

# Top 10 Bangladeshi Spoken English Mistakes 2012-07-23

Here are my top 10 most important differences I detected in English as spoken by Bangladeshi teachers in an English medium school in Bangladesh. In order:

Bangladeshi English example	Normal English alternative	Explanation
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## 1. Missing Articles

“He is watching movie.”	“He is watching <b>a</b> movie.”	<i>Although singular nouns without articles are everywhere in Bangladesh – in newspapers, on the radio, TV, billboards etc. they are almost always needed in English.</i>
“Write few lines.”	“Write <b>a</b> few lines.”	
“Go to toilet.”	“Go to <b>the</b> toilet.”	
“Where is book?”	“Where is <b>your</b> book?”	
“What is declarative sentence?”	“What is <b>a</b> declarative sentence?”	

## 2. Word Order of Questions

“Why <u>you are</u> not doing anything?”	“Why <b>are you</b> not doing anything?”	<i>Word order for questions is much more strict in English than in Bangla. Just adding a question word is not sufficient - you must also invert of the subject and verb.</i>
“What <u>he is</u> going to do?”	“What <b>is he</b> going to do?”	
“Why <u>you coloured</u> it like this?”	“Why <b>did you colour</b> it like this?”	
“ <u>Your book is</u> where?”	“ <b>Where is your book?</b> ”	

## 3. Overliteral Pronunciation

“... Wednesday...”	<u><i>/ˈwɛnzdeɪ/</i></u>	<i>Pronunciation is much more subtle than spelling, and depends on the context.</i>
“He is...” /hi/ /ɪz/	/hɪz/	

## 4. Omission of Words

“You didn't bring?”	“Didn't you bring <b>any</b> ?”	<i>While sometimes possible, omission of pronouns or other words understood from the context is much less common in English than in Bangla. Native English speakers may find it confusing.</i>
“I gave you?” <i>(Holds up paper)</i>	“Did I give you <b>one of these</b> ?”	
“Finish?”	“Have you finished?”	
“Finish colouring?”	“Have you finished colouring?”	

## 5. Tag Questions

“You speak good English, <u>isn't it?</u> ”	“You speak good English, <b>don't you?</b> ”	<i>Unlike Bangla, English has no fixed phrase which can be tagged on the end of a sentence to convert it into a question.</i>
“I am doing well, <u>no?</u> ”	“I am doing well, <b>aren't I?</b> ”	

## 6. Superfluous Words

“...the orange <u>colour</u> book ...”	“...the orange book ...”	<i>It is very unusual in English to include these extra words.</i>
“...big size car...”	“...big car...”	

## 7. Mixing up He & She

“she”	“he”	<i>This may seem like a small point, but it is really not since it is a source of confusion.</i>
“his”	“her”	

## 8. Mixing up Singular & Plural

“No Excuse!”	“No Excuses!”	<i>Plurals are needed to refer to more than one thing.</i>
“Use your coloured pencil.”	“Use your coloured pencils.”	

## 9. Lack of Imperative

“After drawing it, <u>you will paint</u> background.”	“ <b>Paint</b> the background when you've finished drawing it.”	“You will...” sounds like a prediction to native English speakers, which is quite different from an imperative.
“ <u>You will do homework</u> tonight.”	“ <b>Do your homework</b> tonight.”	

## 10. Adjectives & Plurals

“... <u>small small</u> thing...”	“... <b>small</b> things...”	Adjective doubling is rare in English and has a different meaning (emphasis).
“... <u>different different</u> colour...”	“... <b>different</b> colours...”	

Bangladeshi English has other issues such as unusual stress patterns, vocabulary, collocation and idioms (e.g. “Go. Take your book.” → “Go and get your book.”). Whilst important, these are not as easily resolved as the grammatical mistakes listed above.