

Original Research Article

The Status and Role of English as a Language of Administration in Bhutan

Karma Tshering

Senior Teacher, Wangbama Central School, Bhutan

Corresponding Author: Karma Tshering, E-mail: karma0543@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: June 21, 2020

Accepted: August 17, 2020

Volume: 2

Issue: 4

KEYWORDS

Dzongkha, Nepali (Lhotsampa),
Sharchop, vernaculars,
multicultural, multilingual

ABSTRACT

English as a language of the world has reached into the tiny Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan from the time of the colonisation of India by the British and this paper examined the status and role of English as a language of administration in the country. English in Bhutan is regarded as EFL while Nepal and Bangladesh has the status of L2. Therefore, why not the status of English in Bhutan is L2 as the country lies in the same geographical zone- sharing borders with India and Nepal. The results presented in this paper accounts with various views and opinions given by 104 respondents from different organisations. The data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics and the study found out that English in Bhutan has the status of L2 by having adopted it as a language of administration, education, media, businesses, etc. The findings revealed that English is used more than the national language Dzongkha with more than (80%) of the tasks being performed in English in various domains. The study also showed 100% English usage in banking, communication outside the country and 90-100% in e-communication, confirming the fact that English is used as a language of administration. Interestingly, this study reported that English language is preferred in the families as a language of convenience.

1. Introduction

The linguistic situation in Bhutan is complex as there are nineteen different vernaculars spoken across the country (Gyatsho, 2003, p. 265). As a multilingual society, several dialects are spoken with Dzongkha as an official national language. A significant number of people can communicate effectively in more than one or two languages with English as a learned language from school. With the standardisation of the national language Dzongkha and the impact of rapid globalisation, many prefer to use and speak English in various domains. Besides Dzongkha as a national language, English plays a pivotal role in government, corporations, private, education, business and in mass media. Indeed, it is an interesting fact to investigate how English has reached the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan that has been never conquered, occupied, or governed by an outside power unlike the other Asian countries of India, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, and Myanmar. Bhutan had been an independent state throughout their history and the bilingual system of government, education, media, etc. with English as a major language in various domains. Therefore, how did English reach Bhutan? What made the Bhutanese learn and use English? What is the status and role of English?

Based on the above mentioned arguments, the present study tries to find out the status and role of English as a language of administration in government, corporations, the private sector, international diplomacy and in business. Over the past forty years, beginning 1960s dramatic changes in social, political and economic life in Bhutan have had a marked influence on the development of various fields of life as well as defining the status and role of English language in the country.

English in Bhutan is similar to the Indian English as Bhutan has been allied with India for all its developmental activities and planning from the early 1960s. Gyatsho (2003) stated that the English language proficiency in Bhutan is not only one of the requirements to study abroad, but also very important for the overall competitiveness of young Bhutanese professionals in the labor market, both in government and private sectors. In light of the above statement, this paper shall focus on the status

and role of English in Bhutan in the perspectives of English as a language of administration or as the associate official working language.

Kachru's (2005, p. 14) concentric circle of Asian Englishes does not show Bhutan although the country is within South Asia, where English cannot be considered as a foreign language. English penetrated the Bhutanese soil after the arrival of British East India Company in India in 1600 and had already assumed the status of a second language by using it in various domains. Factually, English is the language of administration, education, employment, commerce, and the language of wider communication in Bhutan.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Status and Role of English in the Government organisations, Corporations and Non-Governmental Organisations

According to Lok Sabha Secretariat (2014) diplomatic relations between Independent India and Bhutan were established in 1968 with the appointment of a resident representative of India in Thimphu. The basic framework of India – Bhutan bilateral relations began in 1949 with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the two countries. Neither Dzongkha nor Hindi was used to write the friendship treaty and instead English was favored in such situations guaranteeing its status as a working language.

In 1971, sponsored by India, Bhutan began to develop its foreign relations by joining the United Nations, followed by the gaining of seats in the UN's specialized and related agencies, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Jetro, 2004). Crystal (2003, p. 87) states that English is one of the official languages of the UN structures, that consists of over fifty distinct organs, programmes, and specialized agencies, as well as many regional and functional commissions, standing committees, expert bodies, and other organizations. There are several UN bodies in Bhutan such as UNDP, UNESCO, and WFP, in which English serve as the principal language in these offices to carry out the administrative work.

Bhutan's participation in international organizations found Dzongkha incapable of serving external functions of administration and government. The use of Dzongkha was purely for internal advantages and therefore, English became the language of governance and administration to establish diplomatic relations with other countries and to participate with them in international organizations. Crystal (2003, p. 5) states that there are several ways in which a language can be official or semi-official status, being used in certain domains in performing certain official roles. Baugh and Cable (2002, p. 4) makes the point that "English is less loved but more used; French is more loved but less used" and likewise, Dzongkha is loved more but used less and English is loved less but used more in Bhutan. The use of English language in Bhutan can be best illustrated by its role in various domains of the society such as education, business, media, and government, guaranteeing the role as a language of administration.

The constitution of Bhutan recognizes Dzongkha as the official language but it fails to function in the arena of foreign diplomacy, financial institutions, international communication, and even in the global market as the use is restricted only to Bhutan. In this context, the continued use of English in most of Bhutan's linguistic domains guarantees its status and role as a language of administration. The status and the role of English in the country is backed up by its facilitative roles at all levels of the work place nationwide as a language of administration. Many acts and regulations of the country have coded and administered both in Dzongkha and English and it is hard to remove English from its place as a language of administration, wider communication and lingua franca. Thus, as a language of convenience English has already become a popular lingua franca among the people in Bhutan because of its usefulness and facilitative role in the country's social, economic, cultural and political development.

2.2 The Status and Role of English in Education

According to Dorji Penjore (2013), the first school in Bhutan was established in 1914 at Haa after the visit of the first king Ugyen Wangchuck to Kolkatta, India, in 1911 to attend the Coronation Durbar of King George V (1865-1936). The following year another school was founded at the first King's palace in Bumthang, especially for the Crown Prince Jigme Wangchuk and some children of the people serving in the royal court. They were mainly taught English and Tibetan. By 1919-20, there were 21 students at Bumthang and 28 students studying at Haa.

One prominent and much-loved figure in the field of education in Bhutan is Father William Mackey who had joined the Jesuit mission in Darjeeling, India in 1946. In 1963, the King of Bhutan Jigme Dorji Wangchuck invited William Joseph Mackey to become an educator in Bhutan, as part of that country's ongoing modernization efforts. He accepted the invitation and came to Bhutan in October 1963 (Zhao, 2011). Ever since the introduction of a western-style English medium education system in

Bhutan, English was taught as a subject and used as medium of instruction at various levels in schools across the country (Zam, 2008). Gyatsho (2003, p. 272), states almost all the Bhutanese students, if given a chance, will prefer to continue their English studies and will not intend to shift to Dzongkha, as proficiency in English is a determining factor for their career.

Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment (2014) states that the question papers for All Bhutan Common Examinations (class-VI and VIII) and the evaluation of the answer scripts were done outside Bhutan (India) from 1972 to 1981. BCSEA also states that the question papers and the evaluation of answer scripts for high schools (CI-X and XII) were done in India from 1974 to 1996. The high schools in Bhutan were affiliated to the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) New Delhi and the Indian council conducted examinations in Bhutan. This system has inevitably made English the most dominant language in Bhutan with the Indian system of education, curriculum, textbooks, frameworks and the Indian teachers. English is the medium of school curriculum and all major subjects are delivered in English with the exception to Dzongkha subject and environmental subject (EVS) at primary level. School documentation such as maintaining performance reports, evaluation, assessments, and the examination results are all prepared in English in all the schools across the country.

The popularity and the status of English in education is also marked by the enrollment of students from pre-primary to tertiary level education with English as a medium of classroom instruction. Thinley and Maxwell (2013) states that English had already assumed the status of second language with having more than 554 schools with 172,391 students and 11 universities with 9,257 students taking English Medium classes. This indicates the status and the popularity of English is comparatively higher than the national language Dzongkha as a language of administration.

2.3 The Status and Role of English in Business

Francoise (n.d), states that western writers have often projected the image of Bhutan as an isolated country, a kind of autarchic mountainous island. In fact, Bhutan had well established commercial relations with her immediate neighbours to the south: Cooch Bihar, situated in the west and Kamrup situated in the east (which today are two Indian districts in West Bengal and Assam respectively), before the arrival of the British in these regions at the end of the 18th century.

Jetro (2004) stated that “Realizing the need for economic diversification in achieving self-sufficiency and to remove constraints inhibiting its expansion, Bhutan's interactions at the bilateral and multilateral levels have increased substantively”. The author also confirms that the first recorded Indo-Bhutanese trade link was established through the British East India Company in 1774, with the signing of the Anglo-Bhutanese Treaty. Bhutan has very strong trade links within the sub-region of India, Bangladesh, Nepal and a few countries outside the sub-region, pushing for the adoption of English as the principal language of the business and economy.

Language permeates nearly every aspect of a multinational business. It is indeed “the essence of international business”. When businesses span national borders, the issue of language is bound to arise (Storozum, 2013). The popularity of the English language in Bhutan is increasing, driven by its growing adoption in business as Dzongkha cannot be used outside the country. Kamil (2012, p. 63-64), states that English is the lingua franca of today's business world, which enables communication among business practitioners coming from a variety of cultural backgrounds worldwide. Although Dzongkha is a lingua franca in Bhutan, it does not have facilitative functions outside Bhutan. English plays a vital role in international communication and business environment as it does not encounter communication problems with their business partners. The great importance of English as a lingua franca in international business can be determined from maintaining of accounts, price tags, instruction manuals of equipment, and advertising materials. The fact that English is used as a true lingua franca can also be drawn from the International Trade Fair exhibitions. Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been organizing trade fairs since 2010 with the objective to draw more FDI into the country and English is the medium of language used in such functions to perform oral or written communication.

2.4 The Status and Role of English in Mass media and Communication

Owolabi and Nnaji (2013) states “that mass media and information is an essential ingredient in a nation's socio-economic development as it helps to change people's orientation and attitude. The mass media and information in their various forms have a role to play in motivating the people and sensitizing them about the recent innovations to enable them take necessary actions”. English plays a dominant role in the media as a medium for communication within and outside Bhutan.

The main means of mass communication in Bhutan includes newspapers, magazines, newsletters, the radio, television, postal service, telecommunication and electronic communication. All these forms of mass media of communication have become

powerful instruments for the penetration of global culture and the values of a global market into Bhutan. There are several newspapers, magazines and journals published in English and circulated both within and outside the country. Kuensel is the daily national newspaper circulated in the country and Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS), the national radio and TV broadcast center. BBS broadcast hourly radio news in Dzongkha, Sharchop, Nepali and English. A weekly magazine of news is specifically broadcast in English aimed at audiences in other countries, as the use of Dzongkha is restricted only to Bhutan. The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (2011) states that there are more than 90 TV channels in either English or Hindi with only one Bhutanese channel. This clearly explains the dominance of other languages in mass media over Dzongkha. The popularity of English television channel in the media strongly upholds the status of English as a language of wider communication. Moreover, as more Bhutanese are educated both outside and within the country, the use of English has surpassed even that of the national language. In almost all of the government organisations, corporations, private, and business organizations, English is the medium of language used to carry out daily administrative work.

The dominance of English is also found in international travels. According to the Tourism Council of Bhutan (2014), total tourists arrival to Bhutan was recorded 116,224 in 2013. Of the total arrivals, 44,267 were international tourists, and the highest international visitors were from the US with about 6,927 visitors, followed by China with about 4,764, Japan with about 4,015 and Thailand with about 3,494. The tourists from all these different destinations visiting Bhutan cannot speak or understand Dzongkha and they need to speak English, the global language. Crystal (2003, p. 104), states that in the tourist spots of the world, accordingly, the signs in the shop windows are most commonly in English. Restaurant menus tend to have a parallel version in English and the domains of transportation and accommodation are mediated using English as an auxiliary language. Moreover, the safety instructions on international flights, information about emergency procedures in hotels, and directions to major locations are now increasingly in English alongside local languages. There is no signboard without English throughout Bhutan. The shop signs, road signs and public information notices are written in English along with Dzongkha. Therefore, English language is favored for these roles over Dzongkha to gain access to the outside world.

2.5 The Status and Role of English in a Family

Bhutan is a multicultural and multilingual society (Driem, 1994, p. 87-105) with different ethnic groups of Ngalop, Sharchop, Lhotshampa, and other indigenous groups including the Tibetans. Barron-Hauwaert (2010) claims that language of the families would change according to the place of their living and pickup speaking or learning a language of the majority. In fact, bilinguals outnumber monolinguals with more than half of the world's population using more than one language while engaging in the activities basic to human needs. In many societies (eg. Africa, South America, India, and South-East Asia, etc.) bilingualism has long been considered the norm and there has always been a great deal of bilingualism due to intermarriage, meetings, and simply interest in acquiring new languages (Saunders, 1983). Likewise, majority of Bhutanese can speak at least two languages and probably understand one or two others, while some may speak five to six languages. Further, migrations and resettlement of people from different ethnicities in the country has predominantly lead to bilingual families. Crystal (2003, p. 146) states when a community adopts a new language, and starts to use it in relation to all areas of life, there is inevitably going to be a great deal of lexical creation and generate complex naming systems (local government, family relationships, clubs and societies, and so on).

Barron-Hauwaert (2010) justifies that there are families where three or four languages being used on a daily basis to communicate with other families in a bilingual or multilingual societies and those parents who do not understand or speak each other's language would use a third language to communicate. Foremost, children tend to choose the language of the community or the school when they start school or increase their social links with the community, thereby changing their preferred language as they grow. They prefer to speak the language of the school or community at home, bringing more of the languages taught in schools. For many of the uneducated parents, their children have taught them some English words or heard them speaking English, increasing their understanding of the English vocabulary. As such, English has penetrated the Bhutanese family regardless of their educational background, knowledge and exposure. The use of English language within a family among the educated Bhutanese is a common practice for various reasons. Many parents prefer to talk in English to their young children at home and they want their children to speak English well. A factor favouring English at home is reinforced in their attitude by the popular view that proficiency in English is a determining factor for their career both within and outside the country (Gyatsho, 2003, p. 272).

Even without a basic knowledge of English, many people use English words successfully in technology and communication. A new variety known as Dzonglish as to Singaporean Singlish (Deterding, 2007, p. 6) or Malaysian Manglish (Ismail, Ismail and Ramakrishnan, 2007) has already evolved and it is being widely used in all social domains. Dzonglish covers the aspect of code switching and code mixing in everyday interaction as it makes people easier to discuss a particular topic, regardless of where

they are talking. The use of English phrases within Dzongkha sentences or incorporating Dzongkha terminologies in an English speech intentionally or unintentionally has become quite normal, occupying the linguistic domain (Wangchuk, 2010). A Bhutanese variety of English or Dzonglish generally have particle 'La' as to Bruneian 'bah' and Singaporean 'lah' (Deterding and Sharbawi, 2013, p.72). The particle 'la' is commonly used in spoken discourse at the end of an utterance and not in formal writing. It is a Bhutanese honorific term used mostly when interacting with elderly people or by people of equal ranks and while communicating with the visitors to imply respect, such as 'Good morning la', 'Welcome la', 'Thank you la', 'Sorry la', 'Ok la', 'fine la', 'Can I help you la?' 'I am not sure la',

3. Methodology

The methodology of this study was a mixed method study. The study employed quantitative method of data collection using structured research instrument questionnaires and a qualitative method of data collection by employing open-ended interview questions and face-to-face interview.

3.1 Research questions

This study attempts to find out the status and role of English by answering the following questions:

1. What is the status and popularity of English as a language of administration?
2. What are the situations and role of English in the domains of government, education, media, and businesses?
3. Can English be considered as a language of administration in Bhutan?

3.2 Participants

As the subject of the study required large samples, the data for this study was collected by distributing structured questionnaire to administrators, professionals, teachers, business people, journalists, and other office workers from different sectors which measured the hypothesis that English is the language of administration in Bhutan. In total, 65 males and 39 females from different sectors participated for the structured questionnaire data collection and 17 males and 12 females for face to face data collection as tabled below:

Table 1: Participants from different organisations

Sl. No	Organisations	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Government	16	9	25
2	Non-Governmental Organisations and Corporations	10	10	20
4	Education	17	11	28
5	Business	11	4	15
6	Media	11	5	16
Total		65	39	104

Table 2: Interview Participants

Sl. No	Organisations	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Government and corporations	3	2	5
2	Education	2	2	4
5	Business	1	1	2
6	Media	2	1	3
7	Family	9	6	15
Total		17	12	29

4. Data analysis

Taguchi (2010) pointed out that asking questions is one of the most natural ways of gathering information and the questionnaire is certainly the most often employed data collection devices in social sciences. A quantitative data collection was used inclusive of questionnaire survey, interviews, and systematic observations for this study to validate the survey findings.

The data gathered using the instruments mentioned above was processed using SPSS 19 and Statistics Calculator. The data collected from different sectors were divided into four sections- the first part of the question focusses on language dominance; second part on language usage; and third part on attitudes of people towards English language. Based on the questionnaire, the data were analysed using descriptive statistics and frequencies. One sample t-test between percentages were calculated to determine the statistical significance of the dominant language used in offices to perform written communicative functions. Percentages were calculated for *Yes/No/Not sure* data to determine whether English can be considered as a language of administration.

5. Results

A one-sample t-test between percentages was performed to determine whether there is a significant difference between Dzongkha and English usage in different organization. Two-tailed P-value is 0.00001 and the result is significant at $P < 0.05$, justifying that English is used as a language of administration and is the dominant language in offices to perform various written communicative tasks while Dzongkha is used in spoken communication.

The findings in this paper indicated that both English and Dzongkha is used in the offices to perform administrative functions. Of 104 respondents, 72% of them stated English as the most dominant language while 28% of them stated Dzongkha to be the dominant language used in their offices to carry out administrative functions.

Table 3: Dominant Language in offices

	Male	Female	Male	Female	Average
Dzongkha	17	11	26%	28%	27%
English	48	28	74%	72%	73%
Total	65	39	100%	100%	100%
<i>t-statistics=5.283, Degree of Freedom=103, Two-tailed probability= 0.00001</i>					

The table below shows the frequency of English usage by time in the workplaces of the respondents. They were asked to state how much time they spent using English in their offices as a language of wider communication. Of 104 respondents, 7% of them stated that they use English (90-100%) in their offices while 17% stated that they use English only about 30-40%. As you can see from the table below, the average for all is also 17%.

Table 4: Percentage of time spent in offices using English.

English usage	Male	Female	Total	%
30-40%	10	8	18	17%
40-50%	12	3	15	14%
50-60%	12	7	19	18%
60-70%	5	2	7	7%
70-80%	10	9	19	18%
80-90%	12	7	19	18%
90-100%	4	3	7	7%
Total	65	39	104	100%

5.1 The Status and Role of English in Government organisations, Corporations and Non-Governmental Organisations

According to the findings in this paper, the respondents from government offices strongly supported the fact that English is used as a language of administration in their workplaces to carry out various tasks. The results indicated that English is used for official documentation (64%), secretarial task (68%), advertisement and announcements (56%), budgeting and accounts (92%), digital media (100%), communication outside the country (100%), and e-communication (76%). However, the study indicated that Dzongkha is used more than English in conferences and seminars (52%). In a similar study under taken by Penjor and Khandu (2014), they reported that English is used more than Dzongkha in official correspondences (74.4%) and in conferences and meetings (61.5%) under Paro Dzongkhag. This confirms that fact that English is occupying a central role as a language of administration in Bhutan.

Table 5: Nnumber of responses and Frequency of English usage in % in government

Frequency	Official Documentation	Secretarial Task	Marketing / Sales	Budgeting/Accounts	Digital Media	External Affairs	Emails	Conferences
Always	15 (60%)	13 (52%)	14 (56%)	21 (84%)	20 (80%)	21 (84%)	22 (88%)	7 (28%)
Most of the time	8 (32%)	8 (32%)	9 (36%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	3 (12%)	2 (8%)	16 (64%)
Some time	2 (8%)	3 (12%)	1 (4%)	0	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
Not used	0	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	25 (100%)

The results obtained from corporations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) indicated that English is used more than Dzongkha to perform various tasks in their workplaces (see Table 5). 80% of the respondents stated that English is used for official documentation, 60% for correspondences, 65% for advertisements and announcements, 95% for budgeting and accounts, 90% for digital media, 100% for communication outside Bhutan and e-communication, and conferences (70%). It should be noted that a high percentage of communication in English has been shown in corporations (DGPC) and non-governmental organizations (UNDP) compared to government offices. A total of ten respondents each from DGPC and UNDP were taken into consideration for the purpose of this study.

Table 6: Dzongkha and English usage in Corporations and Non-Governmental Organizations.

Frequency	Official Documentation	Secretarial Task	Marketing/ Sales	Budgeting/Accounts	Digital Media	External Affairs	Emails	Conferences
Always	18 (90%)	18 (90%)	14 (70%)	19 (95%)	17 (85%)	19 (95%)	19 (95%)	15 (75%)
Most of the time	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	5 (25%)
Some time	0	0	2 (10%)	0	0	0	0	0
Not used	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)

Table 7: English usage over Dzongkha in Corporations and Non-Governmental Organizations.

Roles/Tasks	Dzongkha	English
Official Documentation	20%	80%
Secretarial tasks (letters)	40%	60%
Advertisements and announcements	35%	65%
Budgets/accounting	5%	95%
Digital Media (computers, printers, faxes, copiers, etc.)	10%	90%
External Agents (Outside Bhutan/Embassy)	0%	100%
E-communication (email, chats, Facebook, etc.)	0%	100%
Conferences/seminars/presentations	30%	70%

5.2 The Status and Role of English in Education

The respondents in this category were all schoolteachers from primary and higher secondary level schools. They reported that English has dominated the educational institutions not only in administrative matters but also in terms of subjects offered in schools and colleges. The findings in this paper indicated that English is used more than Dzongkha to perform various tasks such as- official documentation (75%), secretarial tasks (82%), advertisement and announcements (89%), budgeting (100%), digital media (96%), communication outside Bhutan and e-communication (100%) and conferences (71%). A few respondents were interviewed via emails and chats to check the reliability of the results and they stated that English is used most of the time to prepare work plans, progress reports of faculties, students, and writing lesson plans by teachers. They were also interviewed to explore how English is used in advertisement and budgeting in education and they confirmed that activities such as placing of purchase orders, bill payments, correspondences, etc. are done in English. One of the respondent stated that Dzongkha is used mostly in spoken communication and not in record keeping or official documentation. Five National language teachers (Dzongkha lopens) were interviewed and they stated that English has become the language of Bhutanese education system, administrations, business and technology.

Table 8: Dzongkha and English usage in education.

Roles/Tasks	Dzongkha	English
Official Documentation	25%	75%
Secretarial tasks (letters)	18%	82%
Advertisements and announcements	11%	89%
Budgets/accounting	0%	100%
Digital Media (computers, printers, faxes, copiers, etc.)	4%	96%
External Agents (Outside Bhutan/Embassy)	0%	100%
E-communication (email, chats, Facebook, etc.)	0%	100%
Conferences/seminars/presentations	29%	71%

5.3 The Status and Role of English in Business

The findings of the paper indicated that English is used widely to the restriction of Dzongkha usage outside the country. On interviewing some of the business people, they stated that it is hard to run a business without English, as everything has to be imported from outside the country. One of the interviewee said that he wants to improve communicative English skills to the highest possible degree as every business transactions and record keeping are done in English. This underlines the fact that English occupying a central role in businesses to perform various administrative tasks beside its verbal communicative role. The participants responded that they can open doors into international companies, communicate with people from other countries, share their achievements, exchange experiences, and promote collaboration with clients and foreign companies using English. This signifies the importance placed on English as a language of business and they claimed it to be their primary business language used in dealing with business partners outside the country. The participants also stated that Dzongkha is used mostly in spoken communication within Bhutan and prefer using English for business documentation such as maintaining stock records, placing orders, bill payments, and for various other transactions. The graph below clearly represents the role of English in business with more than 80% of their tasks being performed in English.

Table 9: Dzongkha and English usage in Business.

Roles/Tasks	Dzongkha	English
Official Documentation	20%	80%
Secretarial tasks (letters)	13%	87%
Advertisements and announcements	27%	80%
Budgets/accounting	7%	93%
Digital Media (computers, printers, faxes, copiers, etc.)	0%	100%
External Agents (Outside Bhutan/Embassy)	0%	100%
E-communication (email, chats, Facebook, etc.)	0%	100%
Conferences/seminars/presentations	27%	73%

5.4 The Status and Role of English in Mass media and Communication

As a multilingual society, language use in mass media is hard to determine although English is widely used in written communication. It is evident that Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) broadcasts news in Dzongkha, English, Nepali and Sharchop but the official working language is Dzongkha and English and not Nepali or Sharchop. Five people were interviewed on language usage in communication and three of them stated that they use English to write letters, official correspondences, and even writing addresses on envelopes. They stated that English has gained the popularity because it has larger audience both within and outside the country. The finding reveals that English is used more frequently in performing various tasks such as official documentation, secretarial tasks, advertisements and announcements (69%), accounting and budgeting, and communication outside the country (100%), followed by e-communication with 94%, digital media 88%, and conferences 75%. (See table-10)

Table 10: Dzongkha and English usage in Mass media and Communication

Roles/Tasks	Dzongkha	English
Official Documentation	31%	69%
Secretarial tasks (letters)	31%	69%
Advertisements and announcements	31%	69%
Budgets/accounting	0%	100%
Digital Media (computers, printers, faxes, copiers, etc.)	13%	88%
External Agents (Outside Bhutan/Embassy)	0%	100%
E-communication (email, chats, Facebook, etc.)	6%	94%
Conferences/seminars/presentations	25%	75%

5.5 The Status and Role of English in Family

To determine the prevalence of English in the family domain, 15 families were interviewed and found that English is used in everyday communication along with other native languages. The participants responded that English vocabulary has penetrated their homes through their children going to school, neighbours, relatives, and mass media and from educated parents. The most common specific type of influence is the borrowing of words from English, similar to English having a huge number of loanwords from French and Latin. Most of the respondent states that they prefer to use English language in the family to let their children pick up the language before going to school as English is the medium of school instruction, the language of technology, and business.

Of the 15 families interviewed, ten were villagers with less exposure to city life. They responded that they would love to take up English courses offered by Ministry of Education, under the Non Formal Education program as it is the language of wider communication and technology. The participants responded that it is difficult for them to operate electronics without having the basic knowledge of English as digital equipment mostly comes with English as a default language. Accepting the facilitative role of English, the Ministry of Education has introduced English language in non-formal education from 2013 to give basic functional skills to use in daily communication. The interview data presented below gives a clear idea of how English has reached into the Bhutanese family domain.

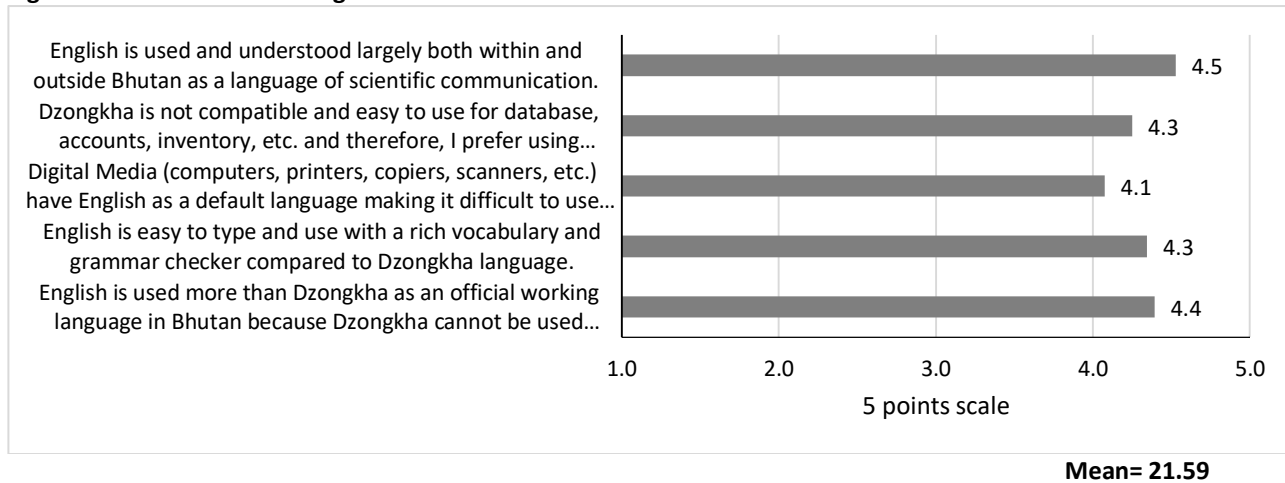
Table 11: Common English words used in a Bhutanese family domain.

Domains	Words
Family/household items	Uncle, aunty, mum, dad, cousin, baby, driver, doctor, army, police, teacher, kitchen, bucket, mug, cake, rice cooker, curry cooker, pressure cooker, hot case, heater, gas cylinder, key, room, bed, bedcover, towel, dress, bag, handbag, table, chair, sitting room, carpet, toilet, showcase,
Electronics	television (TV), radio, telephone, computer, laptop, mobile, call, miscall, number, charge, charger, voucher, battery,
Others	time, date, bus, ticket, football, bills, pen, pencil, off/on, pass, fail, school, hotel, biscuits, taxi, pipe, blade, bottle,

5.6 Attitudes of the people towards English.

A five point Likert scale test was employed to determine the attitudes of the Bhutanese towards English as a language of administration and communication in various domains. The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on five different situations as how much they agree or disagree by selecting an appropriate response on a five-point Likert scale: 'Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). There were 104 respondents, (65 males and 39 females) from different sectors, expressing their opinions regarding the use of Dzongkha and English in different situations.

Figure 1: Attitude towards English.



The results of the finding in this paper, as shown in the graph above clearly indicates the fact that English is being used as a language of administration in all sectors. Almost in all the five different situations, the measurement scale lies in between 4.1 to 4.5 (mean=21.59) from the highest point of 5. The result confirms that the Bhutanese are much more comfortable to use English in various domains as a language of administration and wider communication.

6. Discussions

The study found that English is the most dominant language used to carry out the official works ($P < 0.00001$) used in written communicative functions though Bhutan was never colonized by the British to be termed as reincarnated English, Kachru (2005, p.32). The findings revealed that English is used more than Dzongkha to carry out administrative functions of government though Dzongkha is supposed to be the official working language. It was found that Dzongkha as a national language is used in spoken communication in all the work places across all the sectors with English as a language of administration. Therefore, English has gained the status of second language, measured by its popularity in various domains and is the most dominant language used in government. Similarly, Penjor and Khandu (2014) reported that English is used more than Dzongkha in official correspondences (74.4%) and in conferences and meetings (61.5%) under Paro Dzongkhag. In line with their findings, it is evident to claim that English is occupying a central role as a language of administration in Bhutan

as every organisation follows the same working conditions. Thinley and Maxwell (2013) reported that English had already assumed the status of second language having more than 554 schools with 172,391 students and 11 universities with 9,257 students taking English Medium classes. Bhutan is also recognised as a country where English is spoken in South East Asia, (Crystal, 2003, p. 47) and supports the fact that English is used in Bhutan.

Crystal (2003, p. 47) states that in terms of numbers of English speakers, the Indian subcontinent has a very special position, probably outranking the combined totals of speakers in the USA and UK. Likewise, more than half of the population in Bhutan can speak, read, and write English as a second or additional language to communicate with other second language users with whom they do not share a cultural and linguistic background, Kirkpatrick (2010). The use of English language in Bhutan can be traced back to the signing of the peace treaty between the British and Bhutan in 1865. It is evident that the language used in the treaty and instruction given by the British political officers was in English as it was the language of the British (Field and Rennie, 1866). The popularity of English in Bhutan and its virtual status as a language of administration is confirmed by its dominance in government, education, international communication, business, and in mass media. English is fundamentally the language of administration although Dzongkha is considered as the National, official language.

The study revealed that English is used extensively in business to conduct various types of transactional activities such as banking, exchange and marketing both within and outside the country and has already gained the status of a second language by adopting it as a language of international business. Bhutan's participation in international organizations found Dzongkha incapable of serving external functions of administration and business. The use of Dzongkha was purely for internal advantages and therefore, English became the language of business to establish relations with other countries. Crystal (2003, p. 5) states that there are several ways in which a language can be official or semi-official status, being used in certain domains in performing certain official roles. Baugh and Cable (2002, p. 4) makes the point that "English is less loved but more used; French is more loved but less used" and likewise, Dzongkha is loved more but used less and English is loved less but used more in Bhutan. The use of English language in Bhutan can be best illustrated by its role in various domains of the society such as education, business, media, and government, guaranteeing the role as a language of the business.

The study found that English is used more than Dzongkha in official documentation, advertisements and announcements, e-communication, etc. in media and communication. Although more importance is given on Dzongkha to be used as a language of administration, its use is very much restricted to Bhutan and cannot be used it as a language of wider communication. Thus, English is chosen over Dzongkha as a language of administration and wider communication as it is the lingua franca of the globe.

The use of English in a Bhutanese family domain supports the fact that the Bhutanese are bilingual and capable of speaking more than one language. Macnamara (as cited in Hamers and Blanc, 2004) states that a bilingual is anyone who possesses a minimal competence in only one of the four language skills, listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, in a language other than his mother tongue. To this fact, every Bhutanese can speak more than two to three languages other than their mother tongue and one of the languages used in the family is English. However, it does not mean that every family member would write or speak English fluently and the paper focused on determining the use of English words with native languages. The interview participants responded that English has penetrated into the Bhutanese family domain through education and media consciously or unconsciously. A few respondents who have not attended schooling stated that they have learned English through contact with other people especially tourists, schoolteachers, business people and through their children. So, this fact confirms that English has gained its popularity in the family domain irrespective of their educational background through contact with other languages.

7. Conclusion

Although English is not the first language for the Bhutanese, people are strongly motivated to learn it because of its usefulness and facilitative role as a language of opportunities and survival. It would be an elusive task for the government of Bhutan to changeover to Dzongkha to be the working language as there are several hurdles in the way of replacing English by Dzongkha as official working language. Although, Dzongkha is the national language of Bhutan, it cannot be used for international communication and trade as it has no platform in the international arena. Therefore, English continues to be the main language for government work, organized business, and higher education. English is used widely in addition to Dzongkha by educated classes and the officer class. They see the benefit of having a large pool of people in Bhutan who can read, write and speak fluently in English. The increase in literacy in English has made the English language the lingua franca,

and since it is acquired through the medium of education, it has played an important role in the society and is the most dominant language in government.

English plays an important role in both print media and digital media in Bhutan. There are many English books published by the Bhutanese writers and researchers and of course very few books in Dzongkha. This is because of the fact that English has wider audiences outside Bhutan while Dzongkha is restricted to Bhutan. Another determining factor is the people's choice of language and many of the respondents in this paper claimed that English is easy to read, write, and publish. Their claims were supported by the fact that there are more than 554 English medium schools against two Dzongkha learning institutes in the

country. Thus, there are more English educated people than Dzongkha and this has led to the dominance of English in the work places as the workers have better English background.

The study showed that English has dominated online media with having most of the webpages maintained in English. It was found that all web pages of the government organizations, ministries, agencies, and private organizations are designed in English. There are only four to five organizations having bilingual webpages (Dzongkha and English) and they keep English as a homepage. All these facts support the view that English in Bhutan has assumed the status of second language (ESL) and is no longer a foreign language (EFL). Dzongkha is used mostly in spoken communication in various offices while English is used widely as a language of administration. The rich linguistic heritage of Bhutan would disappear on the brink of globalisation if English is used more than Dzongkha in various domains. The government had issued circulars to use only Dzongkha for official purposes within the country but failed in implementation by the organisations.

*"3.1.1 Except when corresponding with foreigners, and such technical correspondences that cannot be conveyed through Dzongkha; all other official correspondence, both written and verbal, within the country needs to be carried out in Dzongkha".
(Dzongkha Development Commission, 2012, p.44)*

Almost every organisations in both government and private still uses English as a language of administration, official correspondences, etc. and they find Dzongkha less effective and efficient to use in computer applications. The other reason is that most of the people working in government, private, media, and education have acquired better English skills than Dzongkha and this has inhibited the use of Dzongkha. Therefore, to be able to use Dzongkha as a language of administration effectively, people working in different organisations need to take appropriate measures and follow the recommendations of the concerned agencies or department.

8. Limitations of the study and future suggestions

There were some limitations to the current study, mainly related to the data collection and interviews as it was administered through emails and web based surveys. The questionnaires were mailed to the participants and most of them stated that they do not have internet connections for mailings, printing and scanning. Similarly, the interviews were conducted with those having internet connections and could not interview people who do not have internet connections. There were less participants for interview data collection as compared to questionnaire respondents. However, this would not have been problematic, if the data collection were done face-to-face giving the printed copy of the questionnaire by the researcher, but failed to do it due to time constraints. Moreover, the respondents might not have taken seriously to answer the questionnaire as it was administered online and they might have done it without giving it much importance or thought. Therefore, this would have made the analysis inaccurate. Moreover, the male and female respondents in this paper is not equal and the data contains more opinions from male respondents. There were 39 female respondents against 65 male respondents and the inequality in gender respondents might have made the findings bias. For the future studies, the researcher should try to include gender equality from different sectors which would help to get more accurate data. With having obtained accurate data, it would give accurate results that can be more generalizable and to probe in depth about the current topic of study.

About the Author

Karma Tshering is an English Language teacher at Wangbama Central School under Thimphu Dzongkhag. He holds bachelor's degree in English and MA in English Language and Linguistics from Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei.

References

- [1] Barron-Hauwaert, S. (2010). *Bilingual Siblings: Language Use in Families*. United Kingdom: Multilingual Matters.
- [2] Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment [BCSEA]. (2014). *Rules and Regulations for the Conduct of Public Examinations in Bhutan*. Thimphu.
- [3] Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Deterding, D. (2007). *Dialects of English: Singapore English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.
- [5] Deterding, D., and Sharbawi, S. (2013). *Brunei English: A New Variety in a Multilingual Society*. London: Springer
- [6] Driem, G. v. (1994). Langaug Policy in Bhutan. In M. A. Hutt, *Bhutan: Aspects of Culture and Development* (pp. 87-106). Gartmore, Scotland: Paul Strachan Kiscadale Ltd.
- [7] Dzongkha Development Commission. (2012). *National Policy and Strategy of Dzongkha Development and Promotion*. Retrieved on 24/04/2015 from [http://www.dzongkha.gov.bt/online/PDF/National%20Policy%20and%20Strategy%20of%20Dzongkha%20\(web\).pdf](http://www.dzongkha.gov.bt/online/PDF/National%20Policy%20and%20Strategy%20of%20Dzongkha%20(web).pdf).
- [8] Field, D., and Rennie, S. (1866). *Bhotan and the story of The Dooar War*. London: Spottishwoode and Co. Retrieved on 25/01/2014 from <http://dl.wdl.org/2387/service/2387.pdf>
- [9] Francoise, P. (n.d). Ancient Trade Partners: *Bhutan, Cooch Bihar and Assam (17th - 19th centuries)* Retrieved on 8/01/2015, from https://www.academia.edu/2400054/ancient_trade_partners_bhutan_cooch_bihar_and_assam_17th_-_19th_centuries_
- [10] Gyatsho, L. (2003). *Difficulty in Teaching Dzongkha in an English Medium System*. Retrieved on 6/01/2015, from <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/ConferenceProceedings/SpiderAndPiglet/13-Spdr&Pgl.pdf>
- [11] Hamers, J.F., and Blanc, M.H. (2004). *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*. (2eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [12] Ismail, N., Ismail, N., and Ramakrishnan, K. (2007). *Malaysian English versus Standard English: Which is favored?* Retrieved on 10/03/2015 from http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Noriah_Ismail/publication/259675483_Malaysian_English_Versus_Standard_English_Which_Is_Favored/links/0deec52d4cffe33f77000000.pdf.
- [13] Jetro, I. (2004). *Sub-Regional Relations in the Eastern South Asia: Special Focus on Bangladesh and Bhutan*. Retrieved on 23/01/2014 from http://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Download/Jrp/pdf/132_3.pdf
- [14] Kachru, B. (2005). *Asian Englishes: Beyond the Canon*. Hong Kong, China: Hong Kong University Press.
- [15] Kamil Z. (2012). *The Role of English in Business and Trade*. Retrieved on 04/11/2014 from https://www.academia.edu/3883892/The_role_of_English_in_business_and_trade_Kamil_Zakrzewski_MA_Thesis
- [16] Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). *English as an Asian lingua franca and the multilingual model of ELT*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [17] Owolabi, D., and Nnaji, C. I. (2013). The English language and the mass media as tools for sustainable development in multilingual nations. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. doi: 10.11648/j.ijll.20130104.16. Retrieved on 7/04/2015 from <http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/j/ijll>.
- [18] Penjore, D. (2013). *The State of Anthropology in Bhutan*. Retrieved on 13/01/2014, from https://www.asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dl/publications/no_1202/AA1202-01_Penjore.pdf
- [19] Penjor and Khandu, K. (2014). A Comparative Study: Reading and Writing Practices in English and Dzongkha Language under Paro Dongkhag. *Rabsel: The CERD Educational Journal*, 79-103.
- [20] Saunders, G. (1983). *Bilingual Children: Guidance for the Family*. England: Multilingual Matters.
- [21] Secretariat, L. S. (2014, June 14). *India-Bhutan Relations*. Retrieved on 13/02/2015 from <http://164.100.47.134/intranet/India-Bhutan%20Relations.pdf>
- [22] Storozum, J. (2013). *The Role of Language in International Business: English as a Lingua Franca*. Washington, DC: American University Kogod School of Business.
- [23] Taguchi, Z. D. (2010). *Questionnaires in Second Language Research*. Routledge, United States: Walsworth Publishing Company.
- [24] Thinley, D. and Maxwell, T.W. (2013). The Role of English in Culture Preservation in Bhutan. *Journal of Bhutan studies*, 28.
- [25] Tourism Council of Bhutan (2014). *Bhutan Tourism Monitor: Annual Report 2013*. Retrieved on 25/01/2-14 from <http://www.abto.org.bt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/BTM-2013.pdf>
- [26] Wangchuk, D. (2010, June 5). *The birth of Dzonglish*. Retrieved on 12/02/2015 from http://bhutanobserver.bt/2860-bo-news-about-the_birh_of_dzonglish.aspx
- [27] Zam, D. (2008). *National Report on the Development of Education*. Thimphu: Bhutan: Ministry of Education.
- [28] Zhao, Y. (2011). *Handbook of Asian Education: A Cultural Perspective*. Retrieved on 26/10/2014 from <http://books.google.com.bn/books?id=irqsAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA445&lpg=PA445&dq=First+Indian+Teacher+in+Bhutan&source=bl&ots=Q7Xvn1I0hT&sig=pxFofeOoRo9daTF68BtCMr7Lck&hl=en&sa=X&ei=F4BcVJfMI4PW8gWBv4L4Aw&ved=0CDsQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=First%20Indian%20Teacher%20in%2>