts to cut and paste the data under same coding categories. Afterwards, I constructed emerging themes from the coding categories. After that I categorised the sub-themes into a similar theme, and wrote by colour-pencil on the right and left margins of the transcripts. This process helped to organise main themes and concepts from the individual pages. Some of the themes came out from my questions and I listed them under the headings like Language barrier, Unable to understand subject contents, Bad result in examination, Disappointed in studying, Drop out, Language loss, Mother language in curriculum for tribal students, and so on. After that, I refined concepts or themes produced from the codes and headings. Due to this, it was an inductive process and data were re-checked many times.

4.6.2 Analytical Memos

I used analytical memos (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007) during the data gathering process to reflect on the emerging theoretical and methodological approaches I was employing, and how they related to the data findings. During the data collection process, I always carried a research journal diary and my digital recorder with me, and when any thoughts came into my mind then I hurriedly wrote these either in the research journal diary or recorded them on the digital recorder

so that these thoughts would help me in the writing analytical memos. In this way, the analytical memos helped me to accumulate my thoughts and identify emergent themes, and gave a chance for continuous analysis on the data.

4.6.3 Document Analysis

As part of data analysis, I followed the thematic analysis process more or less for document analysis to investigate the role of different languages in the secondary language curriculum. To extend the document analysis, I tried to uncover underlying themes which are perpetuated in the secondary language curriculum of Bangladesh. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007) and Coffey and Atkinson (1996), the researcher investigates for patterns, themes and topics, and assigns coding categories in qualitative research. I explored for patterns, themes and assigned coding categories in the documents to see the position of tribal languages in the document. For the data analysis, it became obvious that some themes were essential to illustrate more closely the power and politics of dominant languages within the curriculum documents. Literally, the thematic analysis happened after the data collection had been completed from the interviews. It should be noted that, due to time constraints thematic analysis of the curriculum documents was limited. The themes are discussed in the findings and discussion chapter.

4.6 My Position as a Researcher

I was conscious about my role as a researcher, and in tune with poststructural theoretical frameworks, am explicitly acknowledging the extent to which I framed the study and the analysis of the data (Janesick, 2003). Basically, I was an outsider in the school, three tribal

communities (Chakma, Marma, and Tripura), and NCTB. I had not had any previous professional or personal connection with the school teachers, students, community leaders, and curriculum planners. According to Hellowell (2006), the outsider of a research is one who is unfamiliar "with the setting and people s/he is researching" (p. 484). As an outsider, I found that it was easier to be objective in my interpretation of the data that participants gave me. Moreover, I needed to get consent from the school authority and participants for the access of doing my research. At the initial stage of data collection, I felt myself estranged in the school, tribal community and NCTB, and I knew that it is not so easy for the participants to become familiar at first sight. Hence, I met with them several times before interviewing them so that they could feel free with me. As a result, participants shared their perceptions with me without any hesitation about the importance of mother languages in schooling for tribal children. As an outsider researcher, I was sincere, open and responsive to any potential issues that may arise from the participants. This decision allowed me to develop a better understanding of my role with the participants when they shared their ideas and perceptions.

4.8 Rigour and Trustworthiness

As a novice researcher, I strove to maintain rigour and trustworthiness in every stage of the research process. According to Robinson and Lai (2006), rigour can be achieved in qualitative research through the pursuit of claims on the basis of description, interpretation and theories of action. I was conscious to store all interview records, because I knew that the interview records would be well-established data for my research (Robinson and Lai, 2006). I was honest while translating the interviews for transcription so that the participants' original voices would reflect accurately. For this reason, I listened to the interview records again and again. Then, I gave the

interview transcripts to the participants to verify whether their voices were accurate or not (Mutch, 2005; and Creswell, 2007).

In fact, rigour ensures the trustworthiness of qualitative research. In qualitative research, the notion of trustworthiness is usually used "to mean the ways we work to meet the criteria of validity, credibility, and believability of our research - as assessed by the academy, our communities, and our participants" (Harrison, MacGibbon, and Morton, 2001, p. 324). Trustworthiness of my research was established through data collection, analysis and reporting. I was aware of my own bias in my research design, choice of methodology, tools of data collection, and analysis process, because I knew that -

qualitative researchers accept the fact that research is ideologically driven. There is no value-free or bias-free design. Early on, the qualitative researcher identifies his or her own biases and articulates the ideology or conceptual frame for the study (Janesick, 2003, p.56).

Therefore, I was sincere in presenting the findings of this study, and this awareness helped me to maintain credibility and trustworthy. I re-examined the data many times to establish accuracy.

4.9 Ethical Issues

For conducting this study, I gained permission from The Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC) of the University of Canterbury. As data was collected from Bangladesh, I also took permission from the Director General (DG), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) before starting the field work. Participants were informed about their part in the research, and written consent was taken from them to be participants in the research. I

recorded all the interviews with the consent of the participants. Copies of the information letters and consent forms are attached in Appendices.

I assured the participants that their information would be kept confidential and anonymous, and the collected data would only be used for research purposes. Pseudonyms were used for all the participants. Participants are identified by their status (such as teacher, Head Teacher, and curriculum planner, Chakma Leader, Marma Leader, and Tripura Leader).

I also gave information letters and consent forms to the tribal students for their parents. Before giving this letter, I spoke with the tribal students at school and gave them the opportunity to discuss anything with me so that they could feel free. I made friends with the students. I ensured them that their privacy and anonymity would be protected and that I would not use any of their real names in my writing up. Moreover, I did not identify the students in my transcripts. Afterwards, I gave consent forms to the students to sign.

The participants had the freedom to withdraw themselves as well as the data provided by them at any stage of the research without explaining any reason. None chose to do so. The data of this study will be kept securely for a period of five years. The data will be used particularly for this thesis, and any related journal articles or reports that may follow.

Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion - 1

In this chapter, the findings provide the insight into the role of languages, particularly tribal languages, in secondary schools in Bangladesh in relation to Bangla language curriculum document and practices. I show tribal students' schooling and what teachers, the tribal community, and curriculum policy makers valued in relation to the significance of mother language learning. The key themes of this research are firstly a disjuncture between home knowledges and school knowledges of tribal students, and secondly a disjuncture between the operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning. Document analysis of the curriculum document indicates that the intended curriculum operates as a political text where the dominant languages of Bangla and English are privileged and considered to be most worth knowing. In contrast, tribal languages are devalued.

I have divided the findings and discussion chapter into two sections. In the first section, I want to understand the participants' ideas and values about the importance of multiple language teaching in education, particularly the role of indigenous languages in education. In the second section, I describe the politics of dominant languages and the marginalisation of tribal languages within the intended curriculum by looking at the general aims and objectives of the language curriculum document (NCTB, 1996), and the perceptions of the participants.

5.1 Disjunctures between Tribal Students' Home Knowledges and School Knowledges

The main theme that emerged from the study is the disjuncture between home and school knowledges. I show how this disjuncture functions in tribal students' academic and personal life and what the short and long term effects of this disjuncture between home and school knowledges on learning for tribal students are.

5.1.1 Disjunctures between home and school knowledges disadvantage the learning of tribal students

Tribal children develop their home knowledges through their mother languages at own home and community, because the mother tongue "represents the thought, culture and heritage of an individual" (Uddin, 2010, p. 32). However, tribal students develop their school knowledges through Bangla and English language in the school though their mother languages and cultures are dissimilar from the school languages and cultures. Therefore, a significant number of the tribal students are struggling to integrate their home knowledges into the mainstream education system. This is the disjuncture between home and school knowledges of tribal students. Due to this, they see education as not functional or interesting, and the academic studies take them to a back seat at the classroom. Although a few tribal students try to recover the disjuncture between their home and school knowledges, their progress is slow and they have a lack of experiences and concepts in school knowledges. The reason is that most of the minority children are "disadvantaged by an education system that does not recognize their language, culture or future livelihood realities" (Uddin, 2010, p. 34).

The literature shows that schools can play an important role to advocate and maintain indigenous language and culture (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002; Kabir and Nath, 2005). Therefore, the use of home languages could be given emphasis as a resource for tribal students in education. If this happened, tribal students would be confident in school and be able to make a link between what they already know and what is new to them. In other words, language is a power by which students can get greater learning. However, after the Independence (1971) until now, only Bangla and English languages are used as mediums of instruction at all levels of the Bangladesh education system. The Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission advocates that "we must...use Bengali as the medium of instruction at all level of education to make our educational schemes successful" (Jalaluddin and Chowdhury, 1997 cited in Kabir and Nath, 2005). Thus, Bangla turned into the dominant language in education. Due to this, the disjuncture between home and school knowledges in the Bangladesh education system indirectly ignored the tribal people's demand for learning in their mother language.

The result of this disjuncture between home and school knowledges of tribal children would influence tribal language loss in Bangladesh eventually, because "education is a very effective tool for incorporating people into the dominant culture" (Harrison, 2008, p. 11) of the school. Moreover, provisions of the curriculum and contents of textbooks of secondary education were worse among the ethnic minorities than the national figure, because the educational needs of ethnic minority children are ignored in secondary school (Kabir and Nath, 2005). As a result, the disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal students usually affect their learning, and contribute to the loss of their mother tongues, customs, values and worldviews.

5.1.1.1 Issues of tribal language loss in Bangladesh in terms of disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal students

When minority languages are disregarded by the language curriculum, this contributes to the disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal students, and the educated tribal people are influenced to less use of their mother languages at home. Due to this, their children assimilate into Bangla language and Bangla culture, gradually contributing to the issues of tribal language loss in Bangladesh. Therefore, the key issues of tribal language loss are discussed as follows:

a) Lesser use of mother language at home

According to Mufwene (2003) cited in Anchimbe (2006), "languages do not kill languages; speakers do" (p. 137). If speakers give up their own ancestral languages for economic and social aspiration, the languages fall into attrition. Anchimbe (2006) found some reasons why speakers give up their own mother tongue such as "lack of teaching facilities, unavailability of other speakers, political or ethnic conflict, identity concealment, and above all the quest for economic survival" (p. 137). Due to the economic and social status of Bangla and English, many tribal speakers move their children towards mainstream languages. Most of the tribal parents are conscious about their children's future, and they practice Bangla and English at home more than their own language. As Bodhi (Chakma leader) remarks:

Chakma parents are more interested to practice their children Bangla, because they think, if their children can study well they can get a good job in future, but learning Chakma language will no more useful except talking into Chakma community. For this mentality,

Chakma parents do not want that their children are practice Chakma language at home.

(Bodhi: 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Indigenous parents prefer to practice their children in dominant languages through education rather than restrict them to their home-languages, because tribal parents do not see any facilities of their languages outside their community. Therefore, some indigenous parents have negative attitudes towards the use of indigenous languages in the education of their children (Anchimbe, 2006). Durnnian (2007) said that "some Adivasi people in the plains area have already lost their language and use Bangla for most communication in the home and the wider community" (p. 15). Promi, a Head Teacher, concurs by saying:

I have seen that, students of the city area and their parents are more conscious than students who live far from the city because urban tribes talk to Bangali people and practice Bangla at home. (Promi: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

According to tribal leaders, it is necessary for curriculum planners to think about the development of tribal people's languages and cultures in education, otherwise they would be assimilated into mainstream language and culture. Education is the best tool for helping to protect non-dominant cultures and their languages. Due to the non-recognition of indigenous languages into the Bangladesh curriculum, most tribal parents do not see a role for their mother language at school or outside their community. From their point of view, schools are for learning Bangla and English, and tribal languages are the language for the home. Therefore, indigenous people use mainstream languages, because they are usually unable to find any usefulness for using their own mother language. As a Marma leader, Raktim noted:

When we write something like letter or something else, we use Bangla language. So, it is observed that the use of our language is reducing day by day and one time we will not found our language. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

The minority people realise that their languages are in danger. Moreover, they see their languages as worthless while they are going to school, college or the job-market. The three tribal leaders also noted that their languages are "on the way to death" like other disappearing rudiments of culture and society.

Tribal students gave some interesting responses when they were asked how they felt themselves in school and at home. As Orchona (from the Chakma group) and Promila (from the Tripura group) explained:

When I understand the lesson then I feel very happy at school. But when I cannot understand the lesson nor do my homework, I feel shy in the classroom. At home, when I talk or share my emotions with my family members or I understand what they talk, then I feel proud. (Orchona: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

When I understand better the lesson in classroom then I feel proud about myself, because it is quite hard for me to understand the lesson though our teachers are trying their level best. On the other hand, when I do not understand the class lesson then I feel worry and tensed about my exam whether I can pass wellfully or not. (Promila: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

Students in all focus groups discussions spoke willingly of the learning at school, despite the language of instruction. When the discussion moved to language learning at school, all three groups shared the problems that they are facing during learning. They spoke about their weakness in Bangla and English. As Urmee (from the Chakma group) and Mongri (from the Marma group) explained:

It is very much difficult for me to memorise my class lecture, because we have to learn through Bangla language. Our teachers taught us by Bangla language that I cannot practice in my home. Moreover, my language is not practicing at school. (Urme: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

I lost my interest in Bangla grammar and literature class, because the literature and grammar is not familiar to me. As a result, I got always poor marks in this subject. (Mongri: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

They feel a translation is necessary between learning in their mother tongue and learning in mainstream languages, because not only is Bangla the national language of their country but also a passport to get jobs. They also shared that their parents 'pressurised' them to learning well so that they can 'get good job or establish in future'. As Simon (from the Marma group) and Tripti (from the Tripura group) argued:

My father always says to me that if I cannot do better in the examination then I will have to work in field with him. My mother also tells me that 'read, read and read' otherwise you cannot get a good job in future. (Simon: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

I cannot go out for playing with my friends in the evening, because my parents dislike it. They always told me that I need to use the time in reading instead of playing. Their ambition about me is that I would be a doctor in future. (Tripti: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

Few tribal students agreed that they were trying to do better in learning according to their parents' aspirations. As a result, they spend more time to learn and understand a lesson properly.

In contrast, Bangali students tend to do better than their counterparts, because they are familiar with Bangla. At the end of all discussions, students from the three tribal groups agreed about the significance of mother language in learning, and said that it would be good for them to learn through their language and they would be more able to understand the content of the lesson. Most of the tribal students believed that if there were close links between their own languages and schooling, their academic achievements would be successful. Moreover, some of them shared their parents' expectations on them to maintain their own language and culture as well as to be a better student at school.

b) Disregard of tribal languages into education

In the Pakistan period (1947-1971), before the Liberation War of Bangladesh, most of the Bangali people studied in Urdu (the State language of Pakistan) that was imposed by the Pakistani rulers to get better jobs, but the Bangali did not accept it from the heart. In my mind, similarly, tribal people are learning Bangla only to obtain good results in the exams or to get a better job. However, a question arises here; do they accept Bangla from the heart? There are 45 indigenous languages in Bangladesh (Cavallaro and Rahman, 2009; Sagar and Poulson, 2003) as I have explained in the introduction chapter (page - 15), but there is neither any progress nor any mentionable activity in Bangladesh for maintaining tribal languages. From the world's perspective, despite having the fourth most popularly spoken language in the world, Bangla is dominated by the perception of the superiority of English. The Ministry of Education in Bangladesh, for example, has approved many different types of projects from Western NGOs and agencies to develop the secondary education sector, but English is the dominant medium used by these agencies when they develop policies, evaluate practices or carry out research in

Bangladesh. Similarly, tribal languages are dominated by Bangla and English, and the curriculum, textbooks, documents, and policies are either in Bangla or English in Bangladesh. As a result, there is insufficient research about the importance of indigenous languages in the secondary education sector. The little research that exists is mostly conducted by NGOs like BRAC, Zabarang Kalyan Samity, and Save the Children (Shishur Khamatayan Project). As indigenous languages are not recognised in Bangladesh yet, indigenous people face issues with regard to their identity and place in the country. Some enquiries are arising in their mind about the disregard for their language. As Tripura leader Shadhon mentioned:

Now, though it is our country but we do not consider ourselves like other civilians, because education is our basic rights, but we can't study through our language. (Shadhon: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal people are taught in the mainstream languages, because they have no other options. During the interview, Tripura leader Shadhon also noted that they had one primary school in their village and their teachers were members of Tripura community, and 'teachers give instruction through Tripura language' though the 'textbook and curriculum are written in Bangla'. But there is 'no high school' in their village. So, after completing the primary level, students of their Tripura village need to go to 'Gomoti Bazaar' which is situated 5km from their village. Therefore, Tripura children have to 'enter into a new and unknown environment' where they become 'assimilated' into mainstream languages. Due to this, their 'results are not satisfactory in secondary school than primary school' which leads them to drop out from school or attain bad academic results. This scenario indicates that when tribal students get instruction through their own mother language, they are able to understand lessons and do better in education, but when they receive instruction in Bangla or English they feel no interest to learn or to come school. The cause of this situation is that tribal languages are ignored by curriculum and school. Thus,

indigenous languages, cultures and identities are being marginalised and overlooked by the present education system. This disregard of the education system toward tribal languages in the long run could very well push the eventual dissolution of tribal communities, as their languages, cultures and identities erode through the course of time.

With the help of the issues of tribal language loss, I tried to unpack from the participants' perceptions about what the disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal students look like and how they shape learning at both places. The reason is that language and knowledge are closely related. From the above discussion, it is revealed that a significant proportion of tribal pupils face different problems due to the lack of connection between their home and school knowledges, and this disadvantages them in various ways. Subsequently, I discuss below the reasons why these disjunctures between home and school knowledges pose a problem.

5.1.2 Why is the disjuncture between home and school knowledges a problem?

The disjuncture between home and school knowledges is a problem for indigenous students, because they cannot understand the contents of the lesson, perhaps contributing to the high dropout rate, and to low achievement. Uddin (2010) showed that the dropout rate of tribal children at school is more than 33 percent¹ as they "fail to understand, read or write Bangla and reluctant to attend classes in fear of that" (p. 33), and this paradox makes the affected tribal children play truant at school. Therefore, the role of mother language in education is significant.

¹ I acknowledge that it is important to have the statistics of Bangali students' presence in the school, as this would make a comparison to that of the tribal students, and would give a clearer picture of the phenomenon. However, unfortunately I do not have this because of paucity of literature.

If anyone is strong enough in their mother language then it would help them to understand the content of the lesson in the classroom. Moreover, language represents one's identity and culture.

5.1.2.1 Importance of mother languages in education

Two sub-themes emerged from the data to interpret the theme of the importance of mother language in education. The subthemes are: (a) Mother languages help to understand subject content, and (b) Language represents identity and culture.

a) Mother languages help to understand subject content

Language is important not only for communication but is a representative of history and culture. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) said that "if you want to destroy a people, you get their language first; get rid of the language and bring in another language, and that brings in another world view" (p. 317), because language is very much important for human life. A language helps to represent a person in front of others. A language is a way to represent a Nation. To know the cultures of a group, language is very important. Language is the main source which provides the explanations on how societies function, on who we are, where we come from, and how we portray the world around us. It is observed that, tribal students acquire their mother language from their childhood but study in another language as in Bangla or English. For this reason, they face a linguistic problem and they need a long time to overcome it. If they got the opportunity to learn or study in their own language, their learning will be easier. Shakil, a Bangla language teacher and Rana, a curriculum developer explained:

The purpose of this education system is to provide realistic education to the society. In this case, I also think that, the opportunity of learning in their (tribal students) own languages will play the important role for the tribal students. There are no alternatives of mother language to understand the contents rather than memorising. (Shakil: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

There is enormous importance of mother language in education system. Language is the medium of communication. People cannot share their feelings without language. Bangla is our language of instruction. Students are learning and studying in mother language. Students can understand anything easily if it is taught in their mother language. (Rana: 18.01.2011, face to face interview)

If tribal students are taught in their own language at school, they can better understand the contents of the lesson or textbook, and their mistakes in reading and writing can be reduced. For this reason, participants in my study think that the inclusion of tribal languages in the curriculum will make the tribal students advance in their studies. Specially, it will be better for those tribes who 'live far from the city and do not practice Bangla' (Shakil, Teacher: 10.01.2011, face to face interview).

According to Magga, Nicolaisen, Trask, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Dunbar (2005), recently indigenous and minority education in other countries show that "the length of mother tongue medium education is more important than any other factor [including socio-economic status] in predicting the educational success of bilingual students" (p. 2). Ironically, tribal languages are neglected in the formal education of Bangladesh. For this reason, tribal students are getting poor results in learning and becoming frustrated. As Chakma, Tripura, and Marma students argued:

In what language we are reading and writing in Bangla class, we cannot speak it in our home. On the other hand, in what language we speak in our home, we cannot learn in that language in our school. Therefore, we cannot do better in our exams. (Olee: Chakma group, 08.01.2011, focus groups)

I face problem to learn through another language, because I cannot express sound in writing or speaking by Bangla what I can easily express in my Tripura language. Sometimes, I feel very shy in my classroom. (Ami: Tripura group, 08.01.2011, focus groups)

As we are learning in Bangla, I think I understand lesser than my Bangali friends. Sometimes, I become hopeless. If the textbooks would write in my language or I could read in my language then my academic result would be better like my Bangali friends. (Aveek: Marma group, 08.01.2011, focus groups)

This linguistic problem is a great hindrance for most of the tribal students in achieving the goal of general education. According to the tribal students and Head Teacher (Promi), teachers are 'very cordial' and they do not take 'negatively this linguistic problem' of tribal students. Most of the time they try to solve the problem in their classrooms. When teachers observe that most of the tribal students cannot understand the content then teachers select 'another student of the same community' who understood the content of the topic clearly so that they can 'make others understood'. So, it is clear that each of the tribal students translate the teacher's lectures in his language to make the other students of his community understand the topic. If the tribal students get the opportunity to study in their language, they can accept education properly and their

difficulties in learning will be lessened. Promi as a Head Teacher and Raktim as a Marma leader explained:

The history and tradition are contained in the language of a nation. In a word, the entire image of a person is incorporated with his language. So, I think if tribal languages are included in the curriculum; its impact will be enormous because by this, not only the languages will get recognition but also the tribal literature will survive. (Promi: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

If they can gain knowledge in their language then can understand any language or any information easily. To understand other language, there is no alternative but mother language. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

The participants strongly believed that there was no substitute for learning in one's mother language. They believe that if tribal students would get the chance to study through their own mother language, they may learn without any difficulty, and they will be able to make themselves more effective and capable. For this reason, it is very important for tribal students for their mother languages to be recognised academically.

b) Language represents identity and culture

The relationship between language and culture of tribal groups are "intertwined as are heart and mind in a flourishing body" (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 115). Hunkin-Tuiletufuga (2001) speaks of the relationship between language and culture as "like oxygen to human survival" (p. 197). Without language, one's culture and identity does not exist. Social constructionists argue that people's identity is "constructed through language" (Burr, 1995, p. 33). In society, we interact

with others to develop our social, economic, educational and political context. Without language, we are not able to do that. Moreover, we do and think everything through our own language. The following data supports this perception. As Bodhi (Chakma leader), Raktim (Marma leader) and Shadhon (Tripura leader) argued:

In our daily life, we use Chakma language at home and with relatives. (Bodhi: 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Our mother language is Marma in which we speak in our home to express our emotion. I call my mother in this language and my lifestyle is articulated in this language. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

The language that I use to ask my mother or say good morning to my neighbour is Tripura. From morning to till night, we speak in our language and express our opinion in this way. You can say we use our language in our daily life like other mother languages. (Shadhon: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal leaders showed how language relates with one's life and represents people's individuality. It is important for one to value and maintain his/her identity. Like others, tribal people of Bangladesh are realising that their cultures and identities are shaped by their own language. Language expresses the things that one's "culture believes in, its ideas, even just the objects with which it is familiar" (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998, p. 52).

Therefore, it can be observed from the above discussions that the disjunctures between home and school knowledges of tribal pupils create various problems for a substantial number of them in their learning such as the incapability to speak and write Bangla fluently, to understand the

contents of the lessons, and encourage the loss of tribal languages and cultures gradually. These problems of the disjunctures between home and school knowledges create several short and long term effects on learning for the tribal learners.

5.1.3 Effects: short term effects on learning for tribal students

The short term effects of the disjunctures between home and school knowledges are truancy, inability to understand the subject content, deficit of required language skills, lack of participation, and lack of ability to do complex thinking for the majority of tribal students.

5.1.3.1 Truancy of tribal students in education

Truancy is a common term of persistent non-attendance at school. I used the word 'truancy' in this study to express school absenteeism of tribal students. According to Okuyama (1999) cited in Baleinakorodawa (2009), truancy is a kind of emotional disturbance in children that is associated with anxiety and leads to absence from school. In Bangladesh, the truant, especially the tribal truant, is an indifferent and a poor learner who dislikes school. When an ethnic minority student fails in the examinations, the student feels embarrassed and tends to not go to school (Kabir and Nath, 2005). The research Indigenous Children's Education Forum (ICEF, 2006) mentioned that failure in the examinations to "engage indigenous students in meaningful ways results in classroom experiences that are incomprehensible and culturally invalidating. The result is that indigenous children often lose interest, underperform and drop out, and remain trapped in conditions of deprivation and marginalization" (p. 22). There are a number of reasons identified as to why truancy occurs. The participants (teachers, students and community leaders)

gave various reasons for truancy in school, especially the language barrier. Moreover, students gave their perceptions about their academic participation in the classroom such as being unable to understand contents of the lesson and facing problems in learning due to different languages.

a) The Language barrier

The language barrier is a key concern of learning and academic participation in the classroom for the tribal students. Indigenous students of Bangladesh usually enter school into a Bangla or English environment where their language, culture and identity are totally ignored. Tribal students face problems in writing and speaking fluently in Bangla, because they are talk in one language at home and study in another language such as Bangla and English, which are totally different from their own languages. Therefore, the indigenous students are facing problems in their study. As Shakil explained:

Tribal students speak in their own language when they are in their home or community. But when they come to schools or colleges, they speak Bangla. As, most of the time they are speaking in their own language, they face problems in writing or speaking Bangla or English at schools and colleges. (Shakil: Bangla language Teacher, 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

In Bangladesh, tribal languages are submerged in the Bangla speaking education system. As the tribal students are speaking their own language most of the day, they are also facing problems to pronounce Bangla words. As a Bangla language teacher Shakil argued:

If you go further inside like Panchari, Dighinala or Lakkhichari, you will see that tribal students of those areas cannot understand Bangla. On the other hand, urban tribes understand Bangla but they have pronunciation problems. This pronunciation problem

affect in their writing. For example, we write 'Mati' in Bangla. Tribes pronounce 'T' as 'Th'. So, they write 'Mathi' instead of 'Mati' (Soil in English). Similarly, when they write a Bangla essay of 300 words, we find 50-60 words that are affected by their own language. Therefore, they feel shy in reading or telling something in the classroom..... Now they (Tribal students) are cramming most of the Bangla words and write them in the exam paper. As a result, spelling meaning of those words become different. (Shakil: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

Classroom transactions are difficult as the tribal students deal with the teachers as well as the difference between home languages and school languages. Actually, language barrier and confusion create a complicated environment for the tribal students in the school, including problems with identity. It is difficult for indigenous students to change the situation because their lack of Bangla and English language disadvantages them in education. Tribal students face this problem in education, because not only do they have to adopt the dominant language but also have to learn it as well. As a result, most of the tribal students have to immediately start to use the dominant languages in the school to "develop new and sometimes quite abstract concepts as well as literacy skills"(Gibbons, 1993, p. 3).

Students from the three tribal groups saw the relationship between their mother languages and mainstream languages are 'fully opposite' and this produced a 'negative impression' about school which led to their 'truancy'. As the students Promila (from the Tripura group) and Olee (from the Chakma group) argued:

When I did not ready my class lesson properly, I show excuse of my sickness to my teachers and parents to avoid present at school. (Promila: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

I am not a meritorious student at school. Also I do not feel interest in learning, because the lessons are very much hard to me. This is because; I cannot understand the language of the lessons. ----- Sometimes teachers scold me in the classroom for not learning the lessons. Therefore, I do not want to come in the school. (Olee: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

Tribal students see that they usually get poor marks in the examinations in comparison to their Bangali peers, because they have language difficulty in learning. They feel ashamed when their teachers rebuke them for their negligence in the lessons. As a result, they tend to not attend school regularly. Many tribal students do not continue their school education, because they do not feel interested in Bangla medium schooling (Uddin, 2010). Besides, most of the tribal students are living far from the city area and they have no opportunity to practice Bangla in their home. As Marma leader Raktim and Head Teacher Promi explained:

Thirty percent people of our community live in the city and the rest 70% people live in village. Thus, who lives in city area are familiar to Bangali people and do not face language problems, but the people of villages do not know Bangla well. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

Specially, I face problem with those who lives far from the city area and stay away from Bangali students because they do not understand Bangla properly. (Promi: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal students, who stay in touch with Bangali students (Bangla users) or those who get the opportunity to practice Bangla in their home properly, usually have no problem to speak Bangla language or get Bangla instructions in the class. However, most of the tribal students live far

from the city area and do not get the environment in their home to practice Bangla. For this reason, the language barrier is a great concern for them.

5.1.3.2 Unable to understand the subject content

According to Bagai and Nundy (2009), tribal children use the State language in a limited space and speak their own language at home, and mainstream schools use the State language for "teaching and communication, which is most often not familiar to a tribal child ----They are thus unable to fully comprehend classroom teaching and activities, read in the state language or understand the texts properly" (p. 12). Villegas (1988) argued that the relationship between school and minority students is very narrow, because the minority students fail to understand the contents of the lessons due to the language barrier in the classroom. According to Goldring (2006), education in minority students' mother language is "an important part of the development of the cognitive growth of a bilingual person, and facilitates their academic ability in their second language" (p. 53). In Bangladesh, tribal students have limited contact with Bangla and English in schooling, and their progress is questionable in comparison to Bangali students. As Promi (Head Teacher) and Shakil (Bangla language teacher) argued:

Bangali students do better if they get a little nursing because they are guided by the textbooks which are written in Bangla and classroom instructions are also in Bangla. Thus, Bangali students can understand the subject contents more easily than the Tribal students. (Promi: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

When I teach in the classroom, I observe tribes understand subject contents lower in respect to Bangali students. (Shakil: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

As tribal students speak in one language at home and study in another language at school, so they cannot understand the content of textbooks which are written in Bangla and English. They understand their language before Bangla. As a result, when they are taught in Bangla, they have to convert it into their own language, and then they can understand. (Shakil: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal students fall behind in education more than non-tribal students who associate with Bangla language and concepts. Tribal students are relatively less exposed to mainstream languages in the school, because they have their own "Eco-zone where they inhabit in relative isolation and therefore have lesser exposure to the outside world" (Kanungo and Mahapatra, 2004, p. 31). On the other hand, generally the Bangali students do not have this problem, because they get their education through the State language as the medium of instruction, which is their mother language as well. However, tribal students have to get formal education through the state language which is not their mother tongue. Moreover, the textbook contains little descriptions about the tribal culture and languages that can be considered insignificant and maximum contents of the textbook reflect the dominant society's culture, language and identity. Therefore, Bangali students are normally more advanced in education in comparison to tribal students. Generally, most of the indigenous students are seen not writing answers promptly in examinations. Tribal students reported that they are as still weak in clear understanding and writing of Bangla and English languages. The following data of focus groups could help to understand the depth of the problem. As the students - Pinky (from the Chakma group), Kamal (from the Tripura group) and Rajesh (from the Marma group) explained:

We got problem of understanding instructions in Bangla and English. (Pinky: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

We are weak generally but particularly very weak in Bangla. It is not our mother language. (Kamal: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

We feel difficulty in understanding the class lecture that is given by our Bangali teachers and we also fail to make teachers clear about what we want to say. (Rajesh: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

Due to this language barrier, tribal students are unable to participate in academic activities. Moreover, they fail to follow the instructions in the class, and are unable to understand the content which contributes to their non-participation.

5.1.3.3 Lack of participation of tribal students

Lack of prior knowledge on indigenous language and culture in curriculum and syllabus creates hesitation and destroys tribal students' self-confidence in schooling. They generally keep themselves from learning and are reluctant to participate in classroom activities. Moreover, important questions might come across their minds but confusion and anxiety on whether they were relevant questions stops them from academic participation in front of their teachers. As a result, they are usually behind in education than the Bangali students. As Shakil (Bangla language teacher) and Promi (Head Teacher) suggested:

----basically Bangali students participate in the classroom but tribes are introvert in participating. They are not interested in studying. I must say, language problem is the main reason for this. As we conduct classes in Bangla, tribal students cannot understand

topics clearly. That's why, Bangali students are advanced in study. (Shakil: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

But truthfully, tribal students do not response in the class that much as Bangali students do. As a result, they do not get good results in the examination. (Promi: 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

As the majority of tribal students understand the lessons lesser than the Bangali students, they do not often willingly participate in the classroom. As a result, the development of their learning capacity is disrupted by their disinclination. According to Magga et al. (2005), mainstream language medium schooling for "indigenous children curtails the development of their capabilities and perpetuates poverty" (p. 2). Students from the three tribal groups said that it was impossible for them to understand Bangla instruction in the classroom clearly. Therefore, they 'memorise studies' and deliver in the 'classroom or exam-papers' for passing the grade, but most of them are unable to memorise their studies and they sit at the back benches in the classroom to keep themselves from class participation. As Raman (from the Tripura student group) and Moley (from the Marma student group) explained:

Sometimes, we cannot understand the lesson that is given by our teacher. That moment is very embarrassing for us. (Raman: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

When our teachers want to know something or ask a question then usually I cannot tell anything in the classroom though I know the answer. Because, I cannot explain the answer clearly in classroom like my Bangali peers. (Moley: 08.01.2011, focus groups)

Tribal students know that their lack of mainstream language makes them embarrassed and restricts their class participation in front of other class members. Students, who survive in fear of

language mistakes, confusion, criticism, and looking stupid, usually withdraw themselves from education (Goldring, 2006). According to Tileston (2005), students who feel uncomfortable and "threatened in the classroom, whether physically or emotionally, are operating in a survival mode, and while learning can take place in that mode, it is with much difficulty" (p. 7).

5.1.4 Long term effects on learning for tribal students

Short term effects show that the tribal children are surrounded by various problems which lead to long term effects such as failure in education, and the gradual disappearance of their cultural identity. The Bangla language and culture based education seems unfriendly to the tribal people for their children's learning achievement and individuality at school. Indigenous students are also affected by the long term by the disjunctures between home and school knowledges. As a consequence, the majority of tribal people realise the significance of their mother languages in the curriculum, because they want to keep alive their own traditional way of life and livelihoods through their children and think it would be possible to reorganise the education system according to the students' needs.

5.1.4.1 Individual students fail and drop out from education

Academic development and cognitive development depend on students' first languages, because "academic knowledge and conceptual development transfer from the first language to the second language" (Thomas and Collier, 1997, p. 43). However, tribal students are unable to assure their academic success at school. Tribal students see themselves as failures in education when they are unable to follow teachers' instructions in the class. This discontinuation of following the

instructional language also undermines their confidence in schooling, and therefore most of them quit from school. As Tripura leader Shadhon and Chakma leader Bodhi argued:

They (Tripura students) don't want to go to school. They cannot express their feelings perfectly in Bangla and they make themselves introvert. They become frustrated when they do not understand teacher's lecture or when they cannot answer questions appropriately. (Shadhon: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

Most of the time, when their (tribal people) children go to school cannot adapt with Bangla and English language. Furthermore, when they do not understand their textbooks, they don't want to go to school. Specifically, after primary school level, most of them avoid further studies, because they think that Bangla as well as English grammar and novels are harder in the high school level. (Bodhi: 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal students feel disinterested in education, because the contents of the textbook become too difficult for them. Generally, the language barrier is a great concern for tribal students, and is responsible for their poor performance in the examination. It is clear that deficient mainstream language in writing and speaking skills exclude the tribal students from education. Sarker and Davey (2009) found that there are six reasons of tribal students dropping out such as "poverty, landlessness, ignorance toward education, language problems, parents' seasonal migration in search of employment, and child labour" (p. 6). Due to the language problem dropout rates among indigenous children are increasing, because schools use Bangla or English whereas indigenous students use tribal languages.

5.1.4.2 Tribal groups' identities

People usually talk about schooling systems, for example the Western schooling system or the Indian subcontinent schooling system, but attention to indigenous schooling systems while indigenous languages exist in the society is often absent (Odora-Hoppers, 2010). Tribal students' identities depend on their capability of speaking their mother languages confidently and fluently. Burr (1995) argued that language is an essential requirement for thought and a "form of action" (p. 7) to construct people's "notions of selfhood and personal identity" (p. 46). Basically, language helps to shape people's culture and heritage in a society. Uddin (2010) explained that people's cultures and identities can flourish where they "enjoy the right to use their mother language fully and freely in all various situations of their lives" (p. 32).

Tribal students are growing in an environment that is encouraging and culturally congruent for expressing their identity, but the school environment is incompatible to their identity. As they have to learn in Bangla and English, they cannot express properly their knowing of understanding in the classroom. Moreover, they are assimilating into mainstream language and identity. As Bodhi (Chakma leader) expressed:

The people of our community can speak Chakma but cannot read it. Many educated Chakma people cannot read anything written in Chakma, because no one practices the written version of the language. -----Literary and conscious people write in this Chakma language from their own interest. But this is a few people. All in our society do not write in this language. -----By using Bangla words, we turned our language into a mixed language. -----Our children can't identify our language's script well. But they are learning

and knowing Bangla alphabet well, because they have to read, write and speak in Bangla.

(Bodhi: 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Most tribal people do not know how to read and write their own mother language though it has an established alphabet/script. One of the reasons is that they do not use their language outside their community and they read or write everything through either Bangla or English. However, tribal leaders are realising the importance of their mother language in learning. As Tripura leader Shadhon explained:

Mother language is necessary to increase the rate of education. My elder son doesn't know our language. He can identify east, west, south and north in Bangla but cannot identify 'yakasha' or 'yagra'. In Tripura language, we say 'right' as 'yakasha' and 'left' as 'yagra'. But my elder son gets confused. In this way, if all Tripura parent start making their children get used to Bangla, then Tripura language may no longer exist. If language is lost, our community will be lost. Now, as a person knows us as Tripura community then no one will be able to recognise us individually. Our culture, tradition, norms and values will also be lost. Then we will have no identity for our own. (Shadhon: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

In this way, if tribal people of Bangladesh are not able to save their own languages, they will lose their ways of thinking, cultures and identities. Language lose means one's culture and identity lose. If tribal languages lose in Bangladesh, the next generation would be unable to enjoy the taste of literature of those languages. As the urban tribal people use Bangla at home most of the day, the characteristics of their languages will be lost. Tribal people are realising that their children are in danger of losing their mother language which is a great threat to their cultural identities. Tribal leaders are deeply worried about their own language and culture. As Marma leader Raktim argued:

We the ethnic groups want to be with the mainstream of Bangali nation in education, thinking and business. But it is seen that we are ignored from so many facilities. There is no discussion or research about our history, literature & culture. Though we have a verbal form of our language, but after 2-3 generation it will no longer exist. In this way, our language will be lost one time. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

If their children lose their own language, they will become strangers in their own linguistic and cultural world, because linguistic identity provides people a sense of aspirations, safety and values. These things can assist breaking down obstacles and making a sense of trust between people. Many tribal people think that their identity is diminishing in education due to their present circumstances, because the curriculum even promotes learning languages that are not even used in the country any more, above their own language. As Shadhon (Tripura leader) explained:

Now in our country, 'Paali' and 'Sanskrit' languages are taught as subjects but none of our country speaks those languages. But Tripura language has no recognition though people of our community are using this language. (Shadhon: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

Paali and Sangskrit (or Sanskrit) are classical languages that share the same status as Latin in the Western world. These languages are no longer used in modern society in Bangladesh except for certain religious or cultural rites and ceremonies. Since the curriculum promotes Paali and Sangskrit as a subject even though these can be considered as 'dead' languages, many tribal people feel a certain sense of inferiority, as they do not feel acknowledged as valuable members of society, and that dead languages are more valued in the eyes of the policy makers. Moreover, where several countries of the world (like Canada, New Zealand, and Chile) are aware to save and revive indigenous languages there, tribal languages are unrecognised in Bangladesh yet

(Uddin, 2010). Without the recognition of tribal languages in education, the rights of tribal people are impossible at the national level. Generally, questions about their existence in the country cross their minds. Marma leader Raktim argued:

We are citizens of this country, voter of this country but we cannot use our language all over the country except our community. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

As citizens, tribal people have the right to education through their mother language, but they are not getting this facility in Bangladesh yet. Tribal people think themselves socially excluded in the country due to lack of recognition of tribal languages in learning. To ensure one's identity, it is necessary to value his/her language in schooling. Skutnabb-Kangas (2007) said that "one of the basic linguistic human rights of persons belonging to minorities is - or should be - to achieve high levels of bi- or multi-lingualism through education" (p. 137). If we think to make education more inclusive for tribal students, the use of their mother language should be recognised immediately. Otherwise, tribal people's identities would be faced with constraints and difficulties in Bangladesh.

5.1.4.3 Disjunctures between what Bangladesh as a country is not doing what it says it is doing

Bangladesh is a country which talks about the value of different groups but actually the reality is that it isn't. Bangladesh signed various agreements or charters on indigenous people, but it is not doing what it says it is doing. As Bodhi argued:

Though UNESCO says to recognise each language and for this, we celebrate International Mother Language Day each year. But the sad news is that in our country tribal languages are not valued formally along with Bangla. Chakma or Tripura, whatever

you say, we want all languages should be valued. The perfect valuation of the language is not possible without recognising these languages in the educational sector. I would like to say about national educational policy. That is - it is mentioned in the national educational system that tribal languages will be included in the curriculum. But the elaboration provided there for Bangla and English, is not provided for our language. For example – there is no elaboration of how many tribal languages will be included in the curriculum, which language will get priority and why etc. (Bodhi: Chakma leader, 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Three main points are present in the above mentioned data. Firstly, where the whole world is celebrating International Mother Language Day tribal languages are still ignored in Bangladesh. UNESCO declared 21st February as International Mother Language Day in 1997, and the member-countries of UNESCO celebrate this day every year (Chakma, 2002). The aim of this day is to promote and give recognition every language including indigenous and minority languages. Moreover, the Bangladesh Government signed many international conventions and initiatives to promote equity and equality in education such as the ILO Convention No 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, 1957; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965; and Dakar Declaration Education for All (EFA) by 2015 and sequential agreements (Durnnian, 2007). However, still the Bangladesh Government has not acted upon the policies, plans or strategies which were mentioned in the signed agreements to ensure the educational rights of tribal children.

Secondly, tribal people are realising that it is necessary to include their mother languages in education so that their languages will be valued. Like non-tribal students, tribal students have their own environment where they grow with their own lifestyles and customs, but they are

unable to find their lifestyles in school. When tribal students see that their teachers are talking in a different language and their languages are worthless in school, they keep themselves apart from classroom participation. Then, education creates panic to them. For this reason, tribal parents realise that the learning in mother tongue is important for their children.

Finally, the Bangladesh National Education Policy 2009 mentioned that tribal languages will be included, but it has not happened in practicality yet. As a result, tribal students who use their mother language in daily life feel "difficulty in understanding and internalizing the meaning of the lessons" (Kabir and Nath, 2005, p. 19).

5.2 Summary of This Chapter

Tribal students grow in an environment where they observe the differences of their home and school knowledges because of their different languages and cultures. Therefore, a substantial number of the tribal students struggle to adopt the school knowledges. Conversely, a few tribal students try to recover the problems that are created by the disjunctures between their home and school knowledges, and their advancement in learning is slow. The reason is that they have a lack of experiences and concepts in school knowledges for their different languages. Therefore, the tribal students who are deficient in school knowledges and languages do not become interested in learning and are prone to dropping out of the school. Therefore, it is clearly observed that the role of mother languages is significant for the students, especially for the tribal learners who are left behind by their Bangali counterparts.

Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion - 2

In this second chapter of findings and discussions, I discuss how the dominant languages become significant through the curriculum, and how the tribal languages are silenced and marginalised within the intended curriculum by drawing on the views of the participants, and analysing the general aims and objectives of the language curriculum document (NCTB, 1996). I believe that the findings and discussion show the perceptions of curriculum planners and community leaders about the role of mother languages in schooling. It is true that teachers are not always responsible for all subject contents and knowledges. For this reason, I need to analyse the curriculum document to understand the disjunctures between the intended and operational curriculum in relation to mother language learning for the tribal pupils. The findings show that curriculum is a political text (Pinar et al. 1995), and operates as a form of social control of knowledge (Pinar et al., 1995; Apple's, 1996; and Popkewitz, 1997) both at the level of the intended and the operational levels. The curriculum document shapes the understandings of learning and learners based on Bangla language and culture. Thus, the curriculum helps to reproduce social inequalities of between Bangla speakers and tribal speakers and provides a strong reason for valuing mother languages in tribal students' learning. Moreover, in this chapter, the findings provide an insight into the tribal students' schooling and what teachers, the tribal community, and curriculum policy makers valued in relation to the significance of mother language learning.

6.1 Disjunctures between Operational and Intended Curriculum in Relation to the Significance of Mother Language Learning

It is necessary to consider curriculum development from a range of lenses that are based on the students' needs. In the current education system, the tribal students have no scope for learning through their mother languages, and they have to learn Bangla to follow the national curriculum. The contents and instructions of the curriculum are based on the Bangla language, and Bangali culture. A large number of tribal students face problems in understanding the instructions and the contents. Even the teachers are mostly Bangali and they may not fully understand the tribal languages and cultures. The contents (story, poem, prose) of the textbooks that are prescribed by the curriculum are also unknown to the tribal students. As a consequence, they fail to involve themselves with the prevailing education system. This disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum about language learning stimulated me to explore how language learning is conceptualised and also how it happens in practice.

6.1.1 What the disjuncture between intended and operational curriculum looks like and how it happens

I now discuss how the disjunctures between intended and operational curriculum in relation to how tribal languages are envisaged from the participants' views and perceptions. In exploring different understandings of teachers, the community and curriculum developers about tribal languages learning, I will show how tribal languages are marginalised in curriculum documents. Most of the tribal children are disadvantaged by the education system that is based on Bangali nationalism and Bangla language. Additionally, the language curriculum and textbook do not

recognise tribal languages and cultures. Due to the non-recognition of tribal languages in the curriculum, the majority of tribal language users show a negative response to learning the mainstream languages. Therefore, the integration of tribal languages into the curriculum and mainstream of communication is essential for tribal students' better academic achievement and identity at the school arena.

According to the Bangladesh constitution (1972), every person has his basic rights in education, food, and health. However, the ethnic people of the country have not had the rights of their mother language in education yet. For the first time in the Bangladesh National Education Policy 2012, the ethnic languages are considered with importance. A separate subject will be introduced in the curriculum where information about all ethnic groups, their languages, cultures and trends are discussed so that 'tribal students will be interested in studies' (Rana, Curriculum Planner, 18.01.2011). This opportunity is basically for tribal students. As Rana, curriculum planner, explained:

We have started our curriculum development project. We are working for the development of curriculum for 6 standards to 12 standards, i.e. for the entire secondary level. We have suggested including this as an elective subject. The name of this subject is *Language and Culture of Ethnic People*. (Rana: 18.01.2011, face to face interview)

Curriculum planners are going to introduce this subject especially for tribes so that they can feel interested in education. As a consequence, the curriculum planners recommended a proposal in the NCTB meeting. However, when I talked with the community leaders, they shared their emotions about the present curriculum and education system. They told me that tribes do not agree with the decision at the central level. They do not want such a subject or textbook which carries only the information about their language and culture. They want their mother tongues to

be recognised in schooling with the mainstream so that their language and culture will be maintained.

Contrary to the views of tribal groups, curriculum developers think that there are a lot of problems in the development of mother tongue in education for Bangladesh's indigenous children. As curriculum developer Rana said:

We need time to make a systematic way to include languages in the curriculum, moreover teachers and books are also necessary to solve this problem. The work we do for a Bangla book- the same work we have to work on the book of tribal language too. It is very difficult. (Rana: 18.01.2011, face to face interview)

Curriculum developers think that it will be very difficult for them to include these tribal languages in the curriculum. Therefore, they are introducing all the tribal languages and cultures under a textbook at this moment. It will be impossible for curriculum planners to provide separate textbooks in diverse languages for tribal students because of having many minority languages. Moreover, it is a matter of time and cost to publish new books in different languages. In addition, there are a lot of problems when changing or reorganising the academic calendar. As Rana argued:

We have some limitations. Besides that, we have 180 working days for each subject in a year in school because there are some days specified for sports, annual vacations and exams. If a new subject is included in the curriculum we need to allot an hour in the class routine, to conduct exam for this subject, we need to give others leave and we need to take these things into account. (Rana: 18.01.2011, face to face interview)

It has been observed that this is the way the central level avoids their responsibilities towards the tribal languages. Thus, in the name of 'development', tribal students are being marginalised and excluded from mainstream education (Tegegn, 2009).

6.1.2 Why the disjuncture between intended and operational curriculum is a problem

In Bangladesh, there is no mentionable language policy. Nevertheless, the National Educational Policy has some rules and regulations regarding all the textbooks. Most of the people, who are related to the education sector, do not know that they have no National Language Policy, and they do not feel the need for it. Being a teacher educator of Bangla literature, I think this is unpleasant, because we are the only nation who sacrificed our lives for the recognition of the Bangla language on 21st February, 1952, and the International Mother Language Day is celebrated in regard to this day. It is an example of showing respect and honour to every mother language of the world. However, Bangladesh curriculum focuses only on Bangla, but does not taking any strategy to preserve or value the tribal languages in learning. As Raktim noted:

This is very sad to say that, the world is celebrating International Mother Language day but our children are not getting chance to study in their language. (Raktim: Marma Leader, 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

The sole authority of Bangla in the curriculum makes tribal people depressed. The disregard of mother language in learning is a very negative warning for tribal people, and "shameful to the people of this country, who sacrificed lives in long struggle to attain recognition of mother language" (Ela, 2009, p.26), because of the lack of attention at the central level, tribal languages may become extinct.

Tribal people see that the intended curriculum deliberately articulates the Bangla language and Bangali nationalism, though other language speakers are also a part of the country. The three tribal community leaders thought that it is needed for policy developers to include tribal languages to make tribal learners competitive in present schooling as well as maintaining their own cultural identity and heritage.

6.1.3 Effects: short term effects of the disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning

Several short term effects of this disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum in relation to mother language learning influence tribal students. I discuss about this in the paragraphs below:

6.1.3.1 Tribal languages and students are seen as having deficits

Many teachers seem to think that tribal students are stupid, because they cannot accept education properly. One's learning depends on his/her capacity of understanding and knowing. As home and school languages of tribal students are different, they cannot understand or know the subject content in Bangla. As Promi explained:

Naturally, they have some deficiency due to this language problem. (Promi: Head Teacher, 10.01.2011, face to face interview)

They are left behind non-tribal students not only in education but also other academic activities such as cultural competitions. From Promi's (Head Teacher) perspective, when a national competition is held such as debating competition or essay writing competition, then tribal

students do not show any interest to participate in those competitions. More than half of the students in that school are ethnic. However, when they 'do not participate' in the competition then the teachers face problems, because 'credit' of these regional or zonal competitions go to other schools and it is a question for the 'reputation of school'. Tribal students usually try to stay away from everything at school. On the other hand, Bangali students do not face this language problem in comparison to tribal students and they are advanced in studies and other sectors as well. According to Harrison (2008), many scholarly writings about indigenous education show that:

Indigenous students as being behind the non-indigenous kids at school ----- creates a non-Indigenous standard to which Indigenous students are compared. This is a way of maintaining power over others: to think about them as deficient, as not as well off as you (p. 9).

Students from three tribal groups shared that if they 'could study in their languages', they might not feel themselves 'isolated'. They often face obstacles in learning, because they still could not find out the 'difference between Bangla alphabet ÒmÓ(s) and ÒkÓ(sh) or ÒhÓ(j) and ÒRÓ(g)' (focus groups discussion, 08.01.2011). As a result, they often get confused about their level of confidence, and they keep themselves introverted in the classroom. However, they are perceived as deficient and poor learners.

6.1.3.2 Language and Power

Since most of the tribal people live in the more remote regions of Bangladesh, their children are unable to achieve the four skills of learning such as listening, writing, reading, and speaking.

They fail to follow or practice the teacher's instructions in the classroom properly. This in turn leads to problems in tribal students' schooling, and their attendance rate. However, generally the attendance of Bangali students in school is higher than the tribal students, and they follow teacher's instruction properly. From common sense and my professional experience, I would like to say that students who are interested in learning would be more likely to achieve academic outcomes at school, and this is true for non-tribal students. The inability of the majority of tribal students in learning makes them weaker than non-tribal students. They are forced to choose to participate in the classroom with others. As Bodhi (Chakma leader) noted:

Our Chakma as well as tribal students are facing more problems in answering creative question, because, we can speak or write easily in our own language which is not perfectly possible in another language. And to answer creative question you must have efficiency in Bangla. In this case, it is really problematic to answer creative question for our children. (Bodhi: 12.01.2011, face to face interview)

Tribal students also agreed that they were trying to adopt Bangla and English though they faced problems in these languages. Actually, they think of them, more or less, as an impediment to pass in their examinations. Therefore, they put more endeavour in succeeding in the examinations rather than achieving the skills of mainstream languages.

6.1.4 Long term effects of the disjuncture between operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning

The discussions and processes made at policy level and what is happening in practice are totally different. This disjuncture between the intended and operational curriculum is actively disadvantaging for the tribal students in terms of their mother language learning.

As the tribal students have no avenue to study through their own languages, they cannot show their achievements at school. Moreover, the awareness of tribal parents is lesser in hill track areas than in city areas. Regardless of this, when tribal parents send their children to the school, the students face language problems and cannot be attentive to studies. Most of them are habituated to cramming lessons so that they can pass the examinations, but cramming cannot make them really knowledgeable. However, those who are unable to pass the examinations drop out of school and engage in other work. Sometimes, they become involved in various crimes which affect individuals and the society as well. As Raktim (Marma leader) indicated:

They are not farming in the field or helping their fathers, but they are engaging themselves into crime. (Raktim: 11.01.2011, face to face interview)

In this way, they are not becoming assets to society or their families, because they do not have literacy, and they are moving forward to darkness. As a result, the education system is failing the tribal students.

6.2 Analysis of Language Curriculum of Bangladesh

The findings of my research show that both at the level of the intended and operational levels, the dominance, power and politics are functioning through the curriculum, I analyse the curriculum document from the concept of poststructuralism to understand the curriculum as a political text (Pinar et al. 1995), and the ways in which the document perpetuates the dominance of Bangla and English languages (Popkewitz, 1997; Apple, 1996; Uddin, 2010; Odora-Hoppers, 2010). The silence in relation to tribal languages in the curriculum document show how the minority languages are undermined by the curriculum and emphasises why one's mother

language is important for their learning. My findings also show that there are tensions between the curriculum document and tribal learners, because they face this situation at school while they study in Bangla or English. Moreover, mainstream languages and the textbooks do not seem 'warm' enough for the tribal learners. The minority children are usually deprived of proper learning by the national education system, because it does not focus on the tribal students' educational needs in terms of their languages and cultures. The analysis of the curriculum document helps me to explore the role of tribal languages in schooling. The language curriculum as the main source of document analysis helps me to explore the politics of languages and the silences of tribal languages, and this is the main concern of my research question.

In this section, I present the findings collected from document analysis of the Bangladesh secondary school curriculum. The findings have been analysed using thematic analysis to illustrate how tribal students are seen as incompetent in the language curriculum and how knowledge and power is functioning through curriculum that promotes the dominance of Bangla. I noted in the curriculum that national identity and language are closely interlinked with each other. Therefore, tribal languages are silenced in the curriculum. The goal of this thematic analysis is to look at what exists in the curriculum document and what happens to tribal students' experience of education in practice. The reason is that if we see the operational curriculum as the lives of tribal people, we might see that there is a slippage between them and the intended curriculum.

6.2.1 The silence of tribal languages in the curriculum document

According to the Bangla language curriculum, a student can be taught the standardised form of Bangla language and its variety that help them to listen, speak, read and write properly in the secondary level (National Curriculum and Textbook Board - NCTB, 1996). The Bangla curriculum also mentions:

Students will learn about the resources, structure and connotations of words and sentences of Bengali language and literature and will be familiar with the lives and literary styles of renowned writers of Bangla (NCTB, 1996, p. 11).

It is easy for non-tribal students in comparison to tribal students to express their feelings, emotions and creativity in a coherent way and their acquired knowledge will stimulate the enhancement of values. On the contrary, tribal students face the problem in learning to express their feelings or to acquire proper knowledge, because their language and culture is different to Bangla. Harrison (2008) argued that "indigenous and non-indigenous students usually have different views of the world, and therefore think differently about school work" (p. 11). Generally the tribal students are unable to get a good idea about the structure and internal order of Bangla language, and therefore are unable to use Bangla language properly in all walks of life like their Bangali counterparts.

According to Mazzei (2007), what is absent or silent is as important as what is in present in language. The contents of the Bangla language curriculum, such as Language Movement/ International Mother Language Day, National Heroic Deeds, History of Bangla Language, Organisation of Bangla Language, and Literature of Bangladesh reflect the Bangla users' culture and identity. In these essays, students find only the artistic image of Bangla language and

Bangali culture. Tribal cultures are overlooked in these works though tribal people are also citizens of Bangladesh. The following quotes show how the principles of curriculum support only Bangla language, Bangali culture, identity and social values.

The Bangla language curriculum gives reasons for studying Bangla language. (NCTB, 1996, p. 89)

Students could develop clear concepts about the internal order of the Bangla language by organising and developing his knowledge and skills further. (NCTB, 1996, p. 90)

Students of this level will learn about the resources, structure and connotations of words and sentences of Bangla language and literature and will be familiar with the lives and literary styles of renowned writers of Bangla. (NCTB, 1996, p. 96)

The principles of the curriculum reflect only the values of Bangla language, and there is no scope for valuing other languages. In the present curriculum, minority languages are silenced because of the supremacy of Bangla. Uddin (2010) argued that Bangla is considered in the curriculum as the tool of identifying Bangali culture and nationalism, because "it is very close to the hearts of Bangladeshis" (p. 32). The contents of the curriculum do not reflect tribal students' cultures, identities, and lifestyles. Tribal students are unable to find out their ethnic history, social livelihood, and the element of their culture in the Bangla language curriculum. For this reason, the relationship between school and tribal students is not closely connected, and thus they feel no interest in education (Chakma, 2002). With the help of meanings, subjectivity, and power relations of the language curriculum, most of the tribal students find themselves increasingly excluded from education.

6.2.2 The dominance of Bangla in the Bangla language curriculum document

After the Liberation War in 1971, education in Bangladesh has been used as a vehicle for promoting Bangali nationalism to build political legitimacy through the curriculum. The curriculum is written in a way which asserts the dominance of Bangla. For example, the ideological goal of the language curriculum is to know about literature, poetry, and history to express patriotism and nationalism in relation to the Bangla language. Pinar et al. (1995) and Apple (1996) stated that curriculum is not a neutral thing, and it is about power and politics where the knowledge of the power holders is considered worth knowing. In the context of Bangladesh, the power holders are the Bangla language users who exercise their power to continue intellectual domination and hegemony through curriculum. This hegemony functions through curriculum to promote certain rules and regulations of knowledge over others who are minorities or who have less power. As the curriculum describes:

The aim of the present curriculum is to encourage in patriotism and humanism to the students. (NCTB, 1996, p. 7)

When the curriculum emphasises only Bangla, and tribal languages and cultures are ignored, how could it be possible for the tribal students feel patriotism and humanism. From their very childhood they learn Bangla to follow the national curriculum and textbooks. They never see that curriculum and textbooks are equitable for them. Moreover, the tribal learners neither understand the contents of the lessons nor the teachers' instructions because of their lacking in Bangla (Uddin, 2010). Therefore, the majority of the tribal students do not respect the curriculum and textbooks. The importance of Bangla language and culture for the students is described in the curriculum document:

To develop future citizens of Bangladesh, curriculum presents such contents that the students can get an awareness of the proud heritage, rich cultural diversity and tradition of religious tolerance for which Bangladesh is renowned. (NCTB, 1996, p. 12)

The dominant group uses techniques and ideologies to shape the human awareness through the curriculum. The Bangla language curriculum, for students of grade nine, has the following specific objectives: Intellectual, Moral and spiritual, Communicative, Aesthetic, and Personal. All objectives emphasise the respect and affection for the Bangla language. The people in power include subject contents based on these objectives, such as Motherland and Nationalism to express patriotism and nationalism; People and Nature of Bangladesh to express about the affection for people and nature of the country; Culture and Traditions to be respectful of the culture of Bangladesh; Language and Literature to demonstrate the style and beauty of Bangla literature; and Patriotism to be inspired by patriotism (NCTB, 1996). The contents of the curriculum showed that the Bangla national identity and Bangla language are strongly related to each other. Uddin (2010) clearly stated that "Bangali culture and Bangla language-based nationalism of Bangladesh has been applied to achieve national integration in its very unitary nature where non-Bangali culture, language and identity was not integrated" (p. 26). In the aims and objectives of mother language learning, the language curriculum stated:

The curriculum of Bangla language, for students of grades nine and ten helps to enhance attraction to the style and beauty of Bengali language and literature so that learners can speak, read, and write in Bangla promptly. (NCTB, 1996, p. 12)

In this way the curriculum disregards the indigenous languages and the needs of minority children, and continues the domination of Bangla within the education system. The lack of appreciation of the minority languages within the curriculum often creates poor academic achievement in tribal students.

As a consequence, indigenous languages are maltreated as Bangla and English languages are more powerful to indigenous languages in the schooling context. As this situation continues, indigenous students may lose their own languages, cultures and identities. I can express this situation through a metaphor of 'cultural-identity crisis'. This 'cultural-identity crisis' happens in Bangladesh when indigenous languages are undermined through the curriculum. The dominance of Bangla and English within the Bangladesh secondary language curriculum has helped to maintain the erosion of value of indigenous languages and cultures. As a result, indigenous students will be disconnected from their own languages, cultures, and identities. So, it is necessary for us to rethink our language curriculum in terms of diversity.

6.2.3 The politics of Bangla in the Bangla language curriculum document

Bangla and English are considered as worth knowing in the secondary language curriculum, because these two languages are the currency of good jobs and high social status. Students have access to State-run schools that teach the curriculum in Bangla and English, because these languages are spoken by the majority people. These languages take on a major role to influence on the minority language users to shape their social aspirations and ideologies. Moreover, tribal students are challenged by conflicting home and school languages and face discrimination that limit their capability for success. Bangla and English play an important role in the political, social and educational structures of Bangladesh, because these languages are considered as dominant and legitimate in the curriculum. This narrow view of curriculum strategy marginalises the tribal students' learning and creates obstacles for them to make themselves as critical future citizens of Bangladesh. Thus, the curriculum creates social inequality, and this inequality lead to

more and more tribal students dropping out from school. As the Bangla language curriculum states:

One of the major objectives of the Bangla language curriculum for the ninth grade is to develop a scientific approach through language and literature and acquire fresh knowledge and skill (NCTB, 1996, p. 89).

This objective emphasises only Bangla language, and disregards the other indigenous languages that exist in Bangladesh. Moreover, this objective does not reflect how the tribal students will expand scientific approach of language and achieve new knowledge and skill through Bangla language since their languages are different. In the same way:

The English language curriculum focuses only on the purposes of learning English to achieve language skills within a learner-centred environment (NCTB, 1996, p. 136).

However, the question arose in my mind that 'is it possible for one to get skilled in other languages without using their mother tongue?' Both Bangla and English languages are benefited through the language curriculum. These two curricula talk about 'language skill', but it is not mentioned in those curricula about how tribal students acquire 'language skill' without their mother languages. Indigenous students have to learn Bangla and English, because the language curriculum does not recognise their languages. It can be observed that this kind of hidden politics of language curriculum devalues the indigenous languages in learning, and the politics behind this situation is to destroy tribal heritage and culture through linguistic oppression. This is similar to colonialism. According to Rahman et al. (2010), education is such a component that "plays a critical role in fostering basic intellectual abilities, expanding further educational opportunities that are vital to success in a world where power is closely linked with knowledge" (p.114). As mentioned in the curriculum:

The language of classroom management, such as any instructions that teachers give to their students, should be either in Bangla or in English. (NCTB, 1996, p. 150)

Through the above mentioned data, it is clearly observed that the Bangladesh secondary curriculum is not neutral, and it reflects the power and politics of mainstream languages in relation to value tribal languages. Apple (1996), Pinar et al. (1995), and Popkewitz (1997) stated that curriculum is about power and politics which lead to the social inequality at school between majority and minority language users.

The other major aims of the Bangla language curriculum are to acquire the ability to apply Bangla language in different areas of practical life; to develop respect and affection for Bangla language; to be proud of Bangla language and literature; to develop personality by acquiring basic skills and expansion of Bangla language; to express feelings, emotion and creative skills beautifully and in an organised way; to learn about the strength, scope and grammatical rules and methods of Bangla language; and so on (NCTB, 1996). All of these objectives focus on the perspectives and values of Bangla language speakers. Similarly, the objectives of the English language curriculum are to ensure that students enjoy acquiring English and are able to use it effectively in real life situations outside the classroom; to initiate and participate in conversations at an appropriately advanced level on a variety of topics; to express opinions clearly and logically through English; to speak intelligibly and fluently in clear, correct English appropriate to the situation; to practice spoken English language within meaningful contexts; to tell narrative and descriptive stories and talk interestingly about themselves in English; and so on (NCTB, 1996). These objectives represent the importance of global English language in schooling, because the influence of English is so great that proficiency in English is expected by those in positions of responsibility in Bangladesh. Both Bangla and English languages are ensuring their

continued domination, linguistic privilege and hierarchic position by these two curricula. Power and politics of Bangla and English languages are expressed indirectly through these curricula. Educational meaning-making processes are also promoted by these curricula, and these processes are privileging to the dominants. Therefore, educational social justice is disrupted, and issues of diversity are being questioned in the curriculum. As the curriculum is a moderator of the education system of a country, it prolongs the rules and regulations favouring the dominant group, and this scenario of the dominance is more widely embodied in society (Popkewitz, 1997).

Through the language curriculum, dominant languages are creating and maintaining class differences in schooling and society as well. Due to this, social and economic aspirations have potential impact on ensuring Bangla and English dominance, because those who are proficient in these languages can get better opportunity and influential social position than the others. This "subtle but unmistakable effect of prestige" (Banu & Sussex, 2001, p. 142) exists in Bangladesh because of a long colonial legacy. The present education system of Bangladesh is more or less a legacy from the British (Ali, 1986 cited in Rahman et al., 2010). In addition, demand for people to work in the government services, business and the trades who are proficient in Bangla and English have ironically ensured the continuation of an Anglo-American hegemony in Bangladesh (Imam, 2005). Besides this, another stream of schooling has rapidly grown in the metropolitan areas of Bangladesh based on the use of English as the medium of instruction and following the British curriculum (Rahman et al. 2010). Thus, Bangla and English have become hegemonic languages in the Bangladesh education system, and tribal languages have no opportunity to get recognition. Hegemony of Bangla users "referred to a process of domination

whereby the ruling class is said to exercise political control through its intellectual and moral leadership over allied classes" (Gramsci, 1975 as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 250).

Due to Bangla and English language priority in the curriculum, a large number of indigenous students are left behind in schooling. Although language curriculum talks about diversity, it only narrowly reflects this. As the Bangla curriculum stipulates:

To select the contents of the lessons, it is necessary to consider all students' learning capacity and class differences. (NCTB, 1996, p. 96)

To use the knowledge of Bangla language in every steps of life of students, it should necessary for language teachers to consider the values and identity of all students in the classroom. (NCTB, 1996, p. 122)

Namely, the students should start from what is familiar to them their own environment and experience before going on to learn other things. (NCTB, 1996, p. 140)

Although it is mentioned in the curriculum that it organises education according to the needs of all students, the tribal dialect users are deprived of the facilities of proper learning due to their language barrier. Moreover, the majority of tribal students face different problems in learning, because the linguistic hierarchisation of mainstream languages promotes the inequality of educational rights. I observe that Bangla and English are considered as dominant and legitimate in the secondary language curriculum, and indigenous languages are relatively worthless. The dominant languages have ironically ensured the continuation of hegemonic and hierarchic character to shift indigenous languages in Bangladesh. Thus, 'cultural-identity crisis' is created by the language curriculum in classrooms. Therefore, it is necessary to take action immediately

to change this situation by reforming the language curriculum. If the language curriculum will be equitable and culturally responsive, tribal students along with non-tribal students will be equally participating in schooling.

6.3 Summary of This Chapter

The findings of this chapter revealed that the majority of tribal students who are incapable to adopt Bangla properly face various problems such as facing difficulties in understanding the contents of the lessons, getting low scores in academic examinations, feeling shy to participate in classroom activities, contributing to an increase in the dropout rates, and feeling inferiority of identity at school. Moreover, the findings again show that a substantial number of tribal children are excluded from the school because of their lack in Bangla and English languages. Last but not least, the findings of my research also postulate that the significance of mother languages as a medium of instruction in the classroom would help the minority students understand the contents of the textbooks and teachers' instruction. Thus, the preceding arguments formulate the answers of my research question as to why mother languages, especially tribal languages are important for tribal students' learning. As the tribal people live in the country along with Bangali, they have the right to get the opportunity to study in their own languages and cultures. If tribal languages are included in the curriculum, the elements of tribal languages and literature may help the Bangali students to know other languages along with the mainstream languages. Moreover, it will help to develop the knowledge of language for both Bangali and the tribes.

Chapter 7: Summary and Recommendations

7.1 Summary

The findings of my study show that tribal students are disadvantaged in Bangladesh at the levels of both the intended and operational curriculum through the dominance of Bangla and English, and that this affects their participation and levels of academic achievement. The main findings of my research are firstly a disjuncture between home knowledges and school knowledges of tribal students, and secondly a disjuncture between the operational and intended curriculum in relation to the significance of mother language learning. In addition, I have found other findings from the curriculum document analysis such as the intended curriculum operates as a political text where Bangla and English are privileged and considered as the most worth knowing, and tribal languages are disregarded. It is exposed from the findings that both at the intended and operational level of the curriculum, the secondary school language curriculum document is fully influenced by Bangali nationalism and Bangla culture, and it reflects the power, politics and worldviews of the dominant group. Classroom instruction and contents of the curriculum document and textbooks are mostly in Bangla and a little bit of English where tribal students use their mother languages in their daily life. They share everything within their family and their own community through their mother languages, but they have to study either in Bangla or in English. Tribal students' ideas and worldviews construct through the dominant languages which is called by Popkewitz (1997) as the *linguistic turn*. As a result, generally they have deficiency in education. Due to the disregard of indigenous languages in the curriculum document and

textbooks, tribal students do not feel interest in schooling. Moreover, they often get poor academic results in learning, and due to this most of them do not continue schooling.

Again, the findings of my research show that at the operational level, the secondary schools do not seem friendly enough for the indigenous students' learning achievement. The cause is that most of the teachers are Bangla users and they do not know indigenous languages. A general weakness in dominant languages (Bangla and English) was found affecting tribal students' learning performance in schooling. Therefore, the majority of the tribal students feel difficulty in understanding and internalising the meaning of the lessons. In absence of tribal language instruction in both the intended and operational curriculum, tribal students generally found trouble in answering the questions in examinations. Comparatively, Bangali students usually get an extra benefit in this case. Tribal students do not involve themselves in classroom activities and quality education is not achieved for their life success. It is also reveal from my findings that the role of mother language is important in identity and learning for tribal students, and needs to be encouraged and valued both in policy and practice for the educational achievement of tribal language students to improve.

The struggles of tribal students in learning provide me to think about some recommendations on curriculum development to maintain their mother languages in the curriculum.

7.2 Recommendations

I propose here several recommendations to relevant parties such as curriculum developers, education policy makers, and teachers on the basis of the findings of this study. I suggest that if

the National Educational Policy and implementation strategies within the national system incorporate indigenous languages in education, then indigenous students would be better positioned to succeed and to contribute to the educational, economic and political development of Bangladesh. I found inspiration from the example of Maori education in New Zealand, because Maori language takes a vital role in education now for linking language and cultural education together, and giving priority to that which they see as setting examples through action. Therefore, it is not a big wish to incorporate the indigenous languages in education as the main priority in the Bangladesh National Education Policy. If the Bangladesh education policies can explicitly value tribal language education, it can provide a context to encourage tribal students and their families and communities and indeed the wider Bangladeshi society to value tribal groups' culture, traditional lifestyles and identities. In this way, the tribal people of Bangladesh can think themselves as part of the development of the country and culture. Moreover, this attempt can lead to a positive result for Bangladesh's mainstream educational system, because mainstream students will have the opportunity to know indigenous literature and culture.

The findings of my research show that tribal students usually fail to follow or practice their teacher's instructions in the classroom. Moreover, tribal students often face difficulties in learning, because they could not understand the contents of the lessons. Therefore, I propose here another recommendation for educational practices at the operational level based on my findings. Tribal children should be taught at school in Bangla and their own languages like India and New Zealand in terms of tribal language recognition in education though the contexts are different. This would help diminish the deficiency in learning and the dropout rates of tribal students in Bangladesh. As Lotz (2004) argued:

As part of a different pedagogy involving more playful and appealing teaching methods, the urgent need for additional textbooks in tribal or minority mother tongues has long been recognised, in order to relate the core curriculum with the environment and the cultural context of the children. (p. 132)

As a result, tribal languages should be incorporated in the curriculum and textbooks by the education policy makers, because school teachers will not teach anything that is not mentioned in the curriculum and textbooks. Moreover, teachers who are skilled in these tribal languages should be appointed, and student must be taught affably, because teachers who are only Bangla users cannot teach in the tribal languages. Besides, a new language means it has some varieties. Every language has its own art and beauty. If tribal language would be included in our curriculum, then Bangali students will know and learn about a new language and culture. Moreover, tribal students will get the chance to practice their mother tongue in education. Furthermore, they will feel proud that their language is recognised in their academic life, and in my mind, they will be more interested and attentive in achieving education.

Further research studies about the importance of mother languages in education would be useful for the tribal students. In recognising the role of tribal languages in education, another area of research could engage an investigation into how schools and teachers could afford educational support for the tribal students who are unable to understand the contents of the lessons in Bangla or English. Moreover, further research could examine the barriers of tribal students' learning in schooling and ways to improve this situation based on my research findings. This is because it would be important to explore why tribal students lag behind and what would be the solutions to support the tribal children to learn fluently in the mainstream languages.

7.3 My Undertakings

As a teacher educator and responsible citizen of Bangladesh, I take with me a clear idea of the role of mother languages in schooling for tribal learners. I hope the curriculum developers and education policy makers will agree to take necessary action to incorporate minority languages into the curriculum. I know it is impossible for the curriculum developers to include all tribal languages into the present education system due to appropriate scope, time, cost and resource, but we have to try to do our level best under the circumstances. I will encourage the policy makers to value some major minority languages in education as a start. I will also encourage secondary school teachers to take tribal students' learning responsibilities as needs-based rather than a rights-based. During the interview, I observed that participants of this research realised the importance of mother language in learning, and they were sympathetic and concerned for tribal students. Therefore, it would be easier for me to encourage teachers and policy makers for adding indigenous languages in the curriculum.

7.4 Finally....

As a language teacher and teacher educator in Bangladesh, I saw how indigenous languages are devalued and marginalised in education. The Bangladesh secondary language curriculum does not focus on indigenous languages. The mainstream educational system promotes decolonisation of indigenous language in schooling. To change this situation, we need to think how language curriculum can be more equitable for all students, especially tribal students who are facing problems in learning. If we want tribal students' equal participation in education, the curriculum should be reorganised in such a way that reflects indigenous languages, cultures and identities.

While we begin to talk about education being equitable, we need to understand, in the name of enlightenment, how indigenous students and their world views are maltreated by the dominants' assimilation strategies in the educational context. We also need to understand the dynamics of power relations and politics that exist in schooling through the language curriculum so that the education should be responsive for diverse students. Moreover, language represents people's culture and identity.

In India, several minority languages have been recognised in learning, and those minority language users are enjoying the facilities of mother tongue learning. The Indian Government and people are thinking and researching to increase value in other indigenous languages in education as well. In New Zealand, Maori education is successful not only because of the Treaty of Waitangi but also because Maori language and culture is valued in schooling by the educational policy. Therefore, indigenous students of New Zealand (Maori students) have a native-language environment in school that enables them to explore their own lifestyle and culture. Following the example of these two countries, the curriculum developers and education policy makers should take the necessary steps to recognise the indigenous languages and cultures in Bangladesh.

Supervision

Dr Baljit Kaur supervised me as a principal supervisor from June 2010 to November 2010, and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan took charge as a principal supervisor for rest of the period (from November 2010 to June 2011). Dr Sylvie Gagnon supervised me as a co-supervisor during the whole investigation.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval from the College Of Education Ethical Clearance Committee

Human Ethics Committee
Tel: +64 3 364 2241, Fax: +64 3 364 2856, Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz



Ref: 2010/73/ERHEC

27 October 2010

Niger Sultana
8/43 Ilam Apartments
PO Box 6362
CHRISTCHURCH 8442

Dear Niger

Thank you for providing the revised documents in support of your application to the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. I am very pleased to inform you that your research proposal "Indigenous languages in the secondary curriculum in Bangladesh: A study in Khagrachari District" has been granted ethical approval.

Please note that should circumstances relevant to this current application change you are required to reapply for ethical approval.

If you have any questions regarding this approval please let me know.

We wish you well for your research.

Yours sincerely


PP Nicola Surtees
Chair
Educational Research HEC

"Please note that Ethical Approval relates only to the ethical elements of the relationship between the researcher, research participants and other stakeholders. The granting of approval or clearance by the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee should not be interpreted as comment on the methodology, legality, value or any other matters relating to this research."

University of Canterbury Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand. www.canterbury.ac.nz

Appendix B: Ethical Approval from Bangladesh

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
Shikkha Bhaban, Dhaka-1000

The Chair
Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC)
University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Subject: Permission for the Bangladeshi Teacher Educators studying for Master of Education at the University of Canterbury to conduct research on Bangladesh Education.

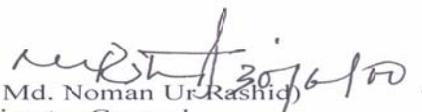
Dear Sir/Madam

The following 14 Bangladeshi Teacher Educators studying Master of Education at the University of Canterbury are hereby given permission to conduct research in the education sector of Bangladesh as a part of their Master of Education program.

Sl.No	Name and Designation
1	Mollah Mohammed Haroon- Ar-Rasheed, OSD (Lecturer, English), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
2	Tania Afreen Khan, OSD (Lecturer, Guidance & Counselling), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
3	Niger Sultana, OSD (Lecturer, Bangla), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
4	Md. Ariful Haq Kabir (Lecturer, Sociology), IER, Dhaka University (on Education Leave)
5	Mohammad Ali, OSD (Assistant Professor, English), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
6	Md. Ahasanul Arefin Chowdhury, OSD (Lecturer, Education), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
7	Md. Safayet Alam, OSD (Assistant Professor, Physics), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
8	Nazma Purvin, OSD (Lecturer, Mental Hygiene), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
9	Muhammed Mahbubur Rahman, OSD (Lecturer, Education), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
10	Abu Nayeem Mohammad Salauddin (Lecturer, Educational Administration), , IER, Dhaka University (on Education Leave)
11	Ranji: Podder, OSD (Assistant Professor, English), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
12	Sanjoy Kumar Mazumder, OSD (Lecturer, English), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
13	Mst. Shailla Banu, OSD (Lecturer, Physics), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh
14	Sheikh Mohammad Ali, OSD (Lecturer, Education), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh

It will be ensured that the researchers have their consent of participation before they start their research; guarantee confidentiality of data and individuals; avoid unnecessary deception; pose no risk to any participants; and their behaviour consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi obligations.

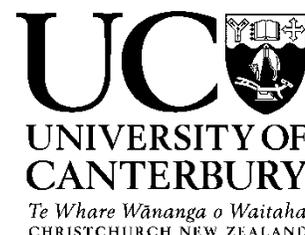
If any complications arise at any stage of the research, the ERHEC is advised to contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email:nazrul@tqi-sep.org).


(Professor Md. Noman Ur Rashid)
Director General
Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
Shikkha Bhaban. Dhaka-1000

Appendix C: Letter of Information to the Head teacher

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the Principal/Head Teacher

Dear Sir/Madam

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups (Chakma, Marma, and Tripura); and curriculum

planner from central level (National Curriculum and Text Book Board) about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to invite your school to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I would like to visit in your school for 5-7 days.
- During my visit, I would like to interview you and your teacher(s) who teach Bangla language in your school to know the perceptions about the value of indigenous language and its relevance in education sector in Bangladesh. The individual interview with you and with the teacher(s) will take approximately 40-50 minutes.
- I would like to go to the grade nine to observe classroom interactions. I will conduct three focus groups with the students of three tribal groups for around 20-30 minutes each.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with you and the other participants of your school to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

I would like to work in your school, because it is a leading school in Khagrachari district, having tribal and non-tribal students, and it is being diverse in many respects.

I would like to record your interview and transcribe it, and then I will give you a copy of the written transcript of the interview so that you will be able to edit anything as needed.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree that your school will participate, then any of the participants will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to you.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional journal. I will ensure the anonymity of all participants and school involved in the study and in all reports and publications of the findings. You will receive a report on the study and all other participants will also receive a report on the study if they wish to.

All data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any questions about the research process at any stage, please contact me (details above). If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree for your school to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____
(Date).

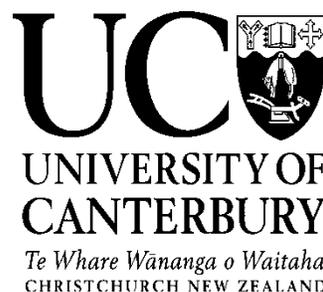
With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix D: Consent Form for Head Teacher

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Head Teacher

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I understand what will be required of me and teacher(s) and students at my school, and I agree that we will take part.

I understand that my participation in this study and that of any teachers and students at my school is voluntary and that any of us may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions provided by me and other participants along with the name of this institution will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify any of the participants or my school.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study, and that participating teachers and students will also receive a copy of this report if they wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree that I, the teachers and students from my school may be approached by Niger Sultana in regard to participating in this research project.

I agree to be interviewed for this research project. The transcript will be given me for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

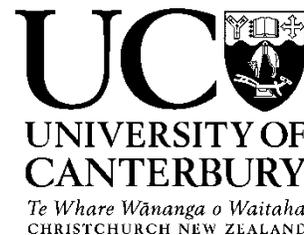
Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix E: Letter of Information to the Teacher

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the Teacher

Dear Sir/Madam

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups - Chakma, Marma, and Tripura; and curriculum planner from National Curriculum and Text Book Board about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I will observe classroom interactions in grade nine during your teaching in Bangla classroom.
- I will interview you individually at a mutually convenient time to know your views about the value of indigenous language and its relevance in education sector in Bangladesh. The interview will take approximately 40-50 minutes.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with you to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

I would like to record your interview and transcribe it, and then I will give you a copy of the written transcript of the interview so that you will be able to edit anything as needed.

I am interested in working with you because you are a teacher of a leading co-education school in Khagrachari district as well as you have expertise in teaching Bangla (Language). I hope that the national and international teaching communities will be benefited from your experiences.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to you.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional

journal. I will ensure your anonymity and that of your school in all reports and publications of the findings. You will receive a report on the study if you wish to.

All data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any queries about the research process, you can contact me (details are given above).

If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

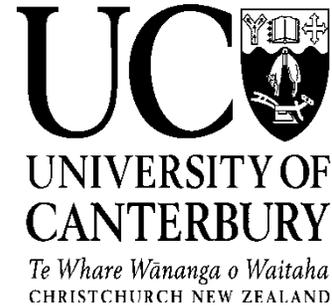
With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix F: Consent Form for Teacher

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Teacher

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I understand what will be required of me, and I agree that I will take part.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I will provide along with the name of this institution will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me or my school.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study if I wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree that I, the teachers and students from my school may be approached by Niger Sultana in regard to participating in this research project.

I agree to be interviewed for this research project. The transcript will be given me for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix G: Letter of Information to the Tribal Students

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the Participating Tribal Students

Dear Participant

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups - Chakma, Marma, and Tripura; and curriculum planner from National Curriculum and Text Book Board about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I will observe you during classroom interactions.
- I will interview you collectively (focus groups) at a mutually suitable time to know your views about the value of indigenous languages. The interview will take approximately 20-30 minutes.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with you to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

I would like to record your interview and transcribe it, and then I will give you a copy of the written transcript of the interview so that you will be able to edit anything as needed.

I am interested in working with you because you are the student of grade nine of a leading co-education school in Khagrachari district and have the skill and capacity to share your views about the importance of mother language in learning. I hope that the national and international student communities will be benefited from your experiences.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to you.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional

journal. I will ensure your anonymity and that of your school in all reports and publications of the findings. You will receive a report on the study if you wish to.

All data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any queries about the research process, you can contact me (details are given above).

If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

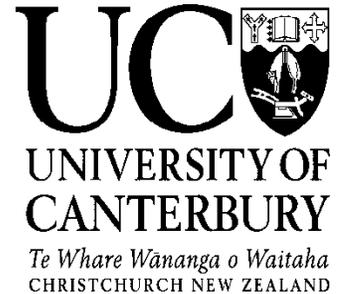
I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix H: Consent Form for Students

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309
Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Students

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I understand what will be required of me, and I agree that I will take part.

I understand that my participation (collectively) in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I will provide along with the name of this institution will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me or my school.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study if I wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to be interviewed for this research project. The transcript will be given me for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix I: Letter of Information to the Tribal parents

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the Parents/Caregivers

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups - Chakma, Marma, and Tripura; and curriculum planner from National Curriculum and Text Book Board about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to get your permission for your child to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I will observe them during classroom interactions.
- I would like to inform you that I will conduct focus groups with your child to know their ideas about the importance of mother language as instructional language in schooling. The focus groups will take approximately 20-30 minutes.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with your child to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. After I have transcribed the interviews, I will send it to your child so that they can be able to edit it as needed.

I am interested in working with your child because they are the student of grade nine of a leading co-education school in Khagrachari district and be able to give their ideas about the importance of mother language in learning. I hope that the national and international student communities will be benefited from their experiences.

Please note that participation of your child in this study is voluntary. If you agree about your child's participation, you will have the right to withdraw him/her from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to your child.

I will take particular care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. I will also take care to ensure your child's anonymity in publications of the findings. All the data will

be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional journal. You will receive a report on the study if you wish to.

If you have any queries about the research process, you can contact me (details are given above).

If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree about the participation of your child in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

I am looking forward to working with your child and thank you in advance for your contributions.

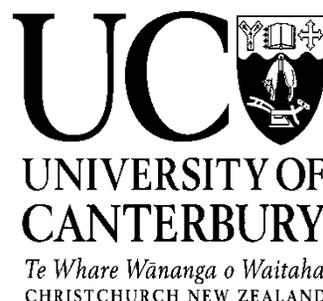
With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix J: Consent Form for Tribal parents

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Parents/Guardians

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I have understood the information given to me regarding the research project and the expected roles of my child.

I understand that my child's participation in this study is voluntary and that my child may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions provided by my child along with the name of his institution will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me, my child or his/her school.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study if I wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree to my child's participation in this research project. I agree that my child will be interviewed. The transcript will be given my child for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix K: Letter of Information to the Community Leader

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the participating Community Leader

Dear Participant

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups - Chakma, Marma, and Tripura; and curriculum planner from National Curriculum and Text Book Board about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I will interview you individually at a mutually convenient time to know your views about the role of indigenous language in education sector in Bangladesh. The interview will take approximately 40-50 minutes.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with you to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. After I have transcribed the interviews, I will send it to you so that you will be able to edit anything as needed.

I am interested in working with you because you are leading one of the tribal communities in Khagrachari and you will be able to represent your beliefs about the importance of languages in education. I hope that the national and international indigenous communities will be benefited from your experiences.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to you.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional

journal. I will ensure your anonymity in all reports and publications of the findings. You will receive a report on the study if you wish to.

All data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any queries about the research process, you can contact me (details are given above).

If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

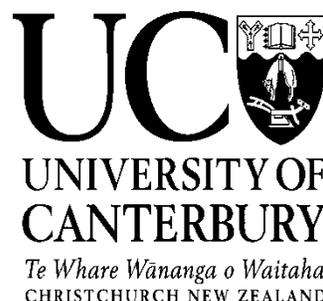
With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix L: Consent Form for Community Leaders

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Community Leader

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I understand what will be required of me, and I agree that I will take part.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study if I wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to be interviewed for this research project. The transcript will be given me for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix M: Letter of Information to the Curriculum Planner

Telephone: +64 3341 1500 Ext: 52041, 008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

A letter of Information to the Participating Curriculum Planner

Dear Sir/Madam

I am Niger Sultana (Lecturer in Bangla, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh), currently studying for Masters of Education, at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to know the role of languages especially indigenous languages in Bangladesh secondary language curriculum. My supervisors for this research are Dr Baljit Kaur, Senior Lecturer and Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, Senior Lecturer, College of Education; and Sylvie Gagnon, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University of Canterbury. The aim of the project is to know the perception of Head Teacher, teacher(s), students from one school; three community leaders from three tribal groups - Chakma, Marma, and Tripura; and curriculum planner from National Curriculum and Text Book Board about the role of languages in secondary schooling in relation to language curriculum and practice in Bangladesh.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. If you accept my invitation this will entail the following:

- I will interview you individually at a mutually convenient time to know your views about the role of indigenous language in education sector in Bangladesh. The interview will take approximately 40-50 minutes.
- Approximately one-two weeks after the initial interview, I may contact with you to clarify if any discrepancy is identified.

The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. After I have transcribed the interviews, I will send it to you so that you will be able to edit anything as needed.

I am interested in working with you because you are experienced in developing secondary language curriculum of central level - National Curriculum and Text Book Board, and your ideas about the importance of different languages in education are valuable. I hope that the national and international curriculum planner/developer communities will be benefited from your experiences.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will remove all the information that related to you.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in a professional journal.

I will ensure your anonymity in all reports and publications of the findings. You will receive a report on the study if you wish to.

All data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any queries about the research process, you can contact me (details are given above).

If you have a query about the study, you may contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private bag 4800, Christchurch, (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz). Alternatively, you may contact Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

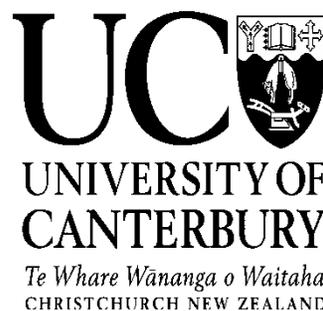
With kind regards

Niger Sultana

Appendix N: Consent Form for Curriculum Planner

Telephone: 0064 3341 1500 Ext: 52041,
008801818137309

Email: nsu46@uclive.ac.nz, nigersul@yahoo.com



Project: **Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District.**

Consent Form for Curriculum Planner

The researcher Niger Sultana has given me a full explanation of her project (Indigenous Languages in the Secondary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Study in Khagrachari District). From her explanation, I understand what will be required of me, and I agree that I will take part.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study if I wish to. I have provided my email/postal details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Niger Sultana. If I have any queries, I can contact the Chair of the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz) or Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Phone: 9562228, Email: nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to be interviewed for this research project. The transcript will be given me for checking, editing or deleting the text.

Interview will be audio recorded: Yes No

Name: _____

Date and Signature: _____

Cell/ Phone Number: _____

Email/ Postal address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Niger Sultana on the addressed envelope provided by _____ (Date).

Appendix O: Sample Questions for semi-structure interview

The following focus questions were used to clarify participants' perceptions about the importance of mother language into Bangladesh secondary language curriculum:

- Tell me about the importance of mother language in education system.
- Why it is important for tribal students to get their mother languages as medium of instruction in schooling?
- Would you like to say something about the usage of Chakma/ Marma/ Tripura language in your daily life?
- What will be the impacts you think if tribal languages (Chakma/ Marma/ Tripura) are included in the curriculum?

Appendix P: Sample Questions for focus groups

- Do you speak fluently Bangla at home? Which language do you use mainly at home?
- What did you think about that?
- How do you feel yourselves in school and at home?
- How long did you spend for learning your class lessons?
- Which language did you feel most comfortable using when you are Speaking? Reading?
Writing?
- Tell me about the things you feel free in the class:
 - 1) The role of mother languages in learning
 - 2) Interest in the lessons
 - 3) Academic achievement
 - 4) Parents' expectations