

Transnational Trajectories of the English Language in Bangladesh and India: A Comparative Investigation into Historical Developments, Policy Paradigms, and Current Sociolinguistic Practices

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Abstract

This paper examines transnational movement of English in Bangladesh and India. It contrasts history, rules of language and the way people use language nowadays. The study is based on existing scholarly articles, policy documents, and international reports. They adopted a qualitative, inductive approach in tracking how the English had been introduced by the British, and how its positioning has modified after independence. The findings indicate that India retained English as an official language alongside other languages. This assists India in managing numerous languages and ensures smooth running of government and universities in India. In contrast, Bangladesh initially rejected English and opted to use Bangla to demonstrate national identity. It later reintroduced English due to pragmatic, universal and monetary causes. Although their personalities differ, in both countries, English has become the center to education, employment, and global communication. Nevertheless, not all people receive good education in English. This social inequality sustains societal inequalities. The research highlights the need for equitable multilingual policies. Besides, the proposed study is theoretically informed by Bourdieu concept of linguistic capital in which English is viewed as a socially valued resource that is not equally distributed among populations. After all, they must promote national languages and provide equal opportunity to all people to study English to have a fair future.

Keywords: *Language policy, sociolinguistics, postcolonial studies, multilingualism, educational inequality.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of Study

English language has been occupied a complex and evolving position in South Asia, especially in Bangladesh and India, shaped by colonial heritage, formation of national identities, and globalization [1]. English as an administrative and educational language was introduced during

the reign of the British colonialists, which was used by elite members. In the post-independence period, the two countries re-established their position in their linguistic and sociopolitical structures. In India, English remained one of the important associate official languages and a common language of higher education, whilst in Bangladesh, its role was up and down depending

on political ideologies and language movements, which stressed the sense of Bengali nationalism [2].

Besides, the terminology of transnational trajectories in this paper refers to the movement, adaptation, and recontextualization of English language across national boundaries shaped by colonial history, global economic forces, and local sociopolitical dynamics. This concept is operationalized through three dimensions:

Historical Mobility: English as a colonial import by British, influenced beyond national borders.

Policy Circulation: Shared but differently implemented language policies motivated by global norms.

Sociolinguistic Localization: Transformation into localized varieties of English language (e.g., Indian English, Bangladeshi English). Moreover, over the past years, the world has become increasingly demanding in terms of English proficiency, and relative statistics are mirror reflections of the lingual situations in these countries. The EF English Proficiency Index 2025 shows that India and Bangladesh rank at the same point of 504, which is a moderate score in English proficiency [3]. On the other hand, the report [4] ranks Bangladesh and India at the 61st (score 500) and 69th (score 490) respectively which are also in low proficiency. The statistical data presented shows that there are directional differences and refutes assumptions about the dominance of English in South Asia. These dynamics are central to the historical, policy, and sociolinguistic explanations of the modern discussion of English in education, governance, and processes of globalization in the two countries of interest. Theoretically, this paper analyzes the role of English through the prism of linguistic capital in which language proficiency is

connected to power, legitimacy and opportunities [29].

1.2 Significance of the Study

This research is incredibly important, both academically and socio-linguistically. Through its comparative relation of the paths of development of the English language in both Bangladesh and India, it helps bring back a refined perspective of how post-colonial nations can still find a way of going around the influence of global linguistic forces but maintaining national identities. It establishes that historical, educational, and sociopolitical ideologies are still influential in the functional and symbolic applications of English in these two nations. This work will be informative to scholars in the areas of the phenomenon of World English linguistic imperialism and post-colonial language planning because the empirical information presented by the author sheds light on the relationships between, and differences among, the two areas of language that are mutually connected with each other. In practice, the above results may be useful to policymakers, teachers, and curriculum developers so that their policy balances international communicative needs with maintaining linguistic independence in localized settings. The discussion of the current sociolinguistic practices also provides an insight into the place of English as a language of opportunity, power, and cultural expression in the fast-globalizing South Asian societies. Finally, the study highlights that to this day, English holds a relevant role as a unifying and differentiating element in defining education, professional, and cultural identity in Bangladesh and India.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The rationale behind this study is that the English language is becoming increasingly

significant across the globe and it is reshaping its functions and significance in postcolonial South Asia. Both Bangladesh and India had been colonized but their languages, politics, and schools have followed different directions, and this has given rise to several styles of using English. Recent statistics of the extent to which individuals can speak English reveal that the situation in the two countries is changing and that we should examine it in greater detail. This research will address the missing links in the existing studies in history, laws, and current ways of talking that will assist us in comprehending how English is not only an aid but also an issue in developing identity, opportunities, and communication. Through this opinion, the study will go beyond the descriptive analysis and look at the role of English in creating chances as well as inequality in postcolonial societies.

1.4 Research Aim & Objectives

The proposed study seeks to critically explore transnational paths of the English language in Bangladesh and India by tracking down the historical development of the language, policy paradigms, and analyzing modern day sociolinguistic practices in academic, professional, and cultural spheres. The following are the objectives of this study.

- To review the historical path of English language in Bangladesh and India, with a narrow scope on how it was introduced, evolved and its sociopolitical forces.
- To compare the language policies in the two nations and their effects on the role of English in education, administration and in society.
- To explore the similarities and differences of the modern use of English in academic, professional, and cultural settings in

Bangladesh and India.

1.5 Literature Review

1.5.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks of this paper are anchored on the Linguistic Capital concept of Pierre Bourdieu which theorizes language as a symbolic power that resides in the social relations and not a medium of communication that is neutral. According to Bourdieu, language functions on a kind of a linguistic market, with some of the lingo varieties being legitimate and more socially valuable, especially those that are standardized or institutionalized versions of the English language. This legitimacy, as recent scholarship [29] has discussed, is not an inherent thing, but rather a contextual thing that is determined by power structures, social position and the norms of an institution. People have different levels of linguistic capital, and it determines their recognition, academic achievement, and economic ascendancy, thus perpetuating social inequality.

This framework is highly resonant with the aims of the current work since it describes how the processes of using English as a high-value resource in the context of Bangladesh and India work both historically, in terms of policy, as well as sociolinguistics. In both nations, English competence is closely linked to being able to get higher education, professional work as well as the global experience. Yet, this entry is discontinuously shared, usually to urban groups and elites which serves to strengthen class divisions. The structure can also assist in understanding the emergence of locally specific forms in an individual or sociocultural context like Indian English and the Bangladeshi English that may still be measured in terms of its dominant standards across the world.

Simultaneously, current studies present significant criticisms and developments of the Bourdieu theory. As an example, the research conducted by Zschomler [30] reveals that linguistic capital is not fixed but can be revaluated in multiple contexts and that migrants can feel disenfranchised and deprived of dignity when their language competency becomes devalued. This brings out the emotive aspect of linguistic inequality and the aspect of symbolic violence. Critics however claim that Bourdieu may be very rigid in his approach because he may dwell on structural restrictive factors and deemphasize on individual powers [29]. Other approaches propose that social interaction and group practices allow people to struggle and negotiation dialects in favor of resisting linguistic roles and statuses. As such, although linguistic capital offers a potent framework to discuss the skewed position of English in South Asia, it should be realized as both dynamic and context-specific and as a product of structural forces, as well as, human agency.

1.5.2 History of English in Bangladesh and India

When the British ruled South Asia, they introduced the English language to work in government and elite schools. This led to the emergence of an English-educated elite class that outlived independence [5]. Critics argue that this trend was replaced at independence of the country by the movements of nationalism and language reforms [5]. Policies in Bangladesh led to the encouragement of Bengali education and the signifying of Bengali identity, competing with English [6]. However, recent research demonstrates that English was not lost utterly. English continued to be used, and increased with time due to international trade, more university, and various private employment irrespective of nationalist slogans [6]. The history behind

English in Bangladesh and India is complicated, that began in colonialism, became threatened by nation-building, and is now being revitalized by globalization [6]. Overall, the study demonstrates that the history of English in Bangladesh and India is not an unbroken line or pure break. It is a sign of continuous discussions undertaken by politics and the global economy.

1.5.3 Paradigms of Language-policies and their Effect

In Bangladesh, despite emphasizing on the use of the Bengali language, English remained in schools, the teachers were required to provide English lessons, and the schools had English classes, and most of the privates' schools in Bangladesh were taught in English [5, 6]. The critics state that this turns English into an urban, affluent privilege of families and exacerbates social inequalities [5-7]. It is a practical move according to supporters: the government is following the demand of people to learn English since it opens career opportunities and global opportunities [6, 7]. A study conducted in India reveals that employees who speak English make significantly higher incomes and that is why English remains in policy [8, 9]. The facts on the ground assert that in both countries, the policy is compromised in nature since officials support national languages, but in actual practice, they incorporate English in practical use, which is a valuable tool. Nonetheless, due to the inaccessibility of everyone, the policy results in inequality existing between the rich and the poor. Regarding linguistic capital, these policy practices indicate how English has been preserved as a valuable asset that is only accessible to dominant groups, thus supporting the structural inequality [29].

1.5.4 Current Sociolinguistic Movement in Academic, Professional, and Cultural Spheres

In Bangladesh and India, the English language has become popular in the countries in universities, in private work as well as in international culture spaces, and is perceived as an image of prestige and an upward ladder [8-9, 6]. Teachers and learners in Bangladeshi private universities tend to mix both English and Bengali to assist one another in class due to a lack of comprehension among learners [10, 7]. Opponents claim that this mixed use only serves the purposes of people who were already well trained in English and continue to enforce social divides [5, 7]. Some claim that such mixing and the local dialects of the language indicate that individuals are using the language creatively and structures that suit them, rather than imitating how the native speakers speak [11, 10]. In the literature, it is indicated that English is not only a means to social mobility, but also a medium in contention. It can also reinforce social divisions, but on the other hand, new mixed forms of speaking, which are representative of local cultures are also inspirational. This is consistent with the observation that linguistic capital varies in context and can be varied with various types of English potentially having distinct social values in the different contexts [30]. So, we have seen that English is a socially stratified and dynamic element of contemporary South Asian life.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The research follows qualitative, inductive, and descriptive in nature to investigate the case of English movement and change in the course of time in Bangladesh and India. The inductive approach does not rely on testing predetermined hypotheses; rather, ideas are generated by the data itself, which is desirable when exploring the

history of politics, policy developments, and the language of people. Descriptive work refers to the research documenting the work of what has occurred to English, the way it is implemented in the institutions and the way it is implemented in the current countries [12]. The theoretical approach applied to the analysis is linguistic capital which views the use of language in systems of power, inequality and social movement in the two national settings [29].

2.2 Materials and Methods

This study employs a qualitative, secondary-data-based research design to comparatively examine the historical development, language policy frameworks, and contemporary sociolinguistic practices of the English language in Bangladesh and India. A historical-comparative analytical approach is applied to ensure systematic and replicable examination of similarities and differences between the two national contexts [13].

Although this research is grounded on the secondary data, this decision is quite grounded in both intentional and methodological terms. Historical-comparative research design involves a lot of interaction with the already published scholarly literature, policy documents, and longitudinal reports in order to trace the macro-level changes in language in national settings. This would be suitable in the investigation of long-term trends of language policy and sociolinguistic change that are not specifically represented with short-term primary data collection. In a bid to provide the in-depth analysis, the research proceeds to assume a systematic qualitative synthesis of 28 sources carefully settled to be representative of the research in order to have consistency in terms of the coding categories in both Bangladesh and

India. This is to guarantee rigor, transparency and replicability.

Nevertheless, the lack of primary empirical data is still a disadvantage. The research might be reinforced in the future by including policymakers, educators, and student semi-structured interviews; analysis using survey on English proficiency and patterns of use; and the case studies of schools and universities as institutions. These methods would give a more profound understanding of lived linguistic experiences and base the macro-level results on empirical facts.

2.2.1 Materials

The study is based exclusively on secondary sources that are publicly accessible and academically credible. Data was collected between August and October 2025 from established academic databases and institutional repositories. The materials include peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books and edited volumes, national language policy documents, reports published by international organizations, and empirical sociolinguistic studies related to English use in South Asia.

Sources were retrieved from Google Scholar, JSTOR, online articles, official government, and education ministry websites. To ensure analytical consistency, the review primarily covered publications from 2000 to 2025, with earlier seminal works included only when required to contextualize postcolonial language development.

Source selection followed clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Materials were included if they directly addressed English language history, policy, education, or sociolinguistic practices in Bangladesh or India; were peer-reviewed or institutionally published; and were available in full-text English. Materials

were excluded if they lacked analytical rigor, originated from non-academic or unverifiable sources, or were unrelated to the South Asian context. Approximately forty sources were initially screened, and twenty-eight sources were selected for detailed qualitative analysis based on relevance and analytical depth [15].

2.2.2 Methods

Data analysis followed a qualitative interpretivist approach, emphasizing contextual interpretation rather than quantitative measurement. A historical-comparative method was employed to examine the two countries across three analytical dimensions: historical trajectory of English, language policy orientation, and contemporary sociolinguistic use in academic, professional, and cultural domains.

Theoretical classifications were used during the coding process included linguistic hierarchy, symbolic power, and language-based inequality as based on linguistic capital theory. The analysis was conducted in a structured and replicable sequence. First, selected materials were categorized into historical, policy-related, and contemporary usage-focused sources. Second, the texts were manually coded using consistent descriptive themes, including colonial legacy, post-independence language policy, educational access, linguistic inequality, and localization of English. Identical coding categories were applied to both national contexts to maintain analytical consistency. Third, cross-national comparison was undertaken to identify patterns of convergence and divergence in institutional usage, policy outcomes, and social implications of English. Finally, findings were synthesized into an integrated analytical narrative grounded in recurring evidence across multiple sources rather than isolated observations.

2.3 Data Sources and Analysis

Only secondary data of scholarly papers, books, archives, policy papers, and institutions reports are used in the study. Among the most important sources, one can find the works on the English policy and post-colonial language study [12, 13], the studies of the colonial and post-colonial language planning [14], and the research of the English-medium education in schools [15, 16]. Government and international reports give an additional insight on the use of English at present and the way policies are implemented.

The analysis follows a structured comparative approach. The research narrates the history of the introduction of English, the shift of policies, and the current use of English in Bangladesh and India. It identifies the similarities, such as the common colonial past and the need to use English around the world, and the differences, such as the influence of post-independence nationalism of languages, policy regulations, and social classes on it [12, 15]. This does not divide the picture into several abstract themes.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 Historical Trajectory of English in Bangladesh and India

The expansion of English can be attributed in Bangladesh and India is primarily due to the British rule. Languages followed two directions after each nation got its independence [17, 18]. In India it was introduced in the early years of the colonial era & later became institutionalized by the change in policy. There were reforms that used English as the primary language of higher education and administration. English language was to expand over time into a substantial portion of politics, law, and schools, forming an elite circle of English educated people that contributed to the colonial state as well as to the

national movement later [17, 18]. In a linguistic capital view, it can be seen that the colonial English provided an early pecking order in which access to English education became a symbol of elite status & institutional authority [29].

The association of Bangladesh with the English has been far more ambivalent. Although English was widely spoken both in the British times, and subsequently in Pakistan, with the 1952 (Language Movement) and the 1971 (Liberation War), the Bengali gained a significant symbolic and political presence [18, 19]. Since independence, Bangladesh attempted to roll out the only language, which was called Bengali to serve in government and education as well as daily life. The English language has been intentionally omitted to create a new national identity. The theatric shift created issues though, as English was the primary medium of higher learning, the rule of law, and international communication. Efforts to eliminate English were ultimately unsuccessful [19]. English made a resurgence in Bangladesh by the late 1970s, which was now to be studied in schools as an obligatory subject. It is not a constitutional language but has taken significance due to trade in the world, higher education necessities and employment. Bangladesh has thus, an informal system, which encompasses English, particularly in the institutions of higher learning, the professional sphere as well as the schools that teach English privately [19]. This has resulted in a widening gap that manifests itself when individuals speak English; individuals who are familiar with English tend to enjoy a more significant social and economic privilege and access to the globe.

After the independence of India, no official rejection of English was made. Instead, it retained English as an associate official language to

manage its massive language diversity. English is a non-Hindi neutral common language used in the states that are not Hindi speakers and assists in uniting the nation. Although a very tiny section of Indians, can speak English well, there is undoubtedly enormous strength of the language in education, government, law, media, international business [17, 18]. Overtime the English language of both countries has evolved no longer as a pure

and colonial language, but as a local, changeable, and practical language. In Bangladesh, studies indicate the increased diversity of Bangladeshi English which is influenced by local pronunciation, terms, and sentence order. Likewise, in India, the shift has occurred towards English being referred to as Indian English, a well-established form of global English [17, 18].

Table 2: Historical Trajectory

Aspect	Bangladesh	India
Colonial introduction	English introduced under British rule	Same colonial origin
Post-independence response	Initial rejection; Bengali-only policy (1971–late 1970s) [19]	Retained as Associate Official Language [17]
Current function	De facto second language in education, business, global communication	Lingua franca among Indian states and elite classes
Sociolinguistic outcome	Rising Bangladeshi English variety [20]	Well-established Indian English [17], [18]
Social impact	English linked to elite access & mobility	English linked to national unity & global competitiveness

Despite the similarity the Table 1 shows, how both countries were influenced by the British rule, the manner at which each country managed English post-independence was extremely different. To India, English was a strategic, unifying, universal instrument; and Bangladesh, initially resisting it with a powerful language nationalism, later revitalized it because the language needed it. In both locations, today English is not an expatriate heritage, it is an affordable source which is local, and manifests

itself in different forms, providing both opportunity and status.

3.2 Comparative analysis of language policies and their impact on English in Bangladesh and India

Policy Orientation after Independence

Following independence, India chose to retain English as an official language so that people communicate with one another in various states and maintain government and schools operating in a productive manner [21]

Table 3: Language Policies and Their Impact

Domain	India Policy	Effect (India)	Bangladesh Policy	Effect (Bangladesh)
Official status	Retained English as Associate Official Language [21]	Institutional stability in law; admin	Bengali constitutionally prioritized; English later reintroduced [22]	Hybrid administrative practice; pragmatic accommodation

Education	3-language formula; English central in HE [24]	Access varies; rural. urban divide; HE barrier	English compulsory early; EMI growth in private sector [23]	Large L2 cohort but weak prof.; elite; private dominance
Administration & Law	English entrenched in statutes and courts [21]	Smooth bureaucratic function	English indispensable in practice despite Bengali policy [22]	Bilingual “hybrid” documents; practical necessity
Society	English = mobility marker; limited fluent core [24]	Reproduces elite advantage	English = passport to privilege; widening inequality [23]	Deepens class stratification

This option contributed to keeping the government steady, as well as providing citizens with access to foreign academic and labor resources. However, Bangladesh ended up abandoning English in 1971 and established Bengali as the sole official language in the process of developing its identity [22]. However, later, when it was necessary to trade around the globe and apply innovative technology, Bangladesh decided to reconsider their choice and begin speaking and writing English as a practical language [23].

Influence on the Education System: At the colleges and universities of India, English is significant as well as in numerous job training programs [24]. However, since in certain schools’ English education is more facilitated than in others, students in the cities tend to receive better opportunities as compared to those in rural locations. Wealth is commonly associated with English classes [24]. English became a compulsory subject in the schools of Bangladesh and was used as a primary language in several of the privates [23]. The number of people educated in English is increasing, which continues to cause inequality since the private

schools are typically exclusive to wealthy families [22].

Position in Employment and Guardianship: English is a legally secured language in India and applies in the courts, government employment and in official documentaries [21]. English is still used nowadays to communicate to other countries, in legal affairs, and in the management of higher education in Bangladesh though the official language is Bangla since it is significant in the global world [22].

Social and Economic Application: The situation in both the countries is that, English is regarded as a symbol of prestige and an option of ascending socially and economically. English speakers can have improved jobs and schooling [24]. Meanwhile, it further reinforces the existing class inequality since not all good English schools are distributed equally [23]. Conclusively, Table 2 noted that India and Bangladesh have had different experiences with English, though both are now heavily dependent on it. India retained English, both in law and use, and it became a permanent aspect of state, college, and business life. This was why Bangladesh initially took off English as a colonial icon and returned it afterwards in

response to international demands. Although it is true that more individuals get to use English the language, it continues to equate privilege to advantage signifying creation of social and educational disparities. The two nations need to reconcile their national language pride with harmonious teaching of the English language to all [21-24].

3.3 Comparative analysis of modern English use in Bangladesh and India across academic, professional and cultural domains

Current English usage in Bangladesh and India differs in terms of the number of individuals using it, the level of their English fluency and the English language users. These distinctions become more evident by examining real data and policy data. There are numerous languages in India. The 1983 survey by [21] indicates that approximately 30% of the populace speaks Hindi; an approximate of 8% of their populace is Bengali and Telugu; another 8% is Marathi, 7%, Tamil, and 12% other languages. Due to such combination, English is also learned as a neutral language across the state borders and national.

Three-Language Policy introduces English into the study curriculum since middle-school or high-school [21].

On the other hand, Bangladesh is more linguistically homogenous, but its education system is divided in three streams, which include, Bangla- medium schools, English- medium schools and Madrasah schools. Such three streams provide students with various possibilities to study the English language, as by [15-25] demonstrates. The placement of the system influences the performances of students in school. Although every pupil in Bangladesh must study English during Class (1-12), more than 17 million people study English but they are weak still. According to [23], the level of performance of university students is usually no higher than in a 7th-grade classroom. Most schools in India also use English, although there is a problem with Tamil-speaking students. Besides, [24] discovered that since higher education is primarily instructional in the English language, students with Tamil backgrounds who did not acquire much English before college have a university barrier and struggle.

Table 4: Academic Indicators

Indicators	India	Bangladesh
Largest language share	Hindi 29.67% [21]	Bangla dominant
English entry point	Upper primary [21]	Class 1–12 compulsory [23]
L2 learner population	Not quantified	17+ million [23]
Higher education medium	Predominantly English [24]	Expanding EMI [22]
Proficiency outcome	University barrier for Tamil-medium [24]	University $\approx$ Class 7 [23]

Table 4 illustrates that English is very prevalent in the professional environment in both India and Bangladesh though it diffuses differently. As indicated by [26], English is widely spoken in government, law, higher education, press and

numerous English newspapers in India, reflecting its traditional position in the life of the population. English is also vital to the economy in Bangladesh, and [22] points out that the English skill is required in the work of the

engineering, business, HR, and marketing industries of the privately owned sector.

Nevertheless, school system (three-stream) causes great inequalities. The paper [25] provided evidence that the students in the English-speaking schools have more favorable employment prospects whereas graduates of the

Madrasah school are the least fortunate as they support language hierarchies based on classes. Though comparable inequities exist between the private English-medium schools and the government Tamil-medium schools, India is a multilingual nation and as such its nationwide dependence on the English language is wider.

Table 5: Professional and Cultural Indicators

Indicators	India	Bangladesh
Press, Media	Thousands of English newspapers [26]	Growing digital ELF use [22]
Employment demand	Widespread across corporate sectors	Mandatory in job ads [22]
Cultural English form	Hinglish; Indian English features	Bangla-English online mixing [22]
Inequality pattern	Tamil-medium disadvantage [24]	Three-stream class division [25]

English penetrates the Indian culture more; it is presented in films, in the media, and in language mixes such as Hinglish [26]. Young people are the primary users of English online in Bangladesh, combining English with Bangla [22]. English is extensively spoken in India in schools, at work, and in daily life. English is also an important language in Bangladesh, and it is used frequently in business however it is not used everywhere due to imbalance in education. After all, the trajectories of English in Bangladesh and India was never isolated but interconnected, produced from colonial histories and participation in international linguistic economies. However, divergence placed in how each nation articulate English within its national regulatory framework.

4. Discussion

The historical development of English in Bangladesh and India reflects complex sociopolitical transformations and demonstrates how the language has been affected by

colonialism, the feeling of national pride and international connectivity. Interpreting these through linguistic capital reveals that English is not merely a communicative tool but a mechanism of symbolic power shaping access to resources and opportunities [29].

The English language was employed in government and in the elite schools and formed a section of educated individuals in Britain who had social and political influence [27-28]. Following India gaining independence, the country retained English as a second official language, hence it is used in the government, institutions of higher learning, and among states, and this remained helpful to maintain order and communication with the rest of the world [21, 17]. However, in Bangladesh, English was rejected and this happened following the 1952 Language Movement and the 1971 Liberation War to enhance the identity of Bengali [19]. Nevertheless, the lure of international trade,

college education, and work has gradually introduced the reintroduction of English in universities and the workplace [20].

There is also the influence of language rules on the socially used English. The Indian policy supports both local and English language and provides an opportunity to people to get to know English without interfering with language variety [8-9]. The slower pace of Bangladesh in adopting English left open spaces, in which students who use the Bengali language feel less equipped to study compared to students learning the English language [22, 24]. The extent to which a person can speak English in both locations is determined by the amount of money and social status that they have, which demonstrates that English is not only an instrument of success but also a symbol of privilege [5-7]. Also, as outlined in recent studies, linguistic capital is not inert but can be revaluated, with some versions of English becoming less valued and more valued in a specific situation, usually having the effect of making one feel marginalized and as having the symbolic violence [30].

English is today mixed or localized. Indian English is now an accepted form of English spoken around the world, whereas the Bangladeshi English is still maturing and has local flavor [18]. In higher education, employment, and media, English prevails in both nations, though not all people can acquire it equally, and this maintains social distance [10-11]. There is creativity in mixing languages, which are flexibility, yet its complete implication is mostly limited to individuals who are already privileged. Nonetheless, although linguistic capital is an adequate approach to the structural inequality, it has been criticized by underestimating the agency of the individual and

the ability to negotiate and restructure linguistic hierarchies.

Moreover, use of English is greatly influenced by internal variation, even though both Bangladesh and India are addressed at the national level. Linguistic differences between states in India (e.g., Tamil versus Hindi-speaking areas) lead to unequal access to English, especially in higher education. The three-tiered education system in Bangladesh-English-medium, Bangla-medium, and madrasah; causes variation and results in stratified linguistic outcomes. These internal variations show that English is not evenly distributed across countries, but rather is influenced by socioeconomic status, region (rural versus urban), and the medium of instruction. Therefore, an intricate comprehension of English in South Asia needs to take intra-national disparities into consideration in addition to national comparisons.

The English language is on one hand a useful tool and on the other hand a divisive factor in South Asia. India established English early and this allowed its administration and schools to remain stable whereas Bangladesh later re-established English as a response to other pressures. In the two countries, English assists individuals to ascend the ladder, secure employment, and unite with other people worldwide, yet it simultaneously sustains inequality. The dilemma is balancing the identity of the national language, equal access, and international utility.

5. Conclusion

Although both Bangladesh and India were left with the same languages inherited by the British, the linguistic policies adopted by the two countries in post-independence periods has resulted into varied yet comparable outcome. India retained English as an official language to

coordinate all the languages and keep a government, schools, and international connections in operation. Originally Bangladesh had boycotted English first in identity show and later reintroduced it due to international trade, and employment requirements. In both locations, the English language has developed above colonial application to the status of a local and critical tool of learning, employment, and international engagement. Regarding the language capital, the course of English in Bangladesh and India demonstrates two-fold truth- it is true that the English language allows being a part of the world and be socioeconomically mobile, yet, it is also true that the unequal distribution of English can still allow reproducing structural inequalities. The solution to this problem must be policy interventions that will provide access to English in a more equal manner without compromising national linguistic identities.

Nevertheless, it is the inequality in the affordability of good English education that causes the gap in social and economic conditions, providing better opportunities to urban and elite populations and disadvantaging rural and marginalized groups. The two nations should produce equitable, multi-lingual language policies that benefit their national languages and at the same time afford those who require it access to the English language with greater ease.

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Declaration of Generative AI Use

The author claims that the AI tools were utilized to enhance the language, grammar, and academic tone of the manuscript. The AI tools were not applied to generate research ideas, process the data, interpret the results, and draw conclusions. The author is fully responsible in all aspects of this work, the ideas, arguments, analysis of the data, and conclusions.

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