

CultureTalk Bangladesh Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
Understanding Two Cultures

English translation:

Irena: I have a younger brother.

Sarah: What does he study?

I: He's a freshman in college.

S: What subject does he study?

I: He studies....

S: Who are you closer to, your mother, father, or your brother?

I: I'm close to everyone, but I'm closer to my brother because there are lots of things that Ashfin understands that Mom and Dad don't. Let me give an example regarding this and Bangladeshi culture. Ashfin was about three years old when we moved to America. So basically, he grew up in that culture. I was six years old, so I understood a bit more than he did. For example, we had this Bangladeshi event, that is, all the Bangladeshis in our area arranged a party. So once during that program, this girl ... she was born and raised in America – her parents are Bangladeshi, but she was born and raised in the US. We were all talking among ourselves when all of a sudden, one of the uncles came – that uncle has a weird temper anyway – and he just said to her, “Shut up. Don't talk.” Just like that. She didn't say anything bad, but he just told her, “You talk too much. Don't talk so much.” And that girl felt so insulted by that, she quickly replied and said, “Why did you say that to me? You're not my father; you have no right to say all these things to me. You've disrespected me by saying all these things.” Half of us, who were with her, were a bit shocked by her outburst. We asked her, “How could you say that to him? Even if he had slapped you, how could you reply like that in front of everyone?” The uncle's wife was sitting there, and she could hear everything the girl said. But the girl said, “Why are you guys taking his side? So what if he is older than me? I didn't say anything bad; I didn't do any harm to him. Then why would he insult and disrespect me like that?”

S: Yes. Things like this don't usually happen here.

I: This is what we were trying to explain to her, but her mentality is so different that she refused to understand. She's right in a way. She says that if someone doesn't respect her, they why should she? But we were saying that she shouldn't have retorted back like that in front of everyone. Well, we will never be able to make her understand and neither will she understand. The understanding is very different.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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