

HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN BENGAL UNDER THE BRITISH RAJ: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the history of English language education in Bengal under British rule (1757-1947). It also investigates the rules of the British to develop the Bengali language too. The British government's initiative to teach English in Bengal is one of the major parts of the analysis. The impact of different educational policies and commissions in Bengal that were taken by English rulers has been discussed with socio-political examples. The significant contributions of Christian missionaries, as well as local landlords of Bengal, to English education are significantly pointed out. The paper also tries to explore the historical debates in different socio-political and communities about English education in Bengal. It also explains the social and political protests against English learning in Bengal as its consequences. Furthermore, what methods were used in English language teaching in Bengal, are chronologically illustrated. With historical references, the role of females of Bengal in English learning at the time is also examined.

Keywords: British Government, Charles Wood's Dispatch, Hunter Commission, method of ELT in British Period, Protest against English Language Education, English Education Act-1835, University Commission Act of 1902

INTRODUCTION

The East India Company arrived in India around 1600 for trade purposes. Company rule in India effectively began in 1757 and lasted until 1858, when, following the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the Government of India Act 1858 led to the British Crown's assuming direct control of the Indian subcontinent in the form of the new British Raj. The British Crown assumed direct control of India from 1858 to 1947 (Kapur, pp. 6-7).

The history of English language education in Bengal claims to be discussed from a sociolinguistic perspective. It is essential to say that the English language was not merely a medium of instruction but also a tool of political power and negotiation among all religious communities and political people. There was a long-run evolutionary development and historical perspective in English language education in Bengal. It was not easy going for English to teach and make English an official language in the Indian Sub-continent.

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Swift's Proposal, 1712, had a great influence on expanding English language education. Swift wrote, "A Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue." Here, he emphasised the necessity of perfect English and made people aware of the importance of

English in expanding national glory. Following Swift's Proposal, many scholars came forward to develop and expand the English language widely. For example, Samuel Johnson wrote the first English dictionary (1755) in which he proclaimed that those who had been persuaded to think well of his design, require that it should fix our language, and put a stop to those alterations which time and chance had hitherto been allowed to make in it without opposition (C. Baugh, 2002, p. 254). In the middle of the 18th century, there was a scholastic revolution to reform and expand the English language inside Great Britain as well as all over the world. Linguistic patriotism was noticed significantly in that period in Britain and among the British rulers all over the world.

Consequently, in the very beginning of East-India company rule, English employees usually spoke in Bengali with the people of the country. An English advertisement was published in the Bengali alphabet. There were no translators. (Sen, 1942). People were not interested in learning English. As long as Persian was the state language in the Indian subcontinent, as long as the king by name was in Delhi, no one could speak or read English. People thought that where there was no bond of religion, there could be a bond of culture. Its new pattern is the linguistic closeness of independent India with imperialist England. The demand for English books is increasing. Gradually, many English books were imported from abroad. It is also published in this country. It was a noticeable feature of Bengal that they were not willing to accept English religion, but willing to accept English culture and education. For example, Persian was the official language of the region for about seven hundred years before English. The upper-class Hindus did not accept Islam but agreed with the Persian language (Ray, 1999, pp. 12-13). In addition, the same fact was noticed in the context of the English language. In Bengal, people were willing to learn English without adapting to the religion and culture of the English-speaking world. Consequently, in the very beginning of East-India company rule, English employees usually spoke in Bengali with the people of the country. An English advertisement was published in the Bengali alphabet. There were no translators. (Sen, 1942). People were not interested in learning English. As long as Persian was the state language in the Indian subcontinent, as long as the king by name was in Delhi, no one could speak or read English. People thought that where there was no bond of religion, there could be a bond of culture. Its new pattern was the linguistic closeness of independent India with imperialist England. The demand for English books was increasing. Gradually, many English books were imported from abroad. They were also published in this country. It was a noticeable feature of Bengal that they were not willing to accept English religion, but willing to accept English culture and education. For example, Persian was the official language of the region for about seven hundred years before English. The upper-class Hindus did not accept Islam but agreed with the Persian language (Ray, 1999, pp. 12-13). In addition, the same fact was noticed in the context of the English language under British rule. In Bengal, people were willing to learn English without adapting to the religion and culture of the English-speaking world.

David Hare was the architect of English education in Bengal and the real founder and promoter of Hindu College in Bengal. Hare School contributed to Rajanarayana's contemporary texts; furthermore, he had a great contribution to girls' education (Gupto, 1954). There was a debate among scholars on English language education in Bengal. One advocates that Western literary

philosophy should be taught in English, in favour of teaching science. For instance, McLean and the missionaries Ram Mohan Roy and Dwarkanath Tagore were prominent among them. Other people advocated that Western literature would be taught in favour of Sanskrit and Arabic education along with the practise of science. For example, Hastings and Minto favoured education in Sanskrit and Arabic. Mountstuart Elphinstone also favoured the practise of Western epistemology in the mother tongue. It is acknowledged that David Hare was a novice at combining Western and Western. He commented on both English and mother tongue practice. (Gupto, 1954) In detail, in the 1820s, there was a heated debate over whether the Charter Act of 1813 should allocate one million rupees annually to the education sector in the country for the expansion of Eastern or Western education. These were known as Westerners or Anglicists. The other party wanted to build the Indians with respect for the country's heritage, Indian education, and culture. They were novices to strengthen the Indian education system and educational institutions and spread it among the Indians. These were known as Orientalists. Charles Grant, Travelian, Lord McLean were pro-Western, while HT Colebrooke, James Prinsep, Charles Wilkins and Wilson were pro-Eastern. The disagreement of the members of the board of directors of the company with Charles Grant regarding the expansion of English education in India reached its climax.

Those admitted to English schools under the direction of David Hare, who was considered to have little knowledge of Bengali, must be sent to study in one of the native schools for at least two hours every day (Mitra, 1949, pp. 66-67). Under the inspection and endeavours of David Hare, many ancient Indian books were translated. Furthermore, many books in the Indian Indigenous language were also translated during his period. He promoted the necessity of teaching and learning through the introduction to language, literature, and science. Both the demand for the Bengali language and the demand for the English language have increased among ordinary people. It is noticed that many Kings of Bengal, including Raja Krishnath Roy, were also helped by finance for English education. Many people expressed their gratitude to David Hare for his contributions. (Mitra, 1949)

During the reign of Lord Thomas Barrington between 1835 and 1840, by the encouragement and influence of Lord Thomas Barrington, European education was introduced in government schools instead of the native (Local) education system. Furthermore, English education in Bengal rose during the time of Lord Auckland. At that time, English was considered the gateway to all modern science, education, and administrative careers. In addition, the teaching of English began in all quarters (Lethbridge, 1875, p. 114). Conversely, it is noted that, along with the teaching of English by the English rulers, the Bengali language was developed highly by the academicians. For example, Bengali prose was first created and developed in the British period. For example, historically, Fort William College, which was established by the English, was the birthplace of Bengali prose (Hye, 2001, p. 26).

In the early days of the English period, Christian missionaries were not welcomed to enter Bengal. Hindus thought that English education and Christian education were the same currency. Therefore, they were far away from learning English. Later, it was seen that many people did not become Christians just by learning English. Then, the fear of conversion is

shattered. Moreover, many people went to Britain in groups for education and conferences (Ray, 1999, p. 14).

The British Raj wanted mediators to facilitate their proceedings in India by learning English (Arafat & Mehnaaz, 2020). For instance, Ram Mohan Roy, Raja Radhakanta Deb, Maharajadhiraja Bahadur Sir Bijay Chand Mahtab, David Hare, and others played significant roles in the spread of English education in Bengal. The Anglo-Hindu School was established in Calcutta in 1815 on the initiative of Ram Mohan Roy. Hindu College was established in Calcutta on 20 January 1818 on the initiative of David Hare. This college was known as Presidency College in 1855. The Calcutta School Society was established in 1818.

The motivations for English language education in India varied. British employees developed the local languages largely. They also wanted to gather the knowledge of the East as well as to domesticating (turning it into a province of European education and developing knowledge and art in one's own country) (Said, 1995, p. 121). Some Bengali people often revolt against the over-emphasis of English. For example, (Rahim, 1929, p. 31) argued that one should study all subjects in English. He did not agree with learning math, history, or science in the English language that takes a decade to learn.

In the early nineteenth century, the widespread influence of the English language was noticed in Bengal. People started to learn English for their professional, social, and economic benefits. Besides, after the establishment of different institutions by English rulers like Fort William College, Sanskrit College, etc., the Bengali language also became rich (Mohammad, 2008, p. 324).

The position of clerk in various government departments is almost exclusive to the natives. Even in 184, Fort William College had to face problems due to a lack of skilled English scholars and scribes. Sur (2020). Therefore, Englishmen realised the necessity of learning the native Bengali language to communicate with native Bengali people. Then some European scholars began to develop and reform the Bengali language based on European linguistic patterns. For example, Bengali prose was created and developed by the patronization of the British under Fort William College. As well, Bengali punctuation was formed following English punctuation in the British period. It is clear to state that learning English grammar by Bengali scholars had a direct impact on reforming the Bengali language too. The same scene was seen in the field of Bengali literature. For instance, Bengali poet Madhusudan Dutta created the fourteenth verse of the "*Amitrakshar Chhanda*" (Blank Verse) in imitation of the English sonnet poem that marked the beginning of a wonderfully unforgettable new chapter in Bengali literature. This is how immortal literature like "*Meghnad Badh Kavya*", "*Sharmistha Natak*", etc. was created. To do this, he had to master both Bengali and English. Furthermore, Rabindranath Tagore, another great writer of the Bengali language, expanded the number of branches in Bengali literature following the genres of English literature. For example, the short story of Bangla literature was introduced by him. In these writings, a large number of references to English writers were cited. The influence of British literature on developing Bengali literature is claimed to be a research question. Therefore, it is vividly found that in Bengal, there is a hint of English education maintaining one's own culture. (Debi, 2011, p. 79)

Emergence of Bengali Muslim community to English education and Socio-political debate:

Historically, a large number of people of Muslim community in the then East Bengal were inspired and motivated to learn about modern education by the poet Muhammad Iqbal and many others modern scholars. He advocated for people not to lag. Rather, he inspired the Indian Muslim community to think of the future with modern learning (Iqbal, 1913). Later, Abdul Aziz, the son of Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddes Dehlavi, the guru of Indian Islam, issued a fatwa (religious statement) realising the need for Muslims to learn English long before Sir Syed Ahmed. It attracted the attention of the Muslim community to keep up the pace of modern education. From the very beginning of the twentieth century, several Bengali scholars felt the necessity of learning English along with their mother tongue, Bengali. For example, scholars in Bengal promoted that Bengali Muslims needed to learn at least five languages, which are Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, and English. In 1918, Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, a prominent professor and linguist in Bengal, also agreed on this point. Gradually, the importance of Urdu and Persian decreased in Bengal. On the contrary, English language teaching and its application in academic and professional fields became of utmost importance. (Anisuzzaman, 1969). At that juncture, Bengali Muslims also began to use English in the practise of literature and culture. For example, The Indian Sun is the first English periodical published by Bengali Muslims (Anisuzzaman, 1969). The Bengali Muslim community realised that learning English was the most powerful weapon to get political power and social benefits. There are many examples of Bengali Muslims learning English while maintaining their religious identity. (Sofa, 2017, p. 30). They learned and used the English language for their secular benefits carefully. Later, many great politicians in Bengal appeared who proved their worth on national issues in British India. However, it cannot be denied that a section of the Bengali Muslims was not in favour of excluding Arabic and Urdu from the practise of the Bengali Muslims. This is indicated in the word 'Bangla Language and Muslim Literature' written by Mohammad Wazed Ali (Anisuzzaman, 1969). They thought that Arabic and Urdu were engaged with religious identity.

Along with men, many Bengali women also started to study English. For instance, Bethune College, Kolkata, is the first women's college not only in India but also in Asia. It was founded by John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune (1801-1851) on May 7, 1849. Several Muslim women studied there. Without a doubt, they were interested in English education. As a result, many outstanding women, including many Muslim women, who graduated from this college made a mark in their respective fields of studies. (KN. Jayaraman)

English was introduced in madrasa education by the third decade of the nineteenth century. Opposition to English was so strong that students boycotted English classes. However, some Bengali Muslims like Nawab Abdul Latif (1826-1893) felt the importance of English. Although he studied at the Calcutta Madrasa, he realised that success in life was not possible without English. He took regular English classes in the madrasa and became proficient in the language. He explained to his Muslim companions that it was essential to know English to improve one's condition. To this end, he announced a prize for an essay competition, the theme of which was how Muslim students could benefit from studying science through the English language. The

minutes of the Muslim Literary Society founded by Abdul Latif were written in English. (Banglapedia)

Contributions of Christian missionaries to English Education:

In the charter act of 1793, Christianity was also motivated to teach English in India to improve the moral fabric of Indian society. In 1795, the Rajas of Tanjore and Marwar established English medium schools by Reverend Mr. Swartz. Subsequently, Fort William College, Kolkata School Book Society, Kolkata School Society, and the General Committee of Public Instructions were established (Islam & Hashim, 2019). Later, missionaries played a significant role in the spread of Western education in Bengal in the nineteenth century. An English school was established in Serampore in 1818 at the initiative of the three Serampore trio. At present, it is known as 'Srirampur College'. On the initiative of Alexander Duff, the General Assemblies Institution was established in 1830, St. Xavier's College in Calcutta in 1835, and Bishop's College in Shibpur in 1819.

British Government Initiatives in Teaching English

The Charter Act of 1813 called for spending one-lakh rupees on education in India. However, there is a conflict over whether this money will be spent on Eastern education or Western education. Because of the East-West conflict, the government adopted Thomas Babington Macaulay's education proposal. Thomas Babington Macaulay was chairperson of the Committee on Public Instruction. This committee was established in 1823 AD. The proposal made by Thomas Babington Macaulay on February 2, 1835, is known as Macaulay Minutes. The proposal said that if English education had spread in India, it would have spread among all the people according to the "Downward Filtration Theory".

At Thomas Babington Macaulay's suggestion, Lord William Bentinck decided that the government would spend money on English education. In 1835, a medical college was established in Calcutta. In 1838, English became the official language of the government. In 1844, Lord Hardinge declared that English-educated people would be given priority in government work.

The method shown by the English regarding education has been followed in Bangladesh as well. The English government entrusted the East India Company with the responsibility of educating the people through the Charter Act of 1813, and without formulating any kind of education policy, it allocated only one-lakh rupees a year to the education sector. Due to the lack of education policy, the allocated money also remains unspent. At this time, there was a long debate about the content and medium of education. One group demanded that Oriental subjects be taught in Oriental languages. The other group wanted the Western language to be taught. In 1835, it was decided to teach Western languages. At first, English medium education was only in urban areas. Education had to be paid at a high price as it was handed over to an education company. Due to the high cost of education, a large number of poor Bengali Muslims failed to receive this education. It may be mentioned that after 1855, schools were established for primary and secondary education in rural areas. However, even after two decades of the twentieth century, the number of educational institutions in rural areas was very small. It is

often blamed by colonised people in Bengal that the British government did not take any state initiative to contribute to the expansion of education, but instead called on the rich zamindars, businesspersons, lawyers, and attorneys to create educational institutions. The builders of educational institutions have been encouraged by the government with various titles, including 'Roy Bahadur' and 'Khan Bahadur'.

Charles Wood's Dispatch and English education in Bengal:

Sir Charles Wood was President of the Board of Control of the British East India Company. In 1854, he introduced a guideline for the overall transformation of the Indian education system, known as the Wood Report or Dispatch. English would be the medium of education in higher education was decelerated by Charles Wood's Dispatch. He said in his report that 1) to establish one university each in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras on the model of the London University 2) to form a separate education department for the expansion of education in 3) to increase the number of government model schools.

In 1835, English was declared as the only medium of higher education in India. Wood's Dispatch on Education was published in 1854. This 'dispatch' of Charles Wood is called the Magna Carta of Education in British India. He was the first to publish a reasonable syllabus of education from primary to higher levels in the form of documents. In this document, he divided how to teach at primary level, secondary level, and higher education level. English as the medium of higher education and the local language as the medium of primary education are adopted. Primary schools, English-language secondary schools, and accredited colleges were established to teach indigenous languages. Private educational institutions began to receive government grants. Realizing the importance of women's education, the tendency to educate girls in the home environment increased. Appropriate institutions were also set up for teacher training. The importance of technical education is also recognized. The Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras were established in 1857.

Hunter Commission:

The Hunter Commission was a commission under the leadership of William Hunter, a member of the executive council of the Governor-General of India, who was appointed in 1882. It was the first commission, which gave wide and comprehensive recommendations on education in the Indian context. Major recommendations by the Hunter Commission of 1882 resulted in the following changes in the education system of British India: Preference was given to literate candidates for government jobs in the lower levels, along with the expansion of primary schools in backward districts.

In 1781, Warren Hastings established the Calcutta Madrasa (now Alia University). In 1891, Jonathan Duncan established a Sanskrit college in Varanasi. In 1800, Lord Wellesley established Fort William College in Calcutta to teach the native language and etiquette to the employees of the British East India Company.

The Charter Act of 1813 and its consequences:

The Charter Act of 1813 was the first to acknowledge the responsibility of the British East India Company for the expansion of education in India. According to this law, one-lakh rupees are allocated annually to improve the quality of education of Indians. Then in 1818, David Hume established the Calcutta Hindu College (now Presidency University).

Founded in 1818, the Hindu College not only made a significant contribution to the intellectual awakening of nineteenth-century Bangladesh but also gave its students an enviable grasp of the English language and a strong attraction to English literature. English was the medium of instruction for all subjects except the traditional and modern Indian languages. The English syllabus of Hindu College included Shakespeare's plays, essays by Bacon, Edison, and Goldsmith, Milton's poetry, Johnson's Rambler, and Russell's. The history of literature and rhetoric was also included in the syllabus. Because of the popularity of Hindu College, nine schools that are more similar were established in Calcutta and one in Dhaka.

The institutional journey of English education began with the establishment of the Srirampur Mission at Hooghly and Raja Ram Mohan Roy issued a memorandum to the Governor-General seeking the cancellation of the proposal to establish a Sanskrit College for English education. In 1835, Lord McLean prepared documents on English education and had them approved by Governor-General Lord William Bentinck. The printing, publishing, and availability of English language books have been encouraged by the Act of 1835 to enable the English language to flourish. A few years later, Persian was abolished as the language of official documents and was replaced by English. On October 10, 1844, Lord Hardinge announced that knowledge of the English language would be given priority in government recruitment. This announcement accelerated the demand for English education in India.

The Educational Policy of Bentick or the English Education Act of 1835:

Lord William Bentick, the then Government-General of British India, passed the English Education Act of 1835, which promoted English literature and science. The act promoted the Western curriculum and the English language as the only modern educational media. Therefore, English would be the language of instruction. As a result, in 1837, English replaced Persian as the official and court language. Furthermore, in the year 1844, Harding announced a preference for English educated Indians in the Civil Service. These two steps effectively sealed any growth of education other than English education (Kapur, p. 7).

The University Commission Act of 1902:

Five decades after Wood's Despatch at the turn of the century, Lord Curzon initiated certain steps to reform the education system. For example, University Commission Act-1902 was one of them (Kapur, p. 9). Lord Curzon passed the Indian Universities Commission in 1902 under Sir Thomas Raleigh. The recommendations were applied to the Indian Universities Act of 1904. Despite strong opposition, the Act was implemented in India. The motto of the act was to de-recognize Indian local educational institutions as well as to regulate indigenous and native institutions. The establishment of Dhaka University in 1921 facilitated English education in East Bengal (now in Bangladesh). At that time, English was the medium of instruction in all

departments except language departments. English has been one of the 12 departments of the university since its inception.

English-language education for females:

It is clear historically to say that Bengali girls and women first learned English in the British colonial period. According to Charles Wood's Dispatch, he supported girls' education. Grants were available if girls' schools were set up. Wood's Despatch supported women's education. It encouraged private enterprises to promote women's education. In addition, schools for girls should be included among those to which grants-in-aid would be given (Kapur, p. 8). Additionally, many Bengali women proved their progressive attitude by learning English and modern education. Furthermore, women from many elite Bengali families went to English schools and learned English proudly. Conversely, in some cases of Bengali women, English language education was mostly not respectable in family life. An example of all these women who learned English Education often-enduring insults from their mothers-in-law or their own families is found in Begum Rokeya's essay 'In the Land of 600 Schools'. (Rokeya, 2010, p. 255). Begum Rokeya, a Bengali female writer, promoted female education and built private schools for girls in her time. Besides, Bethune College was founded as the Calcutta Female School in 1849 by John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune. It was financially supported by Dakshinaranjan Mukherjee. The school started in Mukherjee's home in Baitakkhana, with 21 girls enrolled. According to the report by the Hindustan Times,

Presidency College and the Scottish Church are some of the earliest ones in India. Lady Brabourne College is the first college established for Muslim women. They were founded by some illustrious social reformers of our country like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and have had as alumni some of the greatest names in modern Indian history like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Swami Vivekananda, and Rajendra Prasad, among others. So, studying in Kolkata colleges means becoming part of a proud heritage. (Khasnabis, 2012)

Thus, women in Bengal started to learn English education. In 1882, Chandramukhi Basu and Kadambini Ganguly passed the examination of the bachelor's degree in arts from the University of Calcutta in India. Their formal degrees were handed in during the convocation of the university in 1883. They were the first two graduates of the entire British Empire, which includes the United Kingdom. In 1902, with the establishment of the Indian Universities Commission, control of education was transferred from the British to the Indians. SNDT Indian Women's University was established in 1916 in Bombay. By 1921-22, there were 19 women's colleges, 675 secondary schools and 21,956 primary schools for girls were established. The teachings of Mahatma Gandhi awakened Indian women, and by 1947, there were 59 arts and science colleges for women, 21,479 primary schools, 2,370 secondary schools, and 4288 professional and technical institutes for women. In this way, women all over India, including Bengal, were engaged in English education (Kapur, p. 9).

Protest against English-language education in Bengal:

Though there were many protests against the English language, education happened in the British period. The English departed, but the English language has been suppressed yet (Ray,

1999, p. 14). During the period of the Swadeshi Movement (part of the Indian independence movement and contributing to the development of Indian nationalism), anti-British people started to think that the English language was also a tool of colonialism. Therefore, people started to revolt against the British rulers. Many Bengali scholars, politicians, and social reformers were conscious of linguistic imperialism. The education system in Bengal was very English-oriented from that period to the present day. Gradually, English people and English philosophy (art and culture) were followed and practised by the students in academic institutions. A large number of Bengali politicians considered learning and practising the English language a threat to national politics. Therefore, the relationship of politics with English language education is a political feature among the people in Bengal. (Das, 1990, p. 103)

The protest against English language education was criticised from a different perspective too. For example, several scholars thought that there was no love for the mother tongue (Bengali) by the people who protested English education in Bengal. It was a characteristic of Bengali politicians to use the Bengali language as a political weapon for political gain, though these politicians themselves knew English very well (Biswas, 1969, p. 41). For example, the majority of the best English writings in the first half of the twentieth century were political in nature. Although the mother tongue was the medium of instruction in primary and secondary education in the 1930s and 1940s, the standard of English education was quite high at that time. Bengali politicians like AK Fazlul Huq (183-1982) and Hussain Shahid Suhrawardy (1892-1983) were both proficient in English. Sir Suhrawardy later wrote memoirs in English like his sister Shaista Ikramullah. His brother, Hasan Shaheed Suhrawardy, used to write poems in English besides memoirs. Although Suhrawardy's family was as wealthy as Fazlul Huq's, any educated member of the general family at that time could have mastered English. Thus, Tamizuddin Khan (189-1973) was born into a simple family and was able to obtain an MA in English from Calcutta University. He later wrote an autobiography in English. Its language is fluent and it reflects the standard of English of the educated people of that time.

In 1854, Charles Wood's policy of creating a separate department for the administration of education in each province was established. Consequently, universities were established in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857. However, no proposal was made for any recommendations on primary and secondary education. As a result, the neglect of primary and secondary education continued to suffer from generation to generation. Noticing the negligence of the British in local medium education, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the consciousness of nationalism began to organize. At this time, the National Congress and the Muslim organisations together began to speak out against the British education policy. It can be seen as the first political protest against the English education of the British Raj.

The Method of English Language Education in Bengal:

It was seen that Bengali teachers in the British period independently taught the English language through the practise of English literature, drama, etc. The use of English literature and cultural practises were very common at that time in teaching the English language. Staging English plays with students was a common activity for teachers in Bengal. It was considered

part of teaching English in Bengal (Tagore, 2016, p. 90). At the beginning of British company rule, especially under the supervision of David Hare, children under the age of six were never taught English. The teaching of the mother language of Bengali people was not ignored in that period. When Hindu College was established, not only English but also Bengali was taught with equal importance in education policy. (Mitra, 1949) The Grammar-translation method was used to teach the English language. Therefore, both Bengali and English were taught in the curriculum and learners were competent in both.

Even more important to teach the English language in colleges at the time was the debate competition introduced by DeRozio, which trained students in reasoning and lecturing. The English language skills that the students debated on various topics were remarkable. Nevertheless, unfortunately, he had to leave the college as the authorities brought charges against DeRozio for destroying and confusing his followers. Before that, he formed the Center for Academic Associations and encouraged students to publish a journal called Parthenon (Sinha, 1978).

Despite the widespread promotion of English education in the Indian subcontinent at the beginning of the British colonial period, the English language had not been as influential as the Persian language. The reason for this can be said to be: 1) in the past, education was given unpaid. 2) Teachers used to be like loving fathers when they taught. 3) Language is usually learned in the company of native speakers rather than by reading books. The social distance of the Bengali people from English during the English period had an impact on the learning of the English language. (Nodbi, 1958)

After the partition of India-Pakistan in 1947, two independent nationals (India and Pakistan) were born and Bengal was divided between India and Pakistan. Bengali people in India live in a multilingual country, so, for communication between inter-states, English is used as a Lingua Franca. Similarly, after 1947, the Bengali people of East Pakistan needed to learn English rapidly to communicate with other states of Pakistan as well as to complete administrative and professional fields. After 1971 (Independence of Bangladesh), Bengali people rapidly learned English to keep pace with globalisation as well as a lack of dependence on the native language. Very few researches and scholastic activities have been done here to promote and develop the Bengali language. Gradually, the Bengali language has not been developed enough to conduct professional and scholastic activities. Therefore, Bengali people have started to depend on the English Language for scholastic, high professional and official activities too. The amount of code switching and code mixing is being increased rapidly in official, personal and academic activities. Furthermore, English-medium schools began to be established on a large scale from the mid-eighties. After the 'Private Universities Act 1992', private universities began to be established where the medium of instruction was English. Then, a compulsory English course in the first year had been introduced in all degree colleges and general universities.

At present, Bangladeshi people have reached the point that advanced study, academic functions, competitive official performance, and successful corporate activities are not possible without command over the English language. Therefore, English teachers of different levels in Bangladesh are occasionally trained and introduced to different ELT (English Language Teaching) methods.

CONCLUSION

The history of English language teaching in Bengal can play a significant role in the discourse historical approach in sociolinguistic research. In addition, it can give resources to ELT (English Language Teaching) in Bengal. Teaching and learning English in Bengal under British rule has multi-dimensional features and belongs to a socio-political attachment. The English language was not a language or medium of instruction at all; rather, it was a medium of power, status, and socio-political as well as economic platform in that period. Bengali people's fate was inextricably linked to English language learning (English Education).

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