
RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Present Situation of the Manipuri Meitei Language : A Study of the Socio-Cultural Aspects of Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to highlight the real context of the Manipuri Meitei language that exists in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been known as a monolingual country since its independence in 1971. Manipuri Meitei, like other indigenous community, must adhere to the country's multilingualism. After learning their mother tongue, Meitei people begin to communicate with the local Bengali community in which they live. Furthermore, throughout the academic phase, Meitei pupils need to study basic Bangla and English as well. In recent days, Multilingualism has become a threat to Meitei indigenous community. In a situation, this study involves finding out the historical background of the Manipuri Meitei language community in Bangladesh and how their language has been associated with their culture, arts, and literature beyond multilingualism. Furthermore, the researcher tried to investigate the attitude of Meitei different aged group generations of using Bangla and English in their daily life conversation. In this research, the researcher follows qualitative methods by doing some interviews and FGD (Focus group discussion).

KEYWORDS

Meitei language, Multilingualism, Bilingualism, Indigenous language, Meitei generation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every citizen of a country has his or her own linguistic rights whether he or she belongs to the mainstream society or not. Linguistic rights mean the rights to learn and to use one's mother tongue (Arzoz, 2007). In this research paper, the researcher highlights the situation of Manipuri Meitei indigenous people in Bangladesh in using their own mother tongues. Indigenous people have been living in Bangladesh from pre-colonial period with their own cultural uniqueness. Though they are living in a country which fought for its language right in 1952, concerning their own languages they are now marginalized constitutionally, economically, and socially. They have little space for using their languages socially and academically. Thus, the researcher has tried focused on finding out the facts which are depriving Manipuri Meitei people of using their own vernaculars in multilingual context. The researcher will attempt to gather data from Meitei communities, to know how Meitei culture and tradition play a significant role in preserving their individualism.

1.1. Manipuri Indigenous Community

The manipuris are one of the many indigenous communities living at Sylhet division. Manipuris are one of the major ethnic communities of Bangladesh. They migrated to Bangladesh during the reign of Rajarshi Bhagyachandra (1764–1789) and the process was accelerated by the Manipuri-Burma war. After the war with Burma, Manipur was ruled by the Burmese invaders for about seven years. During that period, King Chourajit Singh accompanied by a large following of Manipuri subjects moved to areas – now in Bangladesh. At present they live in different places of Sylhet Division, like Kamalganj, Sreemongal, Kulaura and

Baralekha thanas of Moulvi Bazar district; Chunarughat thana of Habiganj district and Chhatak thana of Sunamganj district (Heritage, DailyStar,2009). According to the 1991 population census, there were about 25,000 Manipuris in Bangladesh (Banglapedia).

1.2. Meitei Manipuri:

According to historian Raj Mohan Nath(1948), "Mei-theis are clearly people of this land, meaning people coming from central China because the word 'mei-tei' or 'mei-thei' means other people or people of Thai or Tai as in the case of Mizo means 'hill people'. The word Meitei is perhaps a twisted form of 'moitei' meaning two phratries or two halves of one clan of great Kuki Chin group." (Raj Mohan Nath, The background of Assamese culture, 1948).

1.3. Meitei Manipuri language

Manipuri belongs to Tibeto-Burman sub family of the Sino-tibetan language family. It is locally known as Meiteilon (the Meitei + Lon language) or Meiteilon. The official language of Manipur, India is Manipuri Meitei. All groups use it as their common language; or as lingua franca. Since August 20, 1992, it has been included among the Indian constitution's eight scheduled languages. We have found two Meitei communities living in Bangladesh as Meitei Loi (Chakpa) and Pang-gal (Manipuri Muslim, Pang-gan). Compared to India, comprehension of Meitei in Bangladesh is more difficult.

1.3.1. Meitei Dialects

Meitei contains various dialects; however, in more recent years the broadening of communication, as well as intermarriage, has caused the differences between these dialects to become nearly insignificant. The only exceptions to this occurrence are the speech differences of the dialects found in Tripura, Bangladesh and Myanmar. The exact number of dialects of Meitei is unknown. (enwiki-Meitei language).

Meitei language exhibits a degree of regional variation. Meitei proper, Loi and Pangal are the three primary dialects of Meitei language. The introduction of new sounds and tone changes are the main characteristics that distinguish the dialects of Meitei. Among the three Meitei proper is regarded as the standard dialect and is said to be more vibrant than the other two. The following table shows some minor dialectal differences.

Standard Meitei	Loi	Pangal	English translation
Chaaba	Chappa	Chaaba	To eat
Kappa	Kapma	Kappa	To weep
Saabiba	Saapipu	Saabiba	To make
Thamba	Thampa	Thamba	To put
Chuppiba	Chuppipa	Chuppiba	To kiss

Table:01-Devi(2002) compares the Imphal, Andro, Koutruk, and Kakching dialects of Meitei(Meitei language,Wikipedia,2020)

1.3.2. Meitei Script

Meitei language has its own script. It was used until the 18th century. The ruler of Manipur kingdom Pamheiba introduced Hinduism, banned the use of Meitei script and adopted the Bengali script. In Bangladesh and India at some places Bengali script is gradually being replaced by the Meitei script. In Bangladesh at Sylhet, a NGO organization called ECDO has played a major role in spreading the awareness about its own script. Going back to Meitei script's history, it has been found that, many Meitei documents were destroyed at the beginning of the 18th century during the reign of Hindu converted king Pamheiba, under the instigation of the Bengali Hindu missionary. Between 1709 and the middle of the 20th century, the Meitei language was written using the Bengali script. During the 1940s and 1950s, Meitei scholars began campaigning to bring back the Old Meitei (Old Manipuri) alphabet. In 1976 at a writer's conference, all the scholars finally agreed on a new version of the alphabet containing a number of additional letters to represent sounds not present in Meitei when the script was first developed. The current Meitei alphabet is a reconstruction of the ancient Meitei script. (Omniglot, Manipuri: Meitei/Meteilon).

During the early 1980, different schools of Manipur practiced Meitei alphabets for written purpose. Meitei language belongs to a syllabic alphabet in which consonants all have an inherent vowel /a/. There are some other vowels which are written as independent letters or by using diacritical marks that are written above, below, before or after the consonant they belong to. The interesting

thing is that, each letter is named after a part of the human body (enwiki- Meitei language). The two special tribes of Manipur called Maring and Limbu have some texts that were written in the Meitei script.

1.4. The socio cultural values associated with the Meitei language:

The art and culture of Manipuri (Meitei) origins are deeply rooted in the traditional rituals and philosophies of Manipur, India, serving as a living legacy of the nation for at least two millennia. The artistic expressions and cultural practices of the Manipuris are distinctly unique and well-recognized globally. Their various forms of art, whether folk, classical, or contemporary, exhibit distinct styles and movements. It is quite rare to encounter a Manipuri girl who lacks talent in singing or dancing. Sankirtana is a type of worship and prayer that is closely related to people's daily lives. Now-a-days, a sequence of Sankirtana in its many stages marks the life cycle of Manipuris: Swasthi puja (the sixth day after birth). Annaprasana, Karnavedha (accepting the sacred thread), Vivah (marriage), and Mrityu (death and related rites). The following is a quick description of Manipuri's major religious festivals: .

*Lai-Haraoba

Lai-Haraoba is the ancient greatest and rich festival amongst the other festivals of Manipuris. The festival is celebrated one in a year in a locality or village or a clan relate with Meitei culture. The word Lai stands for God and Haraoba stands for pleasing. The Lai haraoba is a festival played by human being to pleasing the God for His creation and every form of lives on this earth. This festival is performed in front of a particular Lalingthou(God) and Lairembi(Goddess).The venue of the performance is known as Laibung. The Lai Haraoba is conducted with the help of three ritual functionaries called Maiba, Maibi. and Penakhongba.Lai haraoba is not only a culture event but it is also a depiction of the early Meitei civilization which shows that human beings basic needs for example food, shelter and clothing are the main important issues of life.

*Ras-Leela

The biggest of the festival of Manipuris are MahaRasLeela observed during the full moon period in the month of Kartik.Manipuri of Bangladesh observe this festivals with full rites,especially at village Madhabpur in Kamalganj upazila of Moulavibazar district. A cultural programme of songs and dances entirely dedicated to the Supreme God is an essential part of these festival.

Ras leela is based on the sport or play of Lord Krishna along with the gopis. The five different types of Ras leela are

- Maha Ras
- Basanta Ras
- Kunja Ras
- Nitya Ras
- Diva Ras

*Manipuri Dance and music

Manipuri dance has two schools of technique-Bishnupriya and Meitei-and both are complementary to each other. Even Bengali music conforming to the Manipuri dance style is also used. Since 1976 the Sylhet station of Radio Bangladesh has been broadcasting on fortnightly basis a regular programme of Manipuri music and in due course Manipuri Lalitkala Academy was entrusted with the task of supervising it.In reality the abiding influence of pure temple oriented dance and music in all spheres of Manipuri life has rendered this tribal culture vastly rich and deeply attractive to the people at home and abroad.

The various chapters of its manifestation include natpala ,rakhual, khopausi, rasnritya, padabali, arati ,leelabilash, nabakirtan., joydevpala and the holy ceremony.Looking comprehensively, the Manipuri dance, music and the literary thoughts, language, emotion, appeal, choice of words, sharpness of expression, depth feelings and warmth of ambience as found in the dance of stories. Some of the famous Manipuri dance dramas are Manipuri Nartan, Chitrangada, Leelabilash, Khamba Thoibi, and Laiharuba. Rich literature on dance and music inherited by Manipuri culture by such eminent writers as poet Joydev,Narod, Sri Chaitannya, Vidyapati, Chandidas, Govindadas, Krishnadas Kabiraj,Damodor Sen, Nahari Chakravarti, Bharatmuni, Thakur Narottomdas, Rabindranath Tagore, Nadia Singha, Bipin Singha, Gayotri Chattopadhyaya and Kaliprasad Singha also made immense contribution to enriching it.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many theories about the origin of the Meitei Manipuris but their true origin still remains a mystery. According to Col. Shakespear, the Meitei Manipuris are part of the Kuki class of Assam. Laureate philologist Sir Dr. George Abraham Grierson has expressed the view that the language of the Meitei Manipuris has many similarities with the Chinese and Burmese language. T. H. Hudson writes in his book "The Naga Tribes of Manipur. The Nagas, Kukis, and Manipuris (Meiteis) descended from a common ancestor, who had three sons who became the progenitors of those tribes of Manipur. The Nagas, Kukis, and Manipuris (Meiteis) descended from a common ancestor, who had three sons who became the progenitors of those tribes of Manipur." Among the Meitei Manipuris there are seven sub clans:

1. Ningthouja
2. Khumon
3. Moirang
4. Ongon
5. Louang
6. Chengly
7. Khabangaloba

Meitei is the language of the Meitei people, and it can be categorized into the Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman subfamily of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages (Grimes 2000:394). This fact, perhaps even more than their facial features, marks them as having their origins in the east.

Like other indigenous groups, the Meitei Manipuri's have their own language and alphabet. Children talk with their mother tongue at home yet school uses Bangla at the mode of instruction. At the result most of the Meitei children cannot adjust with the school environment outside their school community and also cannot understand reading materials. Learning Bangla language and adjust with the new language seem to be very hard for them. Most of the children cannot share their problem with the teacher because of fear and shame. They also find difficulties to communicate with majority community at school. (Ahmed, 2025).

The Meitei people, primarily residing in the Sylhet division and some of the in Chittagong hill tracts are characterized by their profound heritage, which includes language, art, music, dance and spirituality. Their existence in Bangladesh originates from historical migration from the adjacent state of Manipur in India, an occurrence that initiated a distinctive cultural symbiosis. The Meitei Manipuri people significantly contribute to the cultural identity of Bangladesh. Their ancient customs, particularly the renowned Manipuri dance, the observance of Rasa-lila and elaborate handloom weaving, have transcended their community to become emblem of national pride. Meitei women are distinguished for their proficiency in weaving, creating textiles celebrated for their vibrant patterns and traditional motives. (Azad & Rahaman, 2025).

As globalization and modernization persists in transforming societal norms, the community's traditional lifestyle and language face escalating threats, rendering the preservation of its history more imperative than ever. (Azad and Rahaman, 2025).

This research aims to highlight the distinctive cultural, social, and linguistic contribution of the Meitei indigenous community to preserve their uniqueness in Bangladesh. The study uses qualitative research design to investigate linguistics, social and cultural dynamics of Bangladesh's Meitei group. To learn about the opinions of general Meitei people of two group ages (From 16 to 25 and 30 to 50 years), in depth-interviews have been conducted. In order to understand the current state of Meitei language and how they assist to maintain their own identity in Bangladesh, the researcher made an arrangement for a face to face interview with Meitei researcher, social worker and Meitei artists.

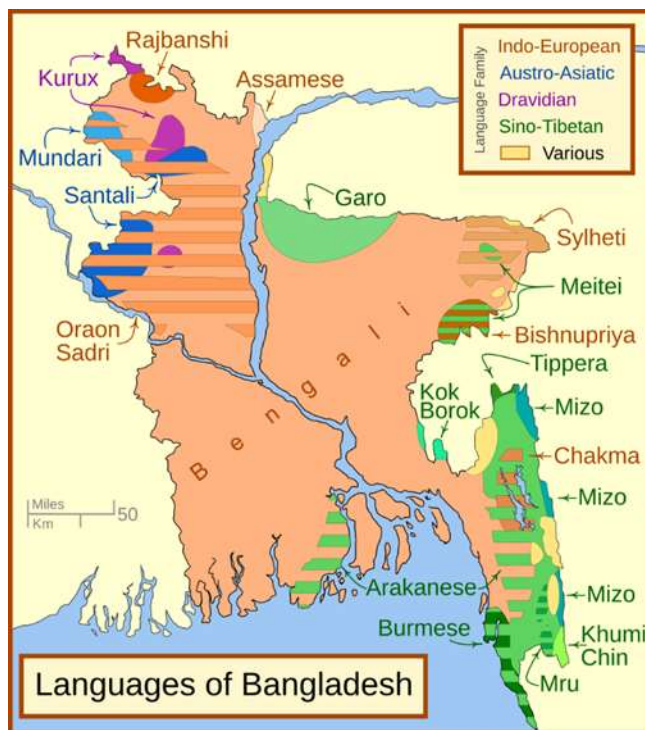
3. SELECTION AND SPECIFICATION OF PRESENT STUDY AREA

Paying attention on all places of Bangladesh where Meitei people live like all districts of Sylhet, all local Manipuri areas, villages, Union Parishad is very expensive and long term process for finding out the present situation of Meitei language in Bangladesh. The study was carried out in locations, where the Meitei community predominates, such as Sylhet main city and other part of Sylhet district with sizable Meitei population. These sites were picked to offer a thorough understanding of the many customs and ways of life within the community. So, I have arranged my research area into two specific Systems.

- Sylhet main city's Manipuri Meitei Concentrated areas.
- Manipuri Meitei Inhabitant in one main district and a Meitei concentrated village.

3.1. Research area

This research is basically an area based work. The Meitei Manipuri mainly live in particular places in Sylhet city and villages. The researcher has choose one specific village area Kamalganj at Moulavibazar, Sylhet and some places of Sylhet main city like Senpara at Shibganj, Lamabazar, Manipuri Rajbari, Mirjajangle and Machimpur.



Map-01: Ethnologic map, 2010

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Sampling:

In this research, purposive sampling is used for collecting data. I have collected data from two kinds of people whose mother tongue is Meitei and they only use this language in their daily life at most of the places but they also know Bangla and the other types who are used to following the multilingualism. (They use Meitei, Bangla, English and local language). The questionnaire is divided into two parts. One part is for group age between 16 to 25 years old (Meitei Young generation) and other part is for middle aged people whose age is between 30 to 50 years old. Each part consists of twenty questions and almost there were 25 participants in total in two groups.

Questionnaire is prepared for two aged groups-

- a. Young Generation (From 14 to 25 years old)
- b. Middle Age and Old aged generation (From 30 to 85 years old)

2.Resource persons

- A. Meitei Language Researcher
- B. Meitei young educated people
- C. Manipuri NGO (ECDO)
- D. Meitei Radio artist
- E. Meitei Dancer

4.2. Data Collection Procedure:

Two procedures are used in the data gathering approach of this study.

1. In Depth Interview
2. Focus Group Discussion

1. In Depth Interview: Semi structured questionnaire is prepared for asking question to the participants based on different ages. In this type of interview, I could able to identify their linguistic skill and knowledge of their own Meitei language, culture and historical background. The overall situation of their language remained veil in this context, so another two ways had been received for this situation.

- i. Focus group discussion(FGD)
- ii. Data collection from resource persons

i. Focus group discussion: For this discussion, one group is selected from age 21 to 25 years old. Some of them are studying at different universities and some of them have already associated with several organizations regarding their culture and arts. In their discussion part, they continued their conversation into two areas.

No-1- Discussion about the Manipuri Meitei dance festival they have recently joined at "Manipuri Dance Festival, 2025" at Imphal, Manipur, India. (20 minutes)

No-2- Discussion about the situation and their thought about their Meitei language usage in daily life. (30 minutes).

The whole conversation was recorded in audio tape recorder to finding out the nature of using Bangla, English and Sylheti dialect in Meitei language. Moreover, the researcher also tried to investigate how fluently the young generation used their mother tongue in normal conversation. In this aspect, the researcher could able to observe how frequently they use other languages by doing code-mixing and code-switching in Meitei language.

ii. Data Collection from Resource Persons: The objective of this research is to uncover the structure and dynamics of phenomenon that are its subject. In this procedure, resource persons are included the Meitei language and literature specialists, the Meitei writer, the NGO (ECDO) community, and the Meitei artists. According this flow, the researcher followed some techniques to present the data which were planned into some specific areas such as follow:

- a. Key Interview
- b. Questionnaire
- c. Focus Group Discussion

2. Focus Group Discussion(FGD): In this method, the researcher collected data from Meitei young generations (Age 21 to 25 years old). The researcher found that, Meitei language is used by all Meitei generations in their family. So, Meitei language is not in endangered position in Bangladesh as the establishment of this language is very strong from homely. Though they do not practice Meitei script from their childhood but they can communicate(orally) in Meitei language with their community. Another significant sign is that, most of the Meitei people are educated and they can write Bangla language as well. Some of them could learn to write in Meitei script at an early age but the stress of multilingualism and a lack of practice cause them to lose the script of their mother tongue. Most of the young Meitei even hardly write their name in Meitei script.

4.3. Data Analysis:

Here, the researcher recorded the two young Meitei graduate students to know the attitude of using Meitei language in their daily life. Additionally, the researcher organized this data representation as participants based on the previously indicated target individuals.

No1 Participant

Moyeng Bam Memita

Age-24

Education-Graduate from Sylhet Agricultural University

Place-Gopaltilla, Sylhet

'My first language is Meitei. I use my mother tongue at home, with my Meitei friend, neighbor, and relatives. From childhood we don't practice our Meitei language except talking. Most of the time we use some of Bengali and English words in our spoken language. The present situation of Meitei language in our country is not so rich like Manipur, India. There are some tonal differences between Bangladeshi and Manipur's Meitei language. I feel that the actual pronunciation and tone of Meitei mayek have some differences than Indian Manipuri and it can be easily identified by Manipur's Manipurians when we go to visit there. At last, if I present my opinion about the holistic situation, I will tell you that some of our own lack of interest and for some national problem Meitei language practicing has remained behind for long days. Some personal social organization have been working from primary level and wish it will make better platform for Meitei Community'.

No-2 Participant

Annanya Seiram Chaity

Age-23

Education-BBA final year from Sylhet Metropolitan University

Place-Shibganj, Senpara, Sylhet

'Hello, I am Chaity. Like other Manipuris my mother tongue is also Meitei Manipuri. When I went to school at 5 years old, at that time I first introduced myself in Bangla language. As I lived in Manipuri Meitei inhabitant area so there was few scope of talking in Bangla language which are very different view from present age. At the first time I felt myself helpless in Bangla learning specially in pronunciation of Bangla alphabets. But, now I feel more comfortable to write and communicate in Bangla language. At home, all of Meitei people talk in Meitei language and we don't feel any uncomfortable to using Meitei language in different areas. The present situation of Meitei language in our country is not so bad as we are very rich in our language, culture, literature in many sectors. Some organization like Manipuri Sahitya Sangsad, Manipuri Language research association in Sylhet have been working for encouraging Meitei child and young generation through different language festival and book fair'.

No3: Participant (As a resource person)

Editor in Chief

Lakshmikanta Singha

Executive director of ECDO (Ethnic Community Development Organization)

ECDO is a non-government and not-for-profit voluntary organization working for the development of different indigenous communities in Sylhet Division, the northeastern corner of Bangladesh. Our aim is to ensure the realization of equality and empowerment amongst indigenous peoples and to eliminate the discrimination against these communities from mainstream society. ECDO has extremely good links with the leaders of local indigenous communities, and as we are indigenous people ourselves, ECDO benefits from having a unique link and bond of trust with its target beneficiaries, and thus greater access in to indigenous communities than might be enjoyed by other, non-indigenous organizations. We utilize this advantage by involving the communities as much as possible in all decision-making processes, and we operate a right-based approach to development.

Project for Manipuri Meitei Children in Mother tongue based learning

A project for Manipuri children was established between a Norwegian NGO group and ECDO community for launching mother tongue based education from 2015 to 2017. This project has been signed for 3 years. ECDO has organized a view exchange meeting with Manipuri students and leaders on 2nd August 2014 at Manipuri Kangshang, Adampur bazar, Kamalgonj, Moulavibazar.

Purpose

Purpose of this project is to ensure the capability of writing own's name, reading in Meitei script. Moreover, ECDO has organized that type of agreement for decreasing the communication gap between two places Manipuri Meitei people.

Manipuri Language Centre

This center has established in each school and it is the part of this project for learning Meitei language.

- a. Acts This center starts their language program from 7am to 9am in every morning.
- b. Compulsory classes are held after finishing of language class.

- c. Manipuri Mathematics, English are also taught in that center for establishing basic knowledge of it.
- d. This center published three different books for different level of students
- e. The first one is called-

1. Manipuri Langdom Lairi , Chapter -1

- f. The second one is called-

2. Manipuri Langdom Lairi, Chapter-2

- g. The third one is called-

3. Manipuri Langdom Lairi, Chapter-3

1. The first chapter is ordered by both Bangla and Meitei language for teaching Manipuri alphabets, words, with the help of using Bangla script.

2. The second chapter is also oriented by both Meitei and Bengali language. But, the amount of Meitei alphabets, words and stories are increased than previous chapter.

3. The last one was belonging more than 80% of Meitei language in third year of language learning project and it was the finishing year of that project.

Result

- This little time project (3 years) helps one Meitei student to write his/her name in Meitei script. Now, one Meitei student can also write his or her parents name, address and can also read Meitei books in Meitei script.
- The Norwegian NGO group has become very satisfied to see that improvement and as a result they enhance their time duration for next project from 2018 to 2020 in next 3 years.

Participant 4 (Meitei Artists)

a. Santana Devi

Sylhet Manipuri dance teacher and trainer

'We perform Manipuri dance in both Bangla and Meitei music. But, at Rasleela festival Manipuri Meitei song or padabali becomes more preferable song for dancing at festival. In other festival, like at Shilpakala academy we perform dance at both language. In many national and international dance festival Manipuri dance takes place great attraction to audience. We dance their in Manipuri language (Bishnupriya) which is known as Brajabuli music from Bhanusingher Padabali of Rabindranath Tagore, but our Manipuri gurus or teacher one of them is Maistamuni Singha transformed Rasleela song from Brajabuli to Meitei language. From then, we started to dance in Meitei language music at Rasleela program'.

b. Mayeng Bam Memita

Sylhet radio drama artist

There are two occasions organized by Sylhet radio station for two Manipuri communities. Every Saturday the Meitei community get opportunity to present their cultural tradition on Radio station. There we perform several cultural activities like-

- a. Mridanga, fluet , Kartal, Setar ,Tabla all of Manipuri Meitei musical instruments we play there
- b. Meitei song is played also there and Meitei famous singers perform there such as Rana Singha , famous Manipuri Meitei singer most of the time sings Meitei and Rabindra songs at Sylhet radio station.
- c. Manipuri theatre performance, some dramas in radio like 'Naransing', Mahabharat , Ramayan, Rasleela plays in Meitei language.
- d. Manipuri Meitei poems, stories, novel are also telecasted here by poets, writers and so on.
- e. We do not telecast any news in Meitei language like Manipur radio station in India.

f. So, there is a future plan of telecasting news in Meitei language from Sylhet radio station.

G. Moreover, we have no any Meitei language program from radio station as our purpose is to represent our rich cultural program in the front of Bangladeshi people and arrange entertainment for Meitei people.

Participant 5

Name-A K Sheram

Manipuri language researcher and writer

To represent the present situation of Meitei language in Bangladesh, he described some language organizations, national education policy and Meitei Literature in Bangladesh.

Mother tongue based Education

2010 National Education policy

The government enacted the national education policy in 2010 to ensure a creative, favorable, and joyful environment for the students. specially for indigenous community for their proper protection and congenial developments. Here the most important Meitei language took place at first place among six indigenous languages for delivering mother tongue based education from primary level of education. The first meeting was held in 2011 in the presence of education minister for managing 'MTB' or 'Mother tongue based education' project among indigenous community according to the National education policy, 2010.

After that meeting the activities of mother based education is progressing day by day. In this meeting, the most valuable indigenous languages (according to the priority of population). Chakma, Garo or Mandi ,Sadri, Tripura and Marma languages books will be provided in the next year. In the first meeting, Meitei language was brought to light in front of the members of committee by considering its rich language, script, cultures, speakers and so on to include in this project as other five ethnic languages in this year.

But, there was great problem of including Meitei language on MTB programed education .The number of the Meitei population were the main obstacle of progressing of pre-primary level in Meitei language. In Bangladesh, Meitei communities are only 25,000 in total living at the different districts of Sylhet. Most of them are living in Villages of Moulavibazar district. In city, they live small in number like few groups in various areas. Those are the reasons of declining Meitei language from the first project. So, there is an expectation that on the next project Meitei language must be considered at first for delivering education for Meitei child through mother language.

Manipuri Language Organization

Manipuri Language Research and Development organization

This organization established in 2011 and the president of this organization is Mr. A K Sheram, Manipuri writer and language researcher. Manipuri language research and development organization upholds 7 schools at the various places of sylhet city. The activities of this school are :

- 1.Manipuri Meitei inhabitant areas both in village and other parts of Sylhet city is selected for providing education.
- 2.Every Friday this school opens for schooling Meitei students for conveying mother tongue based education by their language.
- 3.The curriculum of this schools are-
 - a. Meitei alphabet education
 - b. To make learn Meitei word according to alphabet
 - c. Gradually teaching Meitei sentence making, taking care of their ability of reading in Meitei language
 - d. Meitei story, rhyme, poem reading practice in class.

In Manipur, the north east part of the India, the state language is Manipuri (Meitei 53%) and it is spreading all over the state in time. It is quite sure that on the next 4 to 5 years Manipur state will start publish all of their written documents and newspaper in Meitei language. So, it is the imminent peril of Bangladeshi Manipuri people for take that issue thoughtfully. The communication between two places of Manipuri will face big problem for this crisis. Hence, Big communication gap between those two relatives

will be increase day by day if that situation cannot be picked up by authorities of two countries. If the Manipuri people of Bangladesh especially young generations do not learn their Meitei alphabets, script, writing system they will be refrain from all communication of Manipur state. Manipuri newspaper, functions, literature, language programs are performed in every year in India and Bangladesh as together. Here, the communication will be obstacle on that environment. As a result, to decrease the communication gap between two inhabitants, those programs are accepted by Manipuri authorities.

•Bangladesh Manipuri Literature Organization, Sylhet (Bangladesh Manipuri Sahitya Sangsad, Sylhet) :

It is also continued by A k Sheram, meitei language researcher and writer first established in 1975.several kinds of stories, rhymes, novels , poems are established from here in Meitei language. Most of the literatures are written in Bangla script because maximum Meitei people can not read Meitei script. They can pronounce their Meitei language with the help of using Bangla script.

There are some books by Mr. A k Sheram in Meitei language given in below :

- Basanta Kunnipalgi loirang,1982(Manipuri poem)
- Nongoubi,2001(Manipuri Short Story edition)
- Manipuri Mayek Mapi,2012(Manipuri alphabet or script learning book)
- Manipuri Shoktak Khudam,1999(Manipuri article)
- Manipuri Nachom,2008(4th edition)
- Lommangnoba,2012(Novel of Manipuri language)
- Dictionary of Manipuri language ,2015 (Bangla to English and Manipuri)
- Bangladeshki thommoikondogi (translation-From the heart of Bangladesh);2017,(poems, stories and articles of Manipuri languages in Meitei script).

***Manipuri Language Day/Festival**

In this festival, students receive a book from organizer which is about Meitei alphabet , words and sentences. In the specific time an examination is held among Meitei students at the different districts of Sylhet division like Kamalganj, Bhanugach , Srimangal, Chunarughat, Habiganj, and Sunamganj. Then the selected Meitei students from 4 districts participate in Sylhet division's commemoration. In this competition about 10 or 15 students are announced as winner and they receive valuable rewards such as Crest, Meitei story books and so on. This festival is celebrated by all Meitei people in every year in whole Sylhet division. At first, secondary and higher secondary grades students participated in that festival. But now higher secondary school has been removed from this occasion rather the Secondary part is divided into two categories.

This language festival is celebrated by Meitei children in every year for encouraging themselves as a capable Meitei learner who can write and read Meitei script at any situation. It is also the way of encouraging Meitei students to love and practice Meitei language in their way of life. (AK Sheram,2022).

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In my research, the total result can be classified as three ways according to data collection sources.

- 1.Findings from resource persons
- 2.Result from Questionnaire
3. Outcomes from FGD or Focus group discussion

1.Findings from Resource persons: They represent their personal activities of maintaining different language related program and organization according to my interview. From their opinion, I have found that most of the Meitei children start their speaking in Meitei language and after 3 years they start to speak at Bangla language. In that situation they cannot learn their Meitei alphabets from home. So, the Manipuri Language research center encourages those children to learn Meitei Mayek or alphabet for building strong language skill, this image is the representation Sylhet area and most of the Meitei guardian are not so interested to send their children in school for learning own language writing system. The researcher told me that the reason behind this issues are-Busyness of city's Meitei people, lack of motivation as there is no any hope of Meitei language in profession like the necessity pf Bangla and English language. Again, from this I have found the future language planning of Meitei language which will be included next Ethnic language project by our government. Manipuri Meitei literature is practiced by many young generation and many of them are very interested to write, speak in Meitei language. But, the Meitei who are not involve in Meitei literature they do not keep any news of Meitei language and literature. Further they do not show any personal interest to practicing their language and script in leisure time. Though most of the researcher and writers are trying to encourage Meitei people to keep their linguistic

identity through those practices, city's people are more less interested than village people. So, it is the holistic image of Meitei language in Sylhet city that I have found.

2. Results from Questionnaire : As my questions were divided into two groups people, so here the result was some different. 1. Intergenerational gap : Most of the young Meitei people expressed that they started to learn Bangla language from home. Some of them study in English medium school and like a Bengali child who study in English medium school cannot write Bangla well and also feel complexity to understand Bangla formal words. Again, they talk Meitei language at home but many words they use, are Bangla. Though, their old generation use different words in Meitei but they do not. 2. Script loss : There was a significant view that about 98% Meitei young people cannot know the name of months, numbers, weeks, proverb in Meitei language. Someone can tell the name of numbers from 1 to 10 but most of the Meitei young people cannot tell. 3. Language alternation : Code switching and Code mixing is very common to all young adult Meitei people. They pronounce different English word like Bengali and they have some Meitei words but they pronounce those words in English.

3. Outcomes from Focus group discussion : The old generation use Meitei language in most of the time. Like young they do little mix Bangla language in their language. They told me that, the Meitei child first learn Bangla language when they first go to school, they practice with their Bengali neighbor, friends, national conference and so on. Most of the guardian are not interested to teach their child in Meitei language at the age of 3 to 4 years. Again they use many proverb in their daily life which are very unknown to Meitei young generation. According to my survey and the opinion of researcher about 90% Meitei people above 45 years old are literate and they can write in Bangla script. Like others, they are also forgetting Meitei alphabets for the lack of using. Old people can tell the names of month, weeks and numbers but most of them cannot write their name in Meitei script. As a result, they are getting trouble in communication with their relatives who are living Manipur in India. They also can't their share and ideas with them through Meitei script.

6. CONCLUSION

In this research I have discussed about the present situation of Manipuri Meitei language in Bangladesh in a control way. To know about the whole perspective issue, we need more time to identify so that the research become more treasured in that aspect.

Finally, doing this research I can realize that here the main issue was to deliver language through mother tongue based education and it was the most precious part of that research. Providing education via indigenous language is the main specific point of understanding the overall language situation in Bangladesh. Within Bangladesh's socio-cultural framework, research on the Manipuri Meitei people emphasizes their rich cultural inheritance, social dynamics, and linguistic individualism. Despite its diverse customs and significant role in promoting intercultural variations, the Meitei community faces challenges such as cultural degradation, inadequate representation, and linguistic imperialism. The study emphasizes, how important it is to protect their legacy and meet their needs through development initiatives, awareness campaigns, and inclusive laws. In terms of bilingualism and linguistic imperialism, the researcher attempted to observe the current state of the Manipuri Meitei language. After collecting different data from interviews, the researcher observed that Meitei language is very much dependent on their culture. This Meitei dance, literature and different religious festivals keep alive the Meitei language and tradition together. Furthermore, young and middle aged Meitei people are accustomed to speaking Meitei with their family and community both indoors and outdoors. The youthful Meitei generations occasionally utilize more Bangla and English vocabulary in their everyday conversations than middle aged or older Meitei people which shows distinction between these two age groups. In addition to being uninterested in using proverbs and idioms in Meitei, the majority of the younger generation does not know the names of the years, months or weeks. Moreover, using attitude of language, areas, scope are also important factors which are described here. In this study the researcher gathered data from two areas of Sylhet main city where majority Meitei people reside in. The researcher was unable to visit more Meitei residents due to time constraints and remote distance. Another drawback of this research is that it was carried out the researcher's own. In future, the researcher will try to cover more Meitei inhabitant's area so that we can know the overall situation of Meitei language situation in Bangladesh. As we know, every citizen has his or her own rights to talk themselves in their mother tongue, by this, I hope here my purpose of this research has been symbolized in an explicit way.

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