

CHAPTER-2

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Language and its teaching in India in
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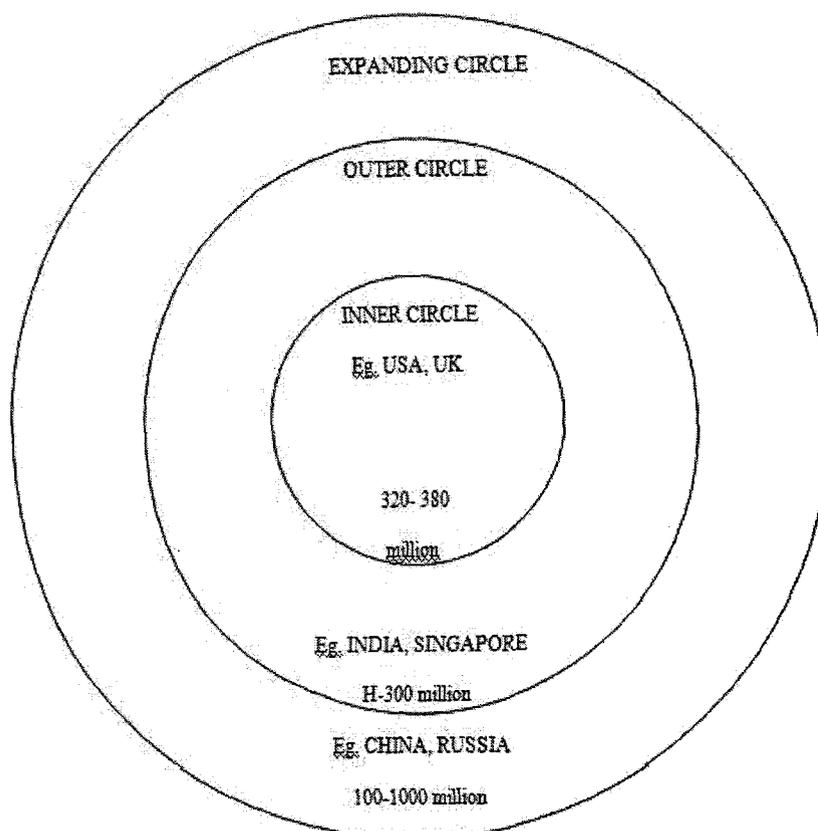
Background to the Spread of English Language and its teaching in India in general and English education in Manipur in particular

2.1 Introduction:

English, which was once a modest dialect was brought to England, in the fifth century by Germanic tribes, has become a global language today. It is one of the Aryan or Indo-European languages. Now it is a world language and is embraced in all developed, developing and underdeveloped countries. It is the first language in U.K., U.S.A, Canada, Australia and many other countries; and the second language in India, Africa, Russia, France, and Pakistan etc. Due to its prominent place in the world language it has become a medium of communication for all. It plays an important role in administration, education and mass media. It is the language of national and international politics, trade and commerce, cultural, scientific and technological development. Use of English throughout the world is becoming increasingly widespread, to the extent that there are now more second language speakers of English than native speakers (Crystal 2003).

In David Crystal's *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (1995 pp.107), explained that the spread of English around the world has been visualized as three concentric circle, representing

different ways in which the language has been acquired and is currently used.



- The inner circle refers to the traditional bases of English, where it is the primary language. It includes the USA, UK, Canada, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.
- The outer or the extended circle involves the earlier phases of the spread of English in non-native settings, where the language has become part of a country's chief institutions, and plays an important 'second language' role in a multilingual setting: it includes Singapore, India, Malawi, and over 50 other territories.

- The expanding circle involves those nations which recognize the importance of English as an international language, though they do not have history of colonization by members of the inner circle, nor have in their language policy. It includes China, Japan, Israel, Greece, Poland, and a steady increasing number of other states. In these areas, English is taught as a foreign language.

According to Small, D. and Abrook, P. (2009) given a list of countries of the world sorted by the total English – speaking population in that country. This includes both native and second language speakers of English. (www.paulsquiz.com/Trivia_Quiz_Resources/Miscellaneous/List_of_countries_of_the_world_by_English-speaking_population_) We can see the mentioned list in the appendix of this thesis.

We can say that English is the most studied subject in the world today. In a global society composed of numerous nations speaking different languages, having English as a common medium for communication has resulted in the need to educate hundreds of millions in the language skills needed for success in the spheres of education, business, academic, and the media. Whatever may be the total figure, English at the end of the twentieth century is more widespread, more widely spoken and written than any other language of the planet, the first truly global language.

2.2 Spread of English in India:

“...so far as skills go English is an enormously useful one to have. Not only it is understood throughout India, it’s rapidly becoming the lingua-franca of the world. Scholars point to a historically unprecedented situation at the start of new millennium. English is understood in every country in the world and as much as one-fourth of the world’s population can communicate to some degree in it. No other language has ever enjoyed this kind of pre-eminence before. You can at best slow down its spread in India, you can’t cut it off. But slowing English down has obvious disadvantages. Much of the world’s scientific, technical and social scientific knowledge exists in English, also the language people are increasingly doing business in. Non-English speaking countries are racing to teach English to their population...”

Ganguly, Swagato in “Subverse Money on English”, Tuesday May 19, 2009. *The Times of India*, North-East, pp.8

India is a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural unique in itself as compared to several other nations in the world. The importance of English in a multilingual country like India is to be viewed in the context of the part it played in pre-independence and its importance in post- independence period. It is a powerful unifying factor in our national life.

No one knows for certain how English spread in India. It is generally assumed that the first contact with the English came through the travellers and traders in the fifteen and sixteen century, who subsequently became the rulers of India. It has some features that distinguish it from other languages that came from outside. It came from Europe, while the earlier languages arrived from central and west Asia, and it came with the baggage of European advantage in science and industry (Annamalai 2004 pp-52). English spread more rapidly as the British established themselves as a paramount power during the eighteenth and nineteenth (Majumdar 1971:403). After the battle of Plassey 1757, and then with the advent of East India Company in the eighteenth-century the status of English underwent a sea change. The importance of English went on increasing with the passage of time.

When English came to India along with the East India Company it was a peripheral trade language in competition with Portuguese that dominated the sea trade (Ram 1983). When the East -India Company gained political power a century later to promote its trade by annexing territories beyond the port towns, by bringing the princely states under its suzerainty and by conquering the competing European powers operating in India, English became a language of power, directly administered by the Company, but also in the princely states. This changed the position of English in the multilingual network in India, endowing it with a dominant position together in the three domains of commerce, administration and politics (Annamalai 2004).

Since the British became the administrators of India, in order to have full command over the people whom they had begun to govern they decided to open educational institutions. Two such institutions were Calcutta Madarssa started in 1781 and Banaras Sanskrit College founded in 1791. A great demand for the spread of English education began to be raised from the different parts of the country. To meet this demand Raja Ram Mohan Roy established the Hindu College in 1817, sponsored by the Calcutta citizens, who wanted this college to impart English education. Until the founding of the Hindu College in Calcutta there was no respectable institution around which English education could cohere. Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1832) was the first among Indians who contributed most and support the introduction of English education. Whatever English teaching was available was private, sporadic, and limited to teaching the rudiments of the language for communication between the English traders and officials and native Indians. Soon, thereafter the missionaries opened a number of schools and colleges in which the teaching of English was given utmost importance. In 1835, the well-known, Lord Macaulay, famous minute, strongly recommend that the spread of Western learning could be possible through the medium of English language. The man who is commonly credited with the introduction of English education in India is Thomas Babington Macaulay, who came to India as a member of the Governor- General's Council in December 1834. Macaulay argued that, "English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit and Arabic". Then the governor, Lord William Bentinck, approved Macaulay's Minutes, and, at a single stroke, English became the language of government,

education and advancement, and ultimately a symbol of Imperial Rule and self- improvement. It would be convenient to take 1835 as the inauguration of the era of English education, though as we have seen it began earlier; nor did things take any dramatic turn because of the Minute, but there was definitely a swing towards English.

In India, English was first taught through Christian missionary schools. Thus, the Christian missionaries also contributed to the spread of English education in India. Their institutions had been operating since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Charter Act of 1813 allowed the Christian missionaries from other countries to carry out their work in India.

During the period 1835 to 1851, English was made court language. The opening of higher government posts to Indians by Lord Hardinge (Governor General) in 1844 resulted in rapid growth of English education. As a follow up of the Wood's Despatch of 1854, the first formalized and formulated education policy statement of the East India Company three Universities were established in 1857 at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras respectively with a great number of colleges affiliated to them. But the fact is that by 1854 English education had won the logic of history and become the sole content and medium of higher education. As regards the education of the masses, it was carried on in a lukewarm fashion. The founding of the Presidency universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay (1857) only emphasised elitist education on the Western model.

The other landmark developments in the area of teaching English in India till the end of colonial period were:

- (i) The Indian University Act (1904) fixed the area of jurisdiction of universities.
- (ii) The resolution on Educational Policy (1913) assigned distinct spheres of activities to universities and high schools, relieved the universities of the responsibility of granting recognition to high schools and placed the latter under the care of provincial governments.
- (iii) The process of separation of levels of education was continued by the report of the Calcutta University Commission (1919), which recommended the separation of intermediate classes from universities.
- (iv) The Abbot-Wood report (1936-37) advocated basic primary and middle school education on children's natural interests and environment.
- (v) The Sergeant Committee Report (1944) suggested the conduct of refresher courses for all the teachers, particularly for those in remote rural areas.

However, the Indian Universities Commission (1902) raised its voice against the neglect of regional languages. Some leaders argued that English should be uprooted from the country whereas some others favoured the retention of English. Mahatma Gandhi said, "It is my considered opinion that English education, in the manner it has given,

has emasculated the English educated Indians. It has put a severe strain upon the Indians students and made us imitators.” He further said that , “all the superstitions that India has , none has so great as that, a knowledge of the English language is necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty and developing accuracy of thoughts.” But other persons like C.Rajagopalacharya said that English should be retained in the country. Their considered opinion was “we in our anger and the hatred against the British people should not throw away the baby (English) with the bath water (English people)”.

The Calcutta University Commission (1917-1919) tried to strike a balance by observing, “The educated classes in the various provinces of India will wish to be bilingual, to use their mother tongue for those dear and intimate things...” As a result of this recommendation, the medium of English was restricted only to the colleges and Universities from 1920 onwards throughout the country.

With the advent of independence in 1947, Commissions and Committees and the leaders of the public opinion took a closed at the value of English and tried to strike a balance between gains and losses. The nation re-defined the goals and priorities in the field of education, more specifically English education. The University Education Commission (1949), also called the Radhakrishnan Commission (after its Chairman, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan), the first education commission ever to be appointed in free India, suggested, among other things, that English be replaced, as easily as practicable, by the Indian language as

the medium of instruction of higher education. The constitution of India, adopted in 1950 provided for English to continue as the official language of the country for a period of fifteen years to be replaced by Hindi at the end of that period. During the fifties the government of India formulated the three-language formula in order to solve the vexed language problem by introducing the three-language formula designed by the Central Advising Board of Education in 1956 and recommended it for the school children. According to the three language formula, every the logic underlying three-language formula has been aptly brought out by Verma (1998): “The three language formula is a surface manifestation of language planning, that is, of language choice and language ordering in a multi-lingual country. There is nothing sacrosanct about the number ‘Three’. What is focused on is the significance of multi-lingualism in our setting. It attempts to weld the different parts of the country into one nation.”

School going child is required to study the following three languages:

- (1) Mother tongue or the regional language
- (2) English
- (3) Hindi for non-Hindi speaking areas. If mother tongue is Hindi, then another modern Indian languages

Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) was set up to resolve the question of medium. According to the Commission, regional language should be taught at the lower primary stage (class I to class

IV). At the higher primary stage (class V to class VI) mother tongue or Hindi/mother tongue or English should be taught compulsorily and the third language should be taught on optional basis. In classes VII to X, the students should study three languages. Thus in Hindi speaking areas, the students will study Hindi, English and a modern Indian language. In non-Hindi speaking areas, the pupils will study regional language, Hindi and English. Thus we find that English has to be learnt by one and all in the schooling period.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) was perhaps the first official body to concern with method of teaching, materials for teaching and the evaluation system. It held a broader view and advocated in favour of English: “No student should be handicapped by ignorance of a language which will ultimately determine the career that he should choose”. The commission was of course dealing with the teaching and evaluation of all subjects but its observations and recommendations of these commissions have not been fully or strictly implemented.

Language planning in India can be said to have arrived at a crucial stage in the nineteen sixties. The conference of the Chief Ministers in 1961 recommended the adoption of the three-language formula in all schools. This meant:

- (i) The regional language or the mother tongue when different from the regional language,
- (ii) Hindi or any other Indian language in Hindi-speaking areas,

(iii) English or any other European language.

The three-language formula was also reiterated by the Kothari Commission (1966). The Commission took note of the riot in Tamil Nadu but still recommended that both Hindi and English should be link languages, even though it felt that English could not serve as a link for the majority. It was felt that English should continue as a library language and as the medium of instruction in all major universities and that a reasonable degree of proficiency in it should be essential for the award of a degree. The Commission also recommended that special units be set up for teaching English as a language skill, as distinct from teaching it as literature.

The first English Language Teaching Institute (ELTL) was established in Allahabad in 1954 in collaboration with the British Council. The All India Seminar on the Teaching of English, held at Nagpur in 1957, suggested the revision of the English syllabus at schools on a national level. The need for services of the British Council was also considered essential. The Central Institute of English (now called the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, CIEFL) was established in Hyderabad in 1958, with the collaboration of the British Council. The study group observed (1971) that, "English will be used in our country, as a 'source language' with a view to enriching our own language...and as a link with the wider world of thought and discovery." The Regional Institutes of English at Bangalore and

Chandigarh and a number of ELTIs were set up with similar collaboration.

After the Kothari Commission Report of 1966, the National Policy on Education was formulated in 1968, largely to implement the recommendations of the Kothari Commission. It also stated that the study of English deserved to be specially strengthened as 'world knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace' and India must not only keep up with this growth and make her own significant contribution to it. Thus special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English. The English language-teaching situation is undergoing a significant change since the pronouncement of The Education Commission as regards the place of English.

When the regional languages are becoming important day by day in every state of the country, the status of English can be considered from the following points of view:

- (i) English as an international language.
- (ii) English as our major window to the world.
- (iii) English as a link language.
- (iv) English as a library language.

English may be learnt either as a second language or as a third language, but being the most important link language co-ordinating all the regions of India, English language is a necessity. Even M.K. Gandhi said in 'Thoughts of National Languages', "I hold its knowledge as a second language to be

indispensable for specified Indians who have to represent the country's interest in the international domain. I regard the English language as an open window for peeping into western thought and science". Naturally none can be denied the study of this language. Pt. Nehru said, "English language is our's by-historic necessity (Sharma 2006).

The English language's position in today's India is better to state as Kachru's (1983) pronouncement that "English has now become an integral part of India's linguistic repertoire" is all the more correct today. Reddy T.Prabhaker writes in the Journal of English Language Teaching (1977), "The number of Indian writers who use English for creative writing is increasing gradually. It looks as if it has become one of the languages of India and its long and wide use by the Indians intelligentsia has given a distinct identity." A few words from Kothari Education Commission Report are worth quoting, "No students should be considered as qualified for a degree, in particular, a Master's degree unless he has acquired a reasonable proficiency in English". Knowledge of English will make a person a citizen of the world. The importance of English for Indian students should be realised on the fact that it is an international language, a link language, a library language and it is considered to be a window to the advanced scientific knowledge.

English has its unique importance in our country. It continues to be the unifying factor between various multi cultural and multilingual states of India. It is, therefore an important language and it must be studied and also it should be taught for its success and bright future in

the country. English has become one of the official languages of the country with the status of associate language and mastery of English is considered a social and educational accomplishment. Three states of the North-East: Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland have granted statutory recognition of English by accepting it as their sole official language. In Manipur, English is recognised as the associate official language.

2.3 Emergence of English education in Manipur: A historical background

All cultures are characterised by distant system of learning and education. A deep insight into the available literatures, documents, and cultural, social, political, religious and vocational traditions of the Manipuri people in the past has highlighted something about the system of education in the early days in Manipur. It had been pointed out that the system aimed at the all round development of an individual. The Maichous, who were priestly-scholars, imparted learning to the royal princes and princesses, son of nobility and certain select commoners. Only indigenous education consisting of literacy, physical education, health and hygiene, games and indigenous medicines etc. was conducted by Maichous and Pandits. In short, before 1885 formal schooling on western model was unknown in Manipur.

The introduction of western education during the colonial period was a result of the acceptance and adoption of “welfare” as a

responsibility of the step by the colonial government under the influence of the utilitarian philosophy. After the annexation of Manipur to British India in 1891, the traditional system of education declined and a system of education which is now called the Western (Modern) education emerged. The emergence of English language in Manipur is associated with introduction of modern system of education. The advent of British rule brought in its wake rapid changes in the system of learning, the whole educational system in general, and language teaching/learning process in particular, take a new shape which is very much different from that of pre-British annexation state of education in Manipur.

The British conquest of Manipur coincided with the formulation of educational philosophy and the decision taken by the government of East India Company to introduce English education in India. In the 19th Century, education has become 'social right' of the subject people; and the government of India both in the centre and the provinces created department of education. Greatly influenced by the European ideas of civilizing the Asians as one of the goals of Imperialism, Christian evangelism went hand in hand with the British colonial rulers. Both the government and the Christian Missionaries, whose aim were to civilize the natives by converting them to Christianity, took up the leading task of spreading education. English education was designed to inculcate within the people European liberal ideas, literature and science and at the same time to produce educated people who could be conveniently employed to play a role in the efficient running of colonial

administration. On the other hand, the Christian Missionaries wanted to train Christian workers from among the non-believers to spread the minimum literary knowledge so that the people could read and understand the Bible and related literature (Kamei 2000). Western education was a gift and instrument of British colonial rule. The original objectives of which were to maintain law and order, collect revenue and adjudicated dispute among the subject people.

In Manipur, Christian missionary, provincial government and the private social service bodies mainly spread education. Education was theoretically made open to everybody in the colonial period. However, the progress of education was very slow. And the English education was introduced with the initiative of British political agents and missionaries.

The seed of new form of education, that is, English education, was first sown by Capt. Gordon when he founded a primary education centre in Manipur in the beginning of the 19th century. However, due to his untimely death, the seed could not germinate and had decayed without bearing any fruit. In 1872, Major General W.E. Nuthall, the then Political Agent, opened a school at Imphal with English language as the medium of instruction. But the school failed to function smoothly due to lack of local co-operation and encouragement. B.C Allen , in his book on “Naga Hills and Manipur” wrote that Education , “it needs hardly be said , received little encouragement in the days of the native rule...offers of assistance in the formation of schools were

declined by the Manipuri who stated that they preferred to remain ignorant” (Allen,1905; Jamini,1989 pp 30-31).

The Manipuris might be ignorant of the English language and the English system of education but not of education of the people of the land. Prior to the arrival of the Britishers, there were agencies in Manipur to execute the educational programmes in accordance with the needs and traditions of the land. It is worthwhile to note here that the Manipuris used to write in their own script from very ancient times. To quote Shri Sanasam Gourhari Singh-

*“The world has 2796 languages as total
Minus dead ones as Statistics does tell,
Of these only 5%, the written have mounted
Ant Manipuri is one of the 140 counted”*

Manipuris wrote books on different subjects using their own script. But the authors were not traditionally recorded in the books .They were highly educated in their own way but they simply did not have any inclination to learn English education. Even in the early 18th Century, people of that time were apprehensive to English education lest, they might be converted into Christianity just as the Hindu Missionary Santidas came to Manipur and converted the King and the people. Manipuris faced many unprecedented events during their conversion from Sanamahi Laining to Vaisnavism. So Manipuris looked at English education with suspicion (Jamini 1989).

The spirit of freedom dominated every aspect of their life. The educational sphere was also dominated by this spirit. The Manipuris, therefore, feared that introduction of English education in Manipur would lead to the curtailment of their freedom and rights. They refused to take any kind of assistance given by the Englishmen to start English education. Instead of being ashamed of not having English education, the people remained quite satisfied with their own rich sources and proud of their own traditional system of education. Many parents looked down upon those children going to the English School and they were treated as untouchable and not allowed to enter the Manipuri house after the school hour unless he/she had taken bath and changed his school dress. As a result of this feeling of untouchability, no English School could thrive in Manipur for a considerable length of time (Ibid: 35-36).

The reasons for the lack of support on the part of the people towards English education were numerous. As Manipur had been conquered by the British in 1891, the people were suspicious towards the intentions of the alien rulers and, therefore, discouraged their efforts. People did not like to take western education on religious grounds. As the political agent was a Christian, they did not like to have social contact with him. It was thought in those days that anybody who receives western education might be excommunicated. Secondly, they had their own system of indigenous education, through the medium of Meitei Mayek (Manipuri script). Thirdly, there was general apathy towards the English education. Manipuris considered it as

unclean and polluting. It took many years for the people to change their attitude to education and realize its importance.

In course of time, circumstances changed. The number of European visitors to Manipur also increased by leaps and bounds. The deep-rooted feeling of untouchability slowly disappeared. Side by side, the English Missionaries became active in the nook and cranny of Manipur and made the people aware of the necessity of English education. Maharaj Chandra Keerti gave his permission to Sir James Johnstone for establishing an English School, when he was requested. Thus, the British officer, Sir James Johnston founded a middle school in 1885, which was named after him. This marked the beginning of general English education in the state.

The Christian Missionaries played an important role in the education of the hill tribes. Mention may be made of an American Baptist missionary Rev. William Pettigrew who worked in Manipur (1892-1903) and his contribution in spreading western education in the hills areas. Along with their missionary activities they started founding many schools. He was a pioneer of western education in Manipur. Watkin Roberts, with his Indo-Burma Thadou-Kuki pioneer mission worked in the south of Manipur hills. However, the real impact of education could not be felt until the end of the Anglo-Manipuri war of 1891 i.e. war of Independence (Khongjom War) broke out. This had caused a set back to the progress gained in the field of spreading Western system of education. With the conquest of Manipur by the British in the same year, a new king named Churachand Singh

ascended the throne with the consent of the then British government. In the year 1907 Maharaja Churachand Singh came back to Imphal after completing his education from the Mayo College, Ajmer. He took keen interest in imparting western education to his subjects, and new developments in the field of education in Manipur followed.

After the Manipur war of 1891, the Middle English School established by Johnstone was re-opened on 1st June 1892 in a temporary building as the former had been destroyed. The number of students was 113 on 31st March 1893 (Shanti 2001). And lower primary schools were established in that year one each in the rural area and the hill area. During the subsequent years, more schools were opened. During 1893-94 two L.P. Schools, one at Sekmai and another at Mao Thana, were opened. In 1895, Tera Keithel L.P.School and Pettigrw L.P. School were established.

Schools established in Manipur during 1885-1900.

| S.No. | Name of the School | Type of the Institutions | Year of establishment |
|-------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Johnstone | MiddleEnglishSchool | 1885-86 |
| 2. | Sekmai | L.P. School | 1892-93 |
| 3. | Mao Thana | ” | 1893-94 |
| 4. | Pettigrew | ” | 1894-95 |
| 5. | Tera | ” | 1894-95 |
| 6. | Phoijing | ” | 1894-95 |
| 7. | Thangmeiband | ” | 1895-96 |
| 8. | Moirang | ” | 1895-96 |
| 9. | Ukhrul | ” | 1896-97 |
| 10. | Regiment, 4 th Assam Rifles | ” | 1897-98 |
| 11. | Thoubal | ” | 1897-98 |
| 12. | Ningthoukhong | ” | 1898-99 |
| 13. | Thanga | ” | 1898-99 |
| 14. | Moirangkhom | ”, (Girl’s) | 1899-1900 |

Source: Shanti, Maimom. Development of Education in Manipur, 2001, pp20.
Th. Mangoljao Singh, Western Education in Manipur, Vol-I & II,, 1989,pp.11, 14, 16 & 18.

As modern education expanded, there arose the need for setting up administration machinery and for this the Department of Education was established in 1910. By 1900, the number of schools had reached 15 including the Middle English schools. In 1920 -21, the Middle English School were converted into full-fledged High Schools. It was affiliated to Calcutta University in 1921-22. Earlier however, a large number of students were sent –off to different –places like Shillong,

Dacca, Sylhet, Guwahati etc. to pursue with their studies in different fields like General Education, Medical, Engineering, Agriculture etc. At the same time, the pressure generated by the awareness of the parents about the necessity of English education for their children and the task of such facilities led to the establishment of Private Schools. Then in the next decade that is by the end of 1941, there have been significant increases in both the numbers of schools and enrolment figures.

Later on in 1945, Maharani Dhanamanjuri Devi took keen interest in spreading western ^{education} and she established the first college in Manipur, Dhanamanjuri College after her name. With the functioning of Dhanamanjuri College Manipur entered into the arena of modern higher education just on the eve of Indian Independence which leads to a dramatic increase in the numbers of educational institutions. Some colleges like Imphal College, Manipur College, Oriental College, Moirang College, Post Graduate training College, G.P. Women's College etc have sprung up at Imphal (Jamini 1989).

Since then there is no looking back and there has been an immense expansion of English education in Manipur. With the growing appreciation of the advantages of higher education by the Manipuris, a new orientation in their general outlook appeared. The English education which was once treated reluctantly, became the most appealing and promising avenue for preparing to erect up a career of children. The study of English is introduced on the day the child entered the school.

Under the influence of western liberal education, many Manipuris began to decry the evils like slavery, polygamy, untouchability etc. in traditional society. Western education also helped in the emergence of a new class of people in the society i.e. the middle class intellectuals, who were educated, imbibed with modern ideas and thoughts. In this way, since beginning of the 20th century, western education brought great changes in Manipuri society. Superstitions, religious orthodoxy and the evils associated with feudal system were the bane of Manipuri society. Humanistic and enlightened education that the English brought opened the eyes of the Manipuri people and they successfully got rid of these social evils.

The importance of western education was well accepted as the key to modernisation. thus

Education became a key determinant of wealth, status and power . It was accepted as an instrument to enable economic growth, as a means to improve the quality of life, to enhance human resources, and to create new knowledge, new technology and new ways of managing resources.

During the sixties and seventies of the 20th century many people came forward to champion and promote higher education in Manipur. With the object of a wide diffusion of higher English education among the people of Manipur and to bring within the reach of the common people many educational institutions were opened.

2.4 The current state of English education in Manipur:

The current state of English education in Manipur has undergone a drastic change from that of the earlier ones. There has been tremendous expansion of English education in Manipur during the past few decades. English language becomes the language which children are most likely to be taught when they arrive in school. The expansion of English language education is visible and it has become one of the compulsory subjects at all levels- Primary, Secondary, Higher and Professional education. There is a sea change in the curriculum and syllabus of both the government and private schools over the years. Revision was done in the syllabus and curriculum of state run institutions. It was considered as a move to modernize the ailing government schools. More English texts were brought in. This has brought about some uniformity in syllabi between the government and private schools.

As modern education expanded, there is a transformation in Manipuris society, and language education in particular cannot be overemphasized. Now English has often been considered as a language of benefit, modernization and of opportunity. Manipuri society today becomes more competitive and modernised. With the introduction of English education certain new routes are opened and our society even could maintain a close link with the current trends becoming a part and parcel of the global world. In contemporary Manipuri society the roles attached to and the function rendered by English language is tremendous. Whether it is in the field of IT, Science,

Medicine, Trade and Commerce, Administration, Legal system and so on, certain changes are taking place. Everybody is proud of English education because the study of this language is considered a passport for employment or lucrative jobs in the present days. The credit of all these modernizing process goes to English education. Keeping in view of the role played by English in Manipuri Society, greater effort should be made to spread and develop the teaching and learning of English.

With the quantitative expansion of education, came the problem of quality and standard of education. In order to develop the teaching /learning process of English education in Manipur, we need to find out those problems and difficulties that language teachers and learners' often tussle while teaching/learning a second language. To study with the problems of learning English includes the problems faced by learners mainly the problems of communicative skills i.e. spoken and written form. Learning a second language or another language is not an easy task. There is no short cut way while learning a language. Whenever a language is learnt or acquired one is faced with the problems of errors. Once the learners' errors are understood than a various strategies can be made in order to sort out or to rectify those problematic areas in order to reach the target language.

2.5 Chapter summary:

In this chapter it has been found that English is the most studied subject in the world today. In a global society composed of numerous

nations speaking different languages, having English as a common medium for communication has resulted in the need to educate hundreds of millions in the language skills needed for success in the spheres of education, business, academia, and the media. The status of English can be considered from the following points of view:

- (i) English as an international language.
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- (iii) English as a link language.
- (iv) English as a library language.

Whatever may be the total figure, English at the end of the twentieth century is more widespread, more widely spoken and written than any other language of the planet, the first truly global language. We have further studied about the spread of English in India and then in Manipur in particular. English may be learnt either as a second language or as a third language, but being the most important link language co-ordinating all the regions of India, English language is a necessity. English has become one of the official languages of the country with the status of associate national language and mastery of English is considered a social and educational accomplishment. Three states of the North-East: Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland have granted statutory recognition of English by accepting it as their sole official language. The chapter further discussed that in Manipur, English is recognised as the associate

official language. With the growing appreciation of the advantages of higher education by the Manipuris, a new orientation in their general outlook appeared. The English education which was once treated reluctantly, became the most desirable avenue for every Manipuri citizen. English education plays a major role in the transformation of the Manipuri society. Under the influence of western liberal education, many Manipuris began to decry the evils like slavery, polygamy, untouchability etc. in traditional society. During the sixties and seventies of the 20th century many people came forward to champion and promote higher education in Manipur. There has been tremendous expansion of English education in Manipur during the past few decades. Manipuri society today becomes more complicated, competitive and modernised. With the introduction of English education certain new routes are opened and our society even could maintain a close link with the current trends becoming a part and parcel of the global world. Keeping in view of the role played by English in Manipuri society, greater effort should be made to spread and develop the teaching and learning of English. Therefore English has often been termed as a language of modernization and of opportunity.