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# Historical Influence on English Language Education at Secondary Level in Bangladesh: Insights from Policymakers

S M Akramul Kabir<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

English language education has been in practice in Bangladesh over the last 250 years. This article provides a critical account of the aims of English language education as well as of the problems that obstruct the realisation of those aims. Bangladesh inherits historical influences for the policy and practice of the English language. This historic review is necessary as there is a lack of comprehensive accounts or critiques of English language education in Bangladesh. Therefore, it is important to understand the historical traces of English language education. In-depth interviews with policymakers were qualitatively analysed to interpret the understandings, intentions, and expectations of the policymakers and for English language education. The article finds the colonial influence on secondary English education in Bangladesh. Although English for Today (EfT) textbooks are aligned to the curriculum for the inclusion of oral skills, they are not fully functional in classroom practice and the assessment process due to the colonial influence. The article suggests future directions for policy and practice of secondary English language education to meet the needs of the Bangladeshi context. As the findings are only based on policymakers' perspectives, it requires further research from practitioners' perspectives to explore new insights.

## Keywords

English language education, history of English language in Bangladesh, colonial legacy, oral skills

## Introduction

### *The Country and its Languages*

Bangladesh is a developing country with an ancient history. It is a country of South Asia linking a natural gateway between South and South East Asia. The

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<sup>1</sup> Researcher, College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Corresponding author:

S M Akramul Kabir, Researcher, College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Email: sm.kabir@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

country shares its border with India and Myanmar. It is almost 57,000 square miles in size, making it the 95th largest country by area on earth. It stands as the world's eighth most populous country having more than one hundred and sixty million people. The population is mostly homogeneous and monolingual. The majority of people (98%) share the same culture and speak the same language known as Bangla (the word "Bengali" is the anglicised version of Bangla ) (Kabir, 2019). The minority 2% of the population comprises different tribal communities. The minority tribal groups have their own and unique tribal cultures and languages. From Grade 1, the English language is taught in schools as a foreign language (Ministry of Education, 2010). However, English is widely practised in the everyday life of the people in the country (Kabir, 2019). "The average annual growth of GDP in 2019 is 8.13 %, and the per capita income of the country is USD 1,909" (Ovi, 2019, p. 1). The literacy rate is approximately 61.3% for males and 52.2% for females of the total population (BANBEIS, 2017).

### *A Brief History*

As far as English language education is concerned, the official website of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education has described the historical situation before the colonial period in Bangladesh, stating,

From ancient times to the Middle Ages, indigenous education was in vogue in this subcontinent. Primary education was home-centred followed by Madrasha and 'Toll' (Higher education) education. Parsi, Sanskrit, and Pali languages were used as the medium of education. Education then was based on practical needs along with religious education. With the coming of British rule, the current education system based on practical needs developed. (Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, 2018, p. 1)

### **Research Objective**

The objective of this paper is to examine English language education in Bangladesh tracing its history and connecting the influence of history to the present context. For this reason, the paper examines and interprets the understandings, intentions, and expectations of the policymakers for English language education. This objective gives rise to the following research question:

How does the colonial imposition still influence English language education at secondary level in Bangladesh?

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<sup>3</sup>The Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh recognised the word Bangla as the state language of the country. Retrieved from [http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/sections\\_detail.php?id=367&sections\\_id=24550](http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/sections_detail.php?id=367&sections_id=24550)

## Review of Literature

The English language in Bangladesh gained its root through British colonial imposition. Charles Grant, the Director of the East India Company, in 1772, implanted the idea to anglicise the people of Asiatic territories through English education. He said. "By planting our language, our knowledge, our opinions, and our religion in Asiatic territories, we shall put our great work beyond the reach of contingencies" (Choudhury, 2001, p. 18). Later, being a member of the Governor General's council, Thomas Babington Macaulay in his "Minute on Education" in 1835 advocated the superiority of the English language to the indigenous languages of the Indian Subcontinent and urged the desirability of disseminating Western learning, especially British literature, on the scaffold of English language (Ghosh, 1993). The decision was a political one to prolong the dominance of British rule in this subcontinent. Macaulay (1835), as a mouthpiece of the then British regime, further stated:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. (as cited in Saraceni, 2015, p. 151)

Macaulay (1835) justified the move to establish the supremacy of European cultures and literature over indigenous cultures and literature of the Indian Subcontinent as follows: "A single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (as cited in Momma, 2013, p. 97). Subsequently, in 1837, English was adopted by the East Indian Company as the language of administration. As a result, English officially entered the educational arena of the subcontinent. Since then, English as a medium of instruction began to dominate the whole education system of the subcontinent.

### *English Language Education under the Pakistani Regime*

After the departure of colonial forces in 1947, English studies were transformed in the subcontinent, including Bangladesh, which was then the part of Pakistan known as East Pakistan. Although English was still accepted by the then Pakistan Government as an official language, there was a discordance between East and West Pakistan on the issue of the national language (Amir, 2008). Bangla was the native language of then East Pakistan and Urdu was the major language of West Pakistan (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). This issue led the people of East Pakistan to sacrifice their lives in 1952 to defend their native language as West Pakistan sought to proscribe and replace it with Urdu as a national language. Historically, the year 1952 is sanctified to initiate Language Movement in Bangladesh. Later, the language movement is considered to be the catalyst to free the country from Pakistan in 1971. According to Amir (2008), this conflict over the language issue later paved the way for the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 by creating linguistic nationalism in response to the then-West Pakistani domination. Bangla, as a language, became a symbol for Bangladeshis both for their national identity and their struggle against suppression and injustice.

### *English Language Education after Independence*

It was not unexpected that Bangali Nationalism underpinned language and education policies in a newly liberated country. As a result, “English thus lost its status as a medium of educational instruction, which it had had until 1971, and was replaced by Bangla at all levels of education” (Hamid & Baldauf, 2008, p. 20). Since the independence of Bangladesh, the country has not had a language-in-education policy (Islam, 2015). Hence, the decisions related to the English language-in-education policy in Bangladesh have consistently been influenced by the determination and reflection of the existing government. After the 1990s, due to the decision of the then government, English was reinstated as a compulsory subject for education, trade, and commerce and cross-cultural potential (Shamsuzzaman, 2015). The decision was underpinned by the notion of “early exposure, better learning” of English (Phillipson, 1992) which is further based on the critical period hypothesis, a concept that is heavily disputed yet widely accepted in the literature of language learning research (Strid, 2017). However, the introduction of the English language from Grade 1 did not make a significant improvement in English proficiency among the secondary students, which was evident in different research findings and reported in newspapers as well (Al Amin, 2017; Islam, 2015).

### *English Language in the Education Policy of Bangladesh*

Any language education policy involves macro-level policy which is related to the national curriculum and micro-level implementation which is related to classroom teaching practices (Basok, 2020). Over the last four decades, different governments introduced different policies for English language education in Bangladesh. Therefore, English language education has not been given a consistent level of attention. The need for the English language was not addressed directly from the time that the first Education Commission of Bangladesh Quadrat-e-Khuda Education Commission, until the recent National Education Policy 2010 (Choudhury & Kabir, 2014). The policy designed by the first Education Commission emphasised the importance and necessity of the English language in the curriculum and proposed to include English as a subject from either Grade 3 or Grade 6. Whether English should be included from Grade 3 or not was to be decided by the availability of trained teachers. The Commission recommended that as Bangla was the national language of Bangladesh, it should enjoy the status of a medium of instruction at all levels, but English should be taught from primary to higher education levels as a mandatory foreign language in the way it was taught before the independence of the country (Podder, 2011). The Government in 1987 passed a law named the Bengali Implementation Act to attach greater importance to Bangla language. This law reduced the importance of the English language as it would be considered illegal for anyone to put forward an appeal for official purposes

<sup>1</sup>The Commission was formed in 1972 and submitted its report in 1974.

in any other language than Bangla (Rukanuddin, 2014). It meant Bangla had to be used for all purposes and at all levels of government. Hence, English was withdrawn as a compulsory subject from the tertiary level. According to Rahman et al. (2010), this was done by the religiously motivated military regimes (1975 - 1990) to show the supremacy of the Bangla language, not for the sake of the development of Bangla language but their political interest, so that they could erase secularism to establish religious education that could be used as an agenda for gaining the votes of religious people in electoral politics by defeating the secular opponents. Later, the democratic practice was established in the 1990s, and many significant changes and reforms were formulated to bring back the secular spirit in the policy of education along with English. English as a language gained its foothold again as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 to the tertiary level in 1992 as a part of ongoing educational reform.

For the adaptation of the new policy, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (1996) conducted a survey in 1990 to evaluate the English proficiency of learners from Grade 1 to Grade 12, but unfortunately, they found a depressing scenario of English language education because of the damage caused in the previous policies. Therefore, the government re-introduced English for every level of its education.

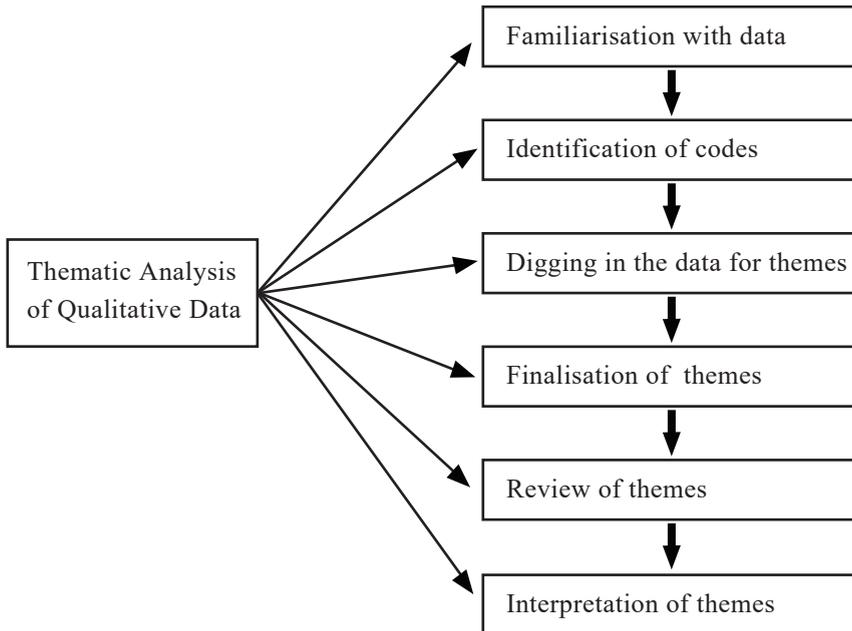
At present, the goals of the National Curriculum for English (2012) are made to align with the National Education Policy 2010. The policies consider English as one of the means of transforming the country into Digital Bangladesh by 2021. The policies aim to achieve the goal of the government as the English language can help contribute to the areas of national development, such as “to achieve developments in science, technology, higher education, business, industry and particularly in communications and IT skills” (National Curriculum and Textbook Board, 2012, p. 73). Therefore, the importance of the English language reaches out beyond the consideration of being a subject taught at schools and colleges. Consequently, English is taught as a compulsory subject in Bangladesh from Grade 1 to Grade 12. Moreover, it is taught as a non-major course for students studying every discipline in tertiary education (Rahman & Pandian, 2018).

## **Methodology**

This study is a qualitative one aiming to provide a detailed understanding of issues that underlie current practices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Chamberlain & Murray, 2017). The data were interpreted in two phases. The initial phase investigates the curriculum policy documents and reports critically. In the second phase, policymakers were interviewed to understand why and how colonial influence exists both in policy and practice. The interview data were analysed using the Thematic Analysis (TA) method based on one of the approaches called – the semantic approach – coding and theme development reflect the explicit content of the data. After transcribing the data, the patterns of the data were identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision (Figure 1).

This paper used Thematic Analysis (TA) method to interpret because it is a popular method for analysing qualitative data in many disciplines including “Education.” In the field of education, procedures for using TA as a qualitative technique only began to be published in the 1990s (Cohen et al., 2018). The purpose of TA is to identify patterns of meaning across a dataset that provide an answer to the research question being addressed. This method also gives flexibility according to the practical need of analysis of what was required to answer the specific research questions (Denzin, & Lincoln, 2011). This means it can be used within different frameworks, to answer quite different types of research questions.

Therefore, in this research, TA suits to answer the relevant research question related to understanding and representation of colonial influence on English language education in Bangladesh.



**Figure 1 :** Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

**Source :** Gormley et al. (2019)

### *Participants*

As the policymakers are major players in the planning and development of English language education, they are the interview participants in this study. The “purposive” selection procedure has been applied to conduct the interviews. Three participants were interviewed in total. The author could not manage more policymakers as participants. Firstly, reaching out to policymakers for research purposes is challenging as they are in more powerful positions

than the interviewer (Signal et al., 2018). Secondly, as the policymakers are often under time constraints, it is often difficult to be flexible with both appointment times and adapting the interview to the time available (Duke, 2002).

The participants were selected based on mainly three criteria: (1) relevant expertise; (2) experience; and (3) willingness to participate. Pseudonyms are used for each of them. Table 1 gives details of the participants.

**Table 1.** Profile of the Participants

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Description of the participants</b>		<b>Instrument</b>
<b>Curriculum Expert1 (CE1)</b>	A member of the committee that plans and frames the curriculum for the secondary level	Policymakers	In-depth Interview
<b>Curriculum Expert2 (CE2)</b>	A member of the committee that plans and frames the curriculum for the secondary level	Policymakers	In-depth Interview
<b>Content Developer (CD1)</b>	A person who develops educational content for the curriculum proposed by the committee	Policymakers	In-depth Interview

**Source:** The author.

The participants were provided with the information necessary about the study through emails and their written consent was obtained back through emails before data collection. To collect the qualitative data, a one-to-one interview was conducted. Each interview continued for nearly an hour. Due to the participants' preferences, interviews were conducted in Bangla and were recorded using an audio recorder. Later on, the recorded interviews were transliterated in Roman Bangla and then translated into English. Regmi, Naidoo and Pilkington (2010) suggest that researchers need to come up with accurate and valid translations to engage with the meanings and discourses of the collected data. The participants were asked about their understanding of English language education policy, classroom practice of oral skills, and the apparent disconnect between policy and practice in Bangladesh. The author reported findings based on the interview data and relating them to other recent research findings.

## **Findings**

In this section, the author explores data related to the continuing colonial legacy that influences the curriculum and the teaching of English, and the factors involved in the quality of secondary English language education.

### *Colonial Influence Continues in Secondary English Language Education*

In an extended interview, CE1, who has been working with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board for the last 15 years in Dhaka and is an English-subject adviser, discussed the colonial legacy. He noted, “The Grammar-Translation Method was introduced by the British Raj in this subcontinent. At that time, there was no known method except the Grammar-Translation Method.”

The use of the word, “British Raj” by CE1, indicates that the English language was introduced by the colonial force. Later, CE1 discussed how different methods had been introduced until CLT was adopted, and he emphasised the current importance of the English language in the curriculum. In discussing the colonial legacy of English teaching methods, CE1 stated the work of Professor Dr. Michael West, who, in 1920, was the first Principal of Dhaka Teachers’ Training College and also became the Dean of the Faculty of Education of Dhaka University when it was established in 1921.

Dr. Michael West wanted to introduce the Direct Method for English language teaching. But seeing the condition, school teachers, and their competence, he realised and understood the problem of teaching English through the Direct Method. Then he developed a method called Reading Method. That became popular all over the world later on.

CE1 then explains how, after the departure of the British colonial force in 1947, English studies were transformed in the subcontinent, including the region that would become Bangladesh. English was accepted by the then Pakistan Government as an official language. Moreover, the curriculum for English language education adopted the Grammar-translation method instead of the Direct Method based on the structural syllabus or grammatical syllabus by the curriculum of the East Pakistan Textbook Board in 1954. CE2 further stated,

Anyway, only in 1957, the structural syllabus is introduced that is also known as a grammatical syllabus prepared by Ronald McCain for the East Pakistan School Textbook Board. It is now called in Bangladesh the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

CE1’s statement highlights how English language education in Bangladesh was determined by being part of Pakistan and so was influenced by the structural syllabus which actually underpinned Grammar-Translation-based English education. Later, English education in independent Bangladesh took another turn. After the independence of Bangladesh, Bangla, as a language, became a symbol for Bangladeshis both for their national identity and their struggle

<sup>4</sup>Maximilian Berlitz of Germany was the initiator of Direct Method. In this method, the fundamental motto of a language learning is to learn the target language very much like the learning of the first language without any translation between first and second languages.

<sup>5</sup>Michael West was the originator of Reading Method. While teaching in India, he understood that the ability of reading fluently in English was more important than speaking in English. For this reason, he developed Reading Method accentuating comprehension as the main aim rather than the production of a language.

against suppression and injustice. Therefore, it was expected that Bangali Nationalism would underpin language and education policies in a newly liberated country. CE1 stated this change,

After Independence, the first Education Commission known as Kudrat-e-Khuda Education commission was formed in 1972. The Commission proposed to teach the English language from Grade 6. The report of the Commission was formulated and based on the socio-economic and political conditions and cultural heritage of the country.

CE1's viewpoint indicates that the prioritisation of Bangla relegated the English language to a state of less importance. His statement aligns with the research of Hamid and Baldauf (2008) who identified the lost status of the English language as a medium of educational instruction at all levels of education after independence in 1971. However, CE2, a National Curriculum and Textbook Board subject adviser who had worked as an English teacher-educator for 20 years at different government colleges, explained that there was a change of status of the English language in terms of its importance. There was also a revision of the English curriculum in 1976 when the English Teaching Taskforce Commission was formed, but there was no immediate change from a structural syllabus to a functional syllabus. CE2 stated,

In the year 1976, the English Teaching Taskforce Commission opens the opportunity to switch from the Grammar-Translation approach to a functional approach to learn English by adopting a Functional syllabus for English education. Nonetheless, structure-based shifting was slow and the previous hangover prevailed until the 1990s when a jointly ventured project named English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) came into function resulting in the inclusion of communicative tasks to teach and functionally learn English in the textbooks named English for Today for school and college levels. English was upheld as a compulsory subject again from Grade 1 for its communicative need for education, trade and economy, and international job market potentials.

Both CE1's and CE2's statements indicate that the change in methodological focus and policy of English language education was slow and unsteady in the eras immediately preceding and following Bangladesh's independence. This was due to successive changes in the political regime. The impact of the politics of this era is also discussed in other published research. However, CD1, who is one of the content developers for English textbooks, mentioned another reason for this slow and unsteady change in policy and teaching approaches. He stated,

I coordinated the textbook for a higher secondary. This actually happened as some of the NCTB subject advisors of the English textbook, for example, Prof. Shahin Kabir, Prof. Monjurul Islam, and Prof. Mostain Billah wanted to follow the traditional literary piece-based English textbook for English language learning.

CD1's use of the term "traditional" is related to the continuing impact of the colonial way of teaching and learning English through the means of English literature. This approach was introduced in the colonial context to establish the supremacy of English culture and society in the region. By stating some of the

names of the English textbook developers, CD1's words signal that being the product of the English literature-based language learners, most of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board content developers of the English textbook still lean towards that pedagogical approach to English education. However, CE1 argued that the process and aim of the study of language and the study of literature are different in terms of purpose and focus,

For teaching and learning the English language at the secondary level, the paradigm has shifted from literature to language in the subcontinent along with other EFL countries in Asia for a communicative purpose. Bangladesh also did the same. However, some influential policymakers do not realise that. They suggest that we should learn English through the study of literature. But we are trying to make them understand this issue that the study of language and the study of literature has different focuses.

CE1's statement signals that the policy related to English language education in Bangladesh has shifted its focus to serve the practical need of the country for learning English. However, CE1 further indicates that the implementation process of the policy is hindered as some of the policymakers have a colonial mindset and so are reluctant to change their established approach to learning English by studying literature. CE1's opinion renews the ontological tension between the study of the English language and the study of English literature. A number of research studies acknowledge that Applied Linguistics has emerged as a separate branch of study to guide both teachers and students on how to learn second languages and to explore how languages and human communication work (Harris, 2001). This branch has evolved significantly in the last two decades for teaching, learning, and researching languages (Akther & Siddiqua, 2016; Grabe, 2012). Billah (2017) expressed his opinion differently by saying that literary texts can be used in some cases if the texts can serve the need for interactive language exercises with authentic English language input to add an extra scope for the students to increase their practice of English. However, in the advocacy of literature-based language learning, one of those influential English textbook experts who were involved in the policy-making process tried to maintain the traditional Grammar-translation approach for better English learning. The influential textbook expert argued (Billah, 2017) that secondary students could learn English in the same way that his generation did. CE1 referred to that response in his account,

Some people think that, for example...I do not mention the name, I won't mention his name. Recently, he has written a newspaper article saying that CLT is a complete failure in Bangladesh. He mentioned that we had learned English through the Grammar-Translation method, and we have learned good English at that time. Now the students are weak in English and they don't have a basic grammar sense of English. So, bring back the grammar-translation method. We are facing this sort of disagreement about the methodological issue.

CE2 expressed a contrary opinion, saying,

The irony of English education in Bangladesh is that the perception of learning the English language through authentic and interactive English language input has not yet been sprouted and we still follow the traditional rote learning of rules to learn English based on grammar-translation.

Moreover, CD1 also emphasised that Bangladesh has to look forward and make its English language education policy compatible with the skills required for the world.

After 47 years of our independence, we have come to this point for English education. We have also a plan for the future to prepare a supplementary textbook separately on listening and speaking skills and to distribute 50% of total marks (25 marks each) on oral skills to make our next generations fluent in English, as it is the global language of the world.

CE1 highlighted that it was difficult to change this colonial notion of English language education for political reasons.

True...the problem is that the old school of thought who advocate literature-based textbooks for English teaching and learning are the products of literature based on English education. Some of them are renowned as a literary genius in Bangladesh. Moreover, they are politically very influential in decision-making. Some of them have a very good connection with the Government. For this reason, they influence the design of the content of English textbooks.

This situation of political influence on language education is not a new phenomenon in the Bangladeshi context. Earlier, CE1 commented on this issue, saying that the country's English language education policy was always guided by the policymakers of a pro-ruling party and elite groups associated with the existing government. Despite resistance from the advocates of the Grammar-Translation approach, a CLT approach was embraced in alignment with perceived linguistic needs for global participation.

The aspirations of the National Curriculum (1995; 2012) have been supported by projects on English language education from Donor/BANA countries. However, the concept of Communicative Language Teaching has not been properly understood by the various stakeholders in English language education in Bangladesh, and it appears that the ground is not ready for the CLT approach. Philosophical conflicts about English language teaching methods, such as these, have generated confusion about CLT and particularly about the necessary oral skills.

## **Discussion**

Underpinned by the perceptions of the participants, statements in policy and a critical review of the literature, the following issues have been raised by the policymakers.

The English language education in Bangladesh went through several significant changes at the policy level since its first Education Policy was proposed by the Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission in 1972. It was an attempt to decolonise the English language for the first time. In this regard, the commission proposed several changes to bring in the policy. However, in reality, the changes did not consistently comply with the policies proposed by the Commission. Therefore, the colonial influence has continued. The Commission (BANBEIS, 1995) affirmed a focus on language education rather than literature to learn English. The commission reinforced this idea by stating,

...at this stage, greater stress has to be laid on English as a language rather than literature. English has to be learned as a medium for the exchange of ideas, and modern and scientific methods...The special application of the language and its phonetics have to be clearly learned, teachers must be well trained. (p. 14)

The commission wanted to create a generation of pupils who could convincingly communicate with the people of the world, access its body of knowledge and understand English books and journals at the higher stages of education. By doing so, the commission clearly indicates that the teaching of English literary texts for improving the critical understanding of learners is different from teaching and learning the language for communicative competence. In May 1974, the commission published its report to decolonise the education system for the first time (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). However, the governments could not manage to design textbooks accordingly. One of the major reasons is the continuation of the colonial mindset regarding English language education. The policymakers (CD1, CE1 & CE2) of this study still have a hangover from the concept that English should be and can be better learned by studying English literature. Hence, a dichotomy is observed between the directives of the policy papers and the discourse of the policymakers regarding English language education. From the participants' voices, it is evident that in the subcontinent colonisers once targeted English literature to transform and colonise the local culture and education. It is generally believed that the way of learning the English language means learning the language via English literature textbooks. However, it is often ignored that the main purpose of teaching English is not to equip our students to appreciate literature but to prepare them to be able to interact in everyday life and actual social situations. From the findings, it is evident that secondary students start learning English from Grade 1, but the expected proficiency on their English language skills is not at all up to that standard which could fulfil their need for communication at different spheres of social needs including contemporary workplaces and higher education.

A colonial influence still prevails in the policy and practice of secondary EfT textbooks. Therefore, the English textbooks for the secondary level heavily depended on literature-based language learning from Bangladesh's independence until the National Curriculum 2012 was adopted. Since then, for the first time, English textbooks have included oral skills for English language education and have tried to make a shift from literature-based language learning to language-based learning which are focused only on reading and writing skills of English. Nonetheless, it is found in this study that oral skills are still ignored

both in classroom practice and the assessment process in public exams. The participants' data indicate that due to the global need for communicative competence, oral skills have been included in the textbook. However, the colonial mindset of some of the policymakers leads them to focus on improving reading and writing skills of English to learn the language undermining the need for oral skills for language proficiency. In this regard, the influence of the policymakers on the design and guidelines of the content of secondary English textbooks seems responsible for not giving due attention to oral skills. For example, there is no clear description of how oral skills are to be included and assessed in the SSC examination. Moreover, most of the secondary teachers have not received any specific training on how to teach oral skills at the secondary level. Although the policymakers advise the teachers to follow the English for Today (EfT) textbooks for listening and speaking practice, they have not provided the teachers with a booklet containing guidelines on how to do the activities in a classroom. Neither the curriculum on secondary English nor the EfT textbooks have included a sample question paper on assessing these two skills. For this reason, oral skills have not been fully functional in the practice and assessment process till now.

As there are not enough existing works on this area of research, the author faced a challenge to evolve the discussion on this current issue. Furthermore, if the discussion could include interviews from more academics across urban and rural schools, it could come up with further interpretation to support the discussed claims more adequately. This would help to gain deeper insight into the reflection.

## Conclusion

Knowledge of the historical development is useful in understanding a situational context. If we know where we have been, we often can perceive where we are and where we need to reach. The history of English language education in Bangladesh has been the legacy of colonisation. The influence of colonial legacy has still a considerable impact on policy and practice at secondary English language education. For example, due to the colonial influence in English language education, oral skills are still not functional in the classroom and assessment process. The influence is perhaps heightened rather than reduced by the impact of globalisation. The residual effects of history indicate the causes of why Bangladesh is currently facing problems to implement its current National Curriculum 2012 for English education in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2010. The goals stated in NEP 2010 and the curriculum reflect the country's aspirations to become a middle-income country by 2021.

Although the colonisers introduced the English language in Bangladesh, they did not formulate any clear language policy in the subcontinent at that time. Besides, attitudes towards the teaching of the English language have been influenced by changes in the country's political regimes as different governments prioritise English or relegate it to a less important position. However, the quality of English language learning has not changed as needed.

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