

# Prospects of Teaching and Learning English Literature in Bangladesh: Background Vs the Current Status and some Recommendations

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## Abstract

This paper aims at examining the causes for the digression of the objectives of teaching and learning English as a subject of Humanities. It provides a literature review on the background of the approaches of studying English in Bangladesh. This study specifically attempts to answer the following questions: 1) What were the objectives of studying English Literature, especially in Bangladesh? 2) What are the changes in the teaching of English in terms of its objectives, syllabus, teaching methodology and student proficiency? 3) What is the approach of the teachers and students towards English? 4) Do the students study English out of an urge to develop their finer senses? The researcher has found that: though English was taught in the 19th century to produce liberal human beings and to develop their finer sensibilities to appreciate the aesthetics of literature, in the 21st century the objective of English has disintegrated because the students' language proficiency has fallen and they are more eager to participate in the rat race of the job market than to enjoy the real essence of literature with zeal and enthusiasm. The students should be encouraged to study more of English literature with due respect for its humanitarian value.

## Key words

Objectives, universal appeal, essence of literature, approaches to teaching English, language proficiency, English syllabus

## Introduction

English is an old traditional language, not endangered and not likely to undergo difficult changes which make students accept it on trust, without questioning the utility, validity or the methodology of its study.

English is highly esteemed for ages together for its intrinsic qualities. It was always believed that the proper study of the language would develop the power of judgment, critical evaluation and the sensitivity and rationality in the learners. The English Literature was studied worldwide gradually in time. The popularity and use of the language increased, and its demand in the market also rose higher and higher day by day. In the mean time the age-old concepts of curriculum and educational sectors developed. English as a language and as a discipline made its place in the broader curriculum of Bangladesh as in many other countries. The ancient literature was also studied in the Department in English translation. The changes took place in the Departments of English in the Universities all over the world. After some years needs of studying the subjects complementary to English were felt and English was studied as a multidisciplinary subject. English was no longer limited to British English, a wider range of English was covered and American English, Latin English, Commonwealth Literature in English, Caribbean Literature and Continental Literature was also included in the syllabus. With the passage of time the developments of new branches of language, like Phonetics and Phonology, Linguistics, ELT, and Applied Linguistics also made their place in the discipline of English and studied as an integrated course.

The study of English is to encourage criticism of English texts, as well as to appreciate them. Exercising their intellectual faculty, the students are to study the foreign culture, mind and society through its language. Bangladeshi learners of English are to generate new eastern approaches to literary criticism.

English as a subject was studied with a view to enhancing and enlightening the students. It is always believed that a language is very much a part of a history and literature, a reflection of the culture. Thus, English as language and literature has the power to introduce taste, sophistication, power of judgment, and to cultivate and to refine the finer sensibilities (Eagleton, 1983)

## Research Methodology

The paper is prepared through library research and empirical research. It projects from thorough review of various books and articles on the subject. It also made a document analysis, which is the evaluation of published syllabuses by using a checklist. Expert opinions were also sought. A questionnaire survey and an interview were also performed with university teachers and students of the English department to find out some crucial points added in the discussions, assumptions and results. Classrooms were also observed. The checklist, the list of the syllabuses used for the document analysis, the detailed list of the universities surveyed, the list of the teachers and students surveyed and interviewed appears in the appendix.

## Objective of English

Professor V.K.Gokak (1962), while providing the definitions and aims of the English Literature departments, in a conference in Cambridge, defines the utilitarian values of the study of a foreign literature. In the first place it widens and deepens the skills in that language. It causes a deeper understanding of the people who produce that literature so that it can grow up some mutual trust, regard, respect, and hence some peaceful co-existence. The primary approach to a foreign literature should be to enhance mutual interchange of experience and literary values. The very centre of defining the values of the study of a foreign language should be its 'universality of reference'. He says that we shall have to be guided in the light of these assumptions by the following considerations in our approach to literature:

- (a) Modern English Literature from the age of Elizabeth onwards will arouse more interest than the literature of the earlier periods.
- (b) The linguistic equipment of the student should be considered when one is prescribing a course of reading for him in English literature.
- (c) At various stages of the study of English, the student should be introduced to varieties of language – narrative, dramatic, scientific, and discursive, etc.
- (d) The students' knowledge of the background of English literature should be taken into account when prescribing texts.

(The Teaching of English Literature Overseas; 33, 1963)

## Liberal humanitarian objective of education through English

English education has been framed under liberal humanitarian objective of education, the purpose of which is to

- help an individual develop as a complete human being by cultivating and refining his finer sensibilities, his humanitarian qualities, liberal values, and the higher worth, and as a visionary for a world free from greed and mad competition.
- train the mind, and it is possible only through the study of canonical, i.e. great or serious literature. Literature alone, it was believed, can train and cultivate the imagination. Canonical literature, especially in which authors like Chaucer, Bacon, Addison, Steele, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Wordsworth, Shelly, Keats, Shaw, T.S.Eliot and such names, was included in the syllabus with that curriculum objective. Its objectives have been: -
  - broadening the intellectual horizons, refining sensibilities of the learners.
  - providing aesthetic pleasure and developing an aesthetic sense which all human being need.

The study of English language is held important for our socio-economic and political growth, and study of English literature is necessary for value education and for becoming good human beings with broad outlook; it polishes the mind. The English department seeks to produce human resources that would be rich in moral values and at the same time, competent in real life English, needed for business, and other types of functional English, needed for professional excellence. The English departments thus cater to the needs of the nation. The studies of English opened up new avenues of hopes for progress and prosperity, and dig the society of its age-old backwardness and superstition. It was thought it would help develop the backward society, literature and culture of the subcontinent and as elsewhere in the world, it would enlighten the people, broaden their mind, refine their sentiments and make people polished gentlemen. The objectives of English education have been to cultivate the mind, to produce liberal human beings with broad humanitarian attitudes, and values of life. English facilitates the culture of the mind, the ability to think, analyze, interpret, evaluate, judge, and to see what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong. (Shahidullah, 2006)

Together with the humanitarian education which the study of English accentuates, it also serves vital functional purposes. The demands on English as an international language is at its highest point of dominance and people learn English more for instrumental and operational purposes today. There are many different ways of learning English, literature is only one of those ways, and literary language is not the right kind of language for everyday communication. Now the question that is evoked at this point is that whether English literature that is widely studied as individual subject, helps with the functional English needed today, or else the syllabuses of the Universities will need moderations. But studies in this field show that literature does help language development, because the huge amount of texts that the students are required to read on different genres of literature from different literary periods or era provides a good type of exposure for subconscious language development. This exposure helps learners master a wide range of vocabulary and expressions, structures and at the same time a good sense of organized writings. Reading and writing skills develop through an extensive amount of reading and writing in the BA honors program. (Shahidullah 2006).

#### **A Historical Survey of English Syllabus and its Evolution**

The study of English has got a long history. It started officially long back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in England and gradually it spread to Africa, Asia and made a glorious space of its own. The scope of the language has changed its dimensions as it got older. It has diversified itself into many branches. The English syllabuses studied now have undergone a sea of changes. English is no longer studied as a literature alone; the language itself is studied more scientifically through various branches of linguistics, phonetics and phonology, etc.

#### **English Syllabus in England**

The historical survey of the English Department syllabuses traces back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From 1828 English was offered as a subject for study – and the first English Professor of English was appointed in 1929 at Cambridge. It was mainly the study of English language, using literature as a source of linguistic examples. English literature was first taught at King's college, London, in 1831.

In 1840, F.D.Maurice was appointed Professor at King's who introduced the study of a set of books, and his inaugural lecture laid down some of the principles of liberal humanism. The study of English literature would serve "to emancipate us...from the notions and habits which are peculiar to our own age", connecting us instead with "what is fixed and enduring". Maurice regarded literature as the peculiar property of the middle class and the expression of their values. For him the middle class represents the essence of Englishness. So middle class education should be peculiarly English, and therefore should center on English literature. Maurice was well aware of the political dimension of all this. People so educated, he thought, would feel that they belonged to England, and that they had a country. There was a distinctly Victorian mixture of class guilt about social inequalities, behind the teaching of early English, a genuine desire to improve things of everybody, a kind of missionary zeal to spread culture and enlightenment, and a self-interested desire to maintain social stability. (Eagleton, 1983)

Edward Freeman, a Professor of History argued that the fact that the study of literature cultivates the taste, educates the sympathies and enlarges the mind is all excellent things. Only tastes and sympathies cannot be examined. Examiners must have technical and positive information to examine. Thus, literature had to be studied along with language otherwise it would not be an academic subject at all. So when the English course was finally set up at Oxford in 1894. It contained a very heavy Anglo-Saxon, Gothic, Middle English, etc. from which it has still not managed to free itself.

G.E.Perren in a conference paper (Teaching English literature overseas: historical notes and present instances as cited in *The Teaching English literature Overseas*, 1963: The British Council) provided the picture of the history of the English Literature Syllabus and its evolution in time. In Great Britain courses of lectures about English literature seem first to have begun in Scotland, but in 1828 the first chair of English Language and Literature in England was established at University College, London. In 1839 the first London University Matriculation examination subsequently presumed a general knowledge of English literature; (typical question: "Write an appreciation of one of Shakespeare's tragedies"). By 1899 its regulations specified that the paper would cover 'English grammar and composition with elementary questions on the history of the language and literature'; there was no literature paper.

In 1859 the special subjects in English literature for the first B.A. Pass Examination of the University of London were defined as:

The History of English Literature during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.

Bacon: Essays

Shakespeare: *King Lear*.

In the same year, the subjects for the B.A. honours examination in 'English Language, Literature and History' included:

'Composition

History and Grammatical Structure of the Language

History of the Literature from the Accession of Elizabeth to the Revolution of 1688

Shakespeare: *Hamlet, King John, Macbeth*

Milton: *Lycidas*

Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*

Clarendon: *History of the Great Rebellion*

Milton: *Areopagitica*'.

Oxford accepted a limited study of English literature in one of the papers for a Pass examination from 1873. In 1893, an Honors School in English Language and Literature was established – there were no candidates for its first final examination; in 1899 only four men appeared to sit for it.

At Cambridge the English literature as a discipline was officially established in 1917. A greater sense of direction was given to English in Cambridge English School in the 1920s. Because Cambridge English was the most recently founded, dating only from 1911, it had the least weight of tradition to fight against, so change was relatively easy. The engineers of this change were a group of people, I.R. Richards, William Empson, and F.R. Leavis, who began teaching at Cambridge in 1920s. I.A. Richards was the founder of a method of studying English which is still the norm today. Firstly, it made a decisive break between language and literature. Richards pioneered the technique called Practical Criticism. This made a close study of literature possible by isolating the text from history and context. Instead of having to study, say, the Renaissance period as a distinct historical moment, with its characteristic outlook, social formations, and so on, students could learn the techniques of practical criticism and simply analyze "the words on the page".

A second Cambridge pioneer was a pupil of Richards, William Empson who presented his tutor with the manuscript of the book, which was published in 1930 with the title Seven Types of Ambiguity. This book took Richards method of close verbal analysis to what may be felt to be an extreme. Empson identified seven different types of verbal difficulty in poetry and gave examples of them, with worked analyses. Another Cambridge critic, F.R. Leavis, said in a review that it is a highly disturbing book because it uses intelligence on poetry as seriously as if it were mathematics. Perren says that the existing overseas university syllabuses mostly fall into four categories:

- (a) Where British influence is strongest, that is in universities and university colleges still, or until recently, in special relation with the University of London. University College, Ibadan, and Makerere University College are examples.
- (b) Where in the past British influence has been strong- e.g. in India and Pakistan.
- (c) Non-European universities where the academic tradition is derived from continental European countries, as in South America, French-speaking Africa or parts of the Near and Middle East.

### English Syllabus in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the first English Department was established in Rajshahi College in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was under Calcutta University. The second English Department started in Dhaka University in 1920. Then Rajshahi, Chittagong, and Jahangirnagar University English Departments started in 1953, 1963 and 1960 respectively.

However, like elsewhere in the world, English Department Syllabuses in all the Universities in Bangladesh were purely literature syllabus, mostly British literature. Only in the Mid 1970s some language courses were introduced and afterwards, keeping with the changes elsewhere, more changes were incorporated in the University English Department Syllabuses in Bangladesh.

The evolution of the syllabuses show, that every change in the needs of the students with the changes in the realities of local, regional and global conditions and other current demands bring corresponding changes in the syllabus or curriculum. As the study of the syllabus of the English studies show, in the early days English syllabuses were purely literature based. It aimed at the liberal humanist attainment to produce human being with better understanding, better power of judgment and more sophisticated sensitivities.

Together with the knowledge of language, the students are also required to be introduced to the philosophical and religious issues in Britain in order to study the literary courses in depth. This also brought with it the need to a proper introduction of the history of language they are studying. Language is not only a part of culture, communication, and a part of history, politics and so on it is also a part of the network of the other literary movements. This realization brought an addition to the European literature, classics in translation and American literature. Linguistics was added to the syllabus to make the students study, why language is what it is and its relation with society, psychology and also the study of the nature of language itself.

Afterwards, as the English language proficiency of students enrolled in the Honours programme was not found good enough to cope with the extensive literature courses, the syllabus designers added reading, writing and comprehension courses to the syllabus.

Later Linguistics and E.L.T courses were also introduced in the B.A. Honours and M.A. programmes. The Private Universities emphasize more on language, linguistics and E.L.T courses keeping with the market demands. Dhaka University also started offering an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and E.L.T.

The study of the syllabuses of the English Departments of Rajshahi University, Dhaka University, Chittagong University and Jahangirnagar University of 70's, 80's, 90's and the current years show that primarily a purely literature syllabus has changed to a more comprehensive syllabus containing language, linguistics, phonetics and phonology, ELT, introduction to literature courses and many more.

It is agreed that the students of English, in addition to becoming teachers, hold worthy positions in administration, business and other wider spheres of public life. (State of English in Bangladesh Today, 1986:35)

Similarly, English must exist, it is believed, for us to be able to survive in a world of international cooperation and economic and commercial interdependence. Mr. M. Harunur Rashid said that people must be effectively trained in English for specific purposes-

diplomacy, journalism, translation, international trade and commerce, interpretation, aviation, etc. (State of English in Bangladesh Today, 1986:40). After a few years, recently with a generous aim to make the students fit for the ensuing critical marks of translation and communication courses like Translation studies and language Media and communication are included.

### **Changes in the Patterns of Life and New Demands of English Curriculum; a cause for the digression of the humanitarian objective of English**

For curriculum development, it is important to think about the needs, the demands and requirements of culture and society, both for the present and for the future (Ronald White, 1988; 62). Curriculum is, after all, a way of preparing learners to participate, as productive members of our nation and the global community. Not all cultures require the same kinds of education, or knowledge and skills (Hilda Taba, 1962; 10). The requirement for world understanding has become a reality in today's world. An analysis of culture and society thus provides some guidelines for determining the main objectives of education, for the selection of content and for deciding what to stress in learning activities in the syllabuses of different subject.

Reports on a conference held in Bangladesh show that in around 1996, English had become the language of global communication and information and was increasingly seen as essential for jobs at home and abroad. Moreover, major literary prizes were being won by non-native English speakers. It was in this context that the English Department of the University of Dhaka chose the theme of rethinking English for its biennial conference in 1996. Participants at the Conference included senior academics and young scholars from India and Bangladesh, thus reflecting current thinking on both sides of the border. The essays on *Revisioning English in Bangladesh* emerged from a biennial conference held about rethinking the status of English in Bangladesh. Before 1971, English had been the lingua franca between the two regions of Pakistan, both of which spoke different languages. With independence, English lost its importance in Bangladesh.

If education is meant for promoting the standard of life, it has to consider the changes taking place in the world, and design syllabuses that help them meet the challenge of an ever-changing world. The world is changing, we are changing and focus in education also is shifting. It has extended to different discursive domains. Micro-electronic technology, restructuring of the global economic base, and reshaping of the cultural relations characterize our time. The dynamic transmigration of people, commodities, capital and culture in the world today has generated new sets of social relations that extended beyond the confines of nation states. The various networks of computer technologies, cable and satellite television dominating the cultural terrain and the vast range of biotechnology are not only potentially altering the way. We will live in the future, but also giving new hope, engendering previously unimaginable dreams. The shift of the concept of text from book to hypertext has been yet another reality of the world today. All these factors pushed the need of English to a new dimension; it brings English language, not literacy but everyday English, English of science and technology, of computer and Internet to the forefront. These changes demands English for the sake of gathering information and knowledge to a much higher level than ever before.

Alongside the sophisticated technological developments that have taken place, the past two decades have witnessed unprecedented level of transmigration as a result of civil wars in different parts of the world, increased poverty political destabilization with in diverse nation states. At the same time development of the global tourist industry and freedom of travel related to modern life style in the more affluent west have influenced economic and internal cultural relations of nation states. It is important to analyze the present situation to examine the kind of education we need today. There is a growing need of education for commercial progress and prosperity and also the classical humanist tradition of education for cultivating manners and morals; producing "gentlemen with liberal human values" an attitude that also has some relevance in our times.

We need to maintain our own distinct socio-cultural identity, and of the same time, a global connectedness. In today's world of science and technology, and of global connectedness we cannot think of ourselves as separate from other nationals. There is a global competition for the "survival of the fittest" in the job market, in business and in industrial productions. A graduate in today's world is not for the home market only; rather s/he is meant for the international job market. It is English language that, among other things, makes a graduate fit for the international market.

The demands on functional English as international English is at its highest point and people learn English more for instrumental or operational purposes today (Stern; 1992) The department of English therefore, should serve both the functional objective and the humanitarian value-enhancing objective. Thus the strongest pressure for re-examination of the curriculum comes from the drastic changes in local and global realities, in technology and culture which require corresponding change in the English syllabus of the universities according to the current needs of the people and the country. The behavioral objective of education must also be taken into consideration. Factors constituting the reasonable basis for curriculum in our society are learner, the learning process, the cultural demands and the content of the discipline. The growing importance of functional English has changed the ages old approaches and objectives of learning English literature.

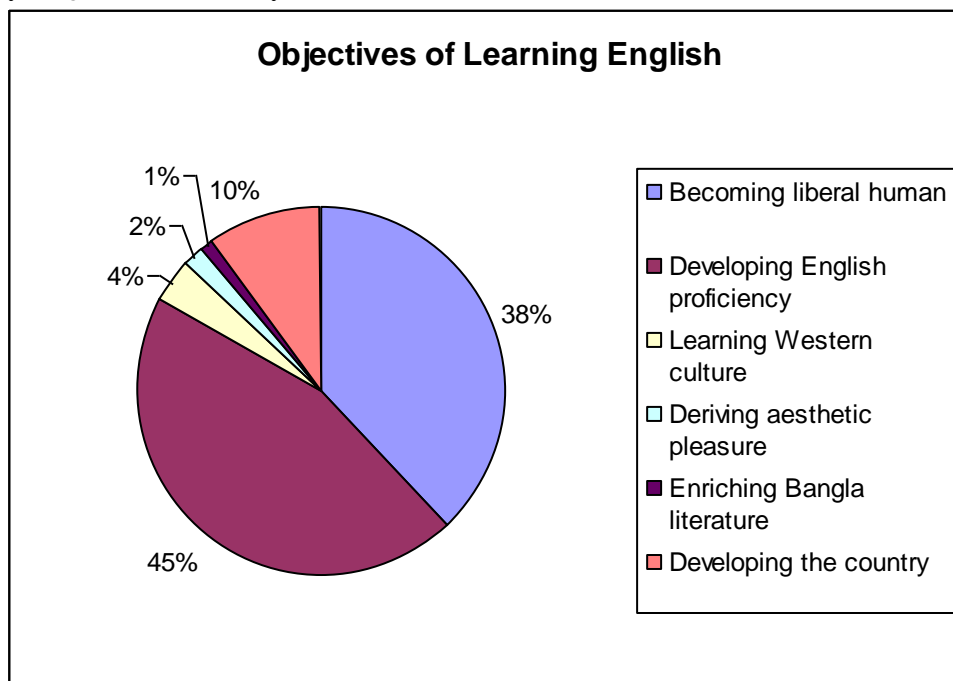
### **The English literature syllabus and the changes already brought about in it: an explanation.**

A historical survey of the syllabuses of English Departments shows that the English syllabuses basically included the literary courses only. With the gradual shift towards a more systematic curriculum, the syllabuses introduced a variety of courses complementary to the literature courses to serve the progressivist and reconstructionist purposes along with the classical humanist model. With gradual changes English emerges as a multidisciplinary subject, grows into a more composite subject.

Several papers say that it was in the mid-70s that the curriculum came under strain when the fresh students were found to be extremely deficient in English language and the teaching of English turned out to be less fruitful. To overcome the situation remedial measure was to introduce language courses. Hence the entry of language courses in English. It is also found that it was in the mid-70s and 80s coincidentally when the British Council, the principal foreign adviser and donor to English departments in our country, sold the idea of privileging language over literature as a tool of economic development. The result was more and more scholarships for study in UK on English Language Teaching. The compromise was that both language and literature were put together in the syllabus. Since the early period of English studies in the nineteenth century academics follow the ideals of the profession in the home countries of English

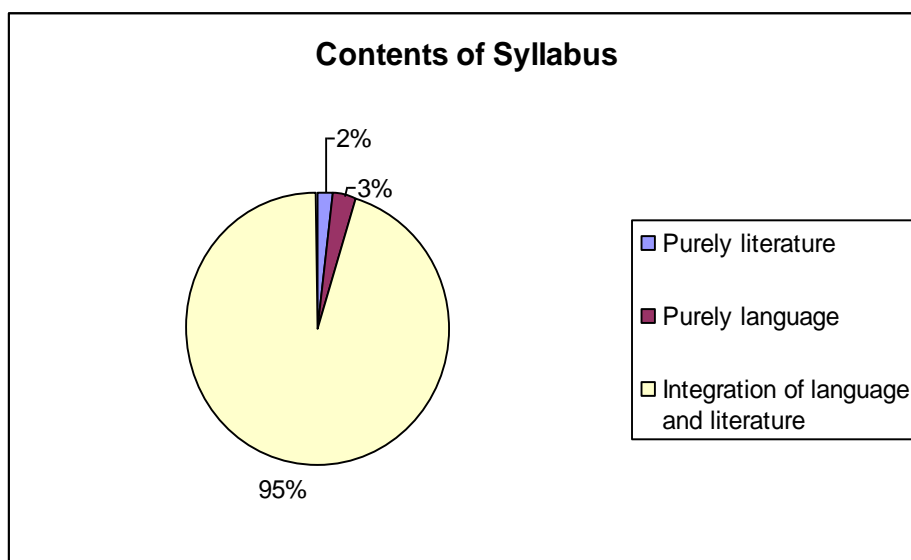
literature. The study of English in Bangladesh can encourage more courses on comparative literature in order to make the study more meaningful. In literary studies, students must do close critical analysis and evaluations of individual works.

#### Data Analysis: Questionnaire Survey and Interview.



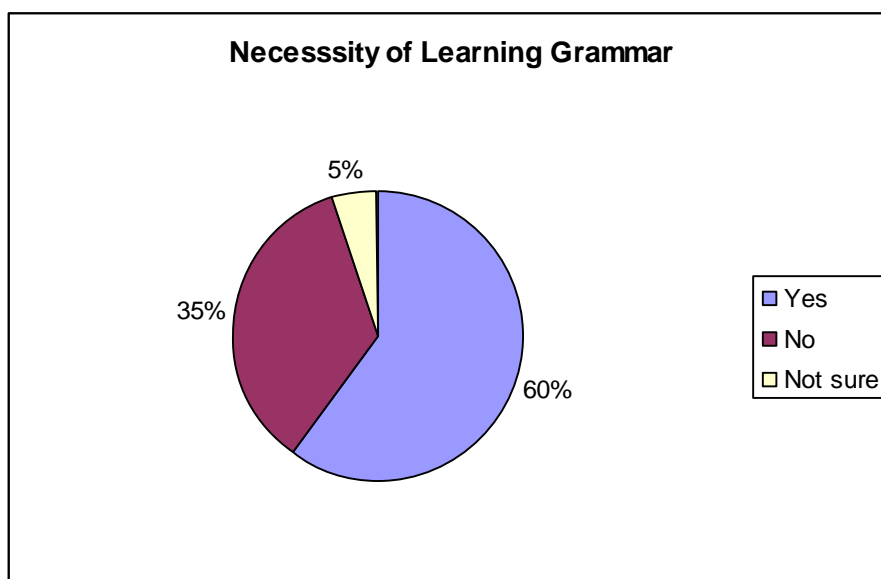
**Figure 01: Objectives of learning English**

The figure above shows that thirty-eight percent of the teachers think that English is taught with an objective to produce liberal human beings with broad mind. Forty-five percent of the teachers think that the objective of English is to develop the language proficiency of the students. Ten percent of the teachers think that English is taught to contribute to the overall development of Bangladesh. Four percent of the teachers think that English is taught so that the students can learn about the Western culture. Two percent of the teachers believe that students are taught English so that they can learn to derive aesthetic pleasure from literature. One percent of the teachers say that through studying English students will be able to enrich Bangla literature.



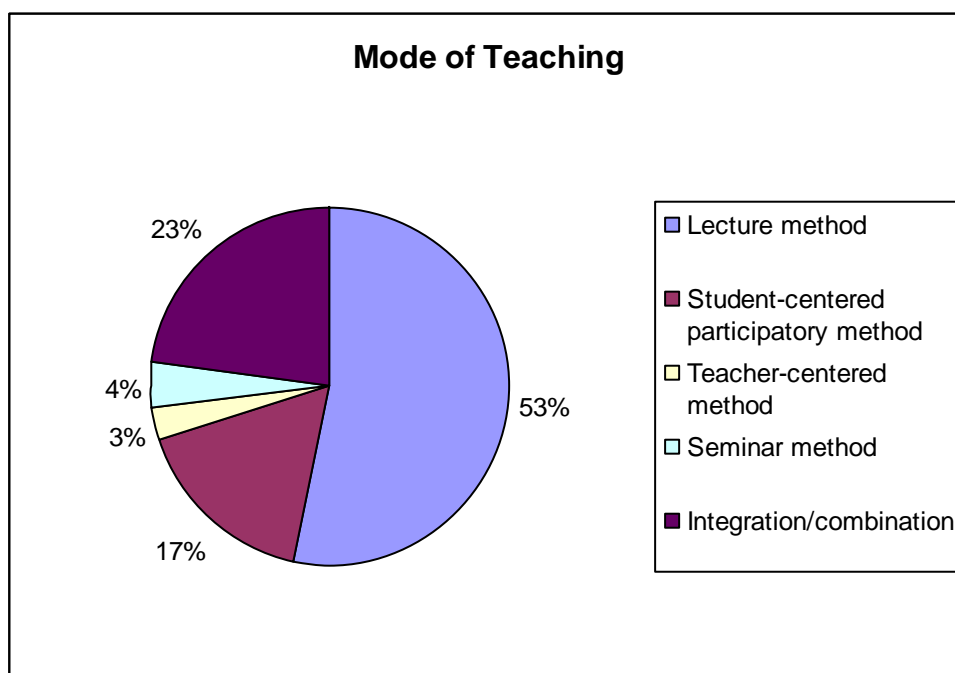
**Figure 02: Contents of the English syllabus**

The figure above shows that ninety-five percent of the teachers think that English syllabus should be a proportionate combination of language and literature. Only two percent of the teachers want it to be purely literature. Only two percent of the teachers want the syllabus to be purely language.



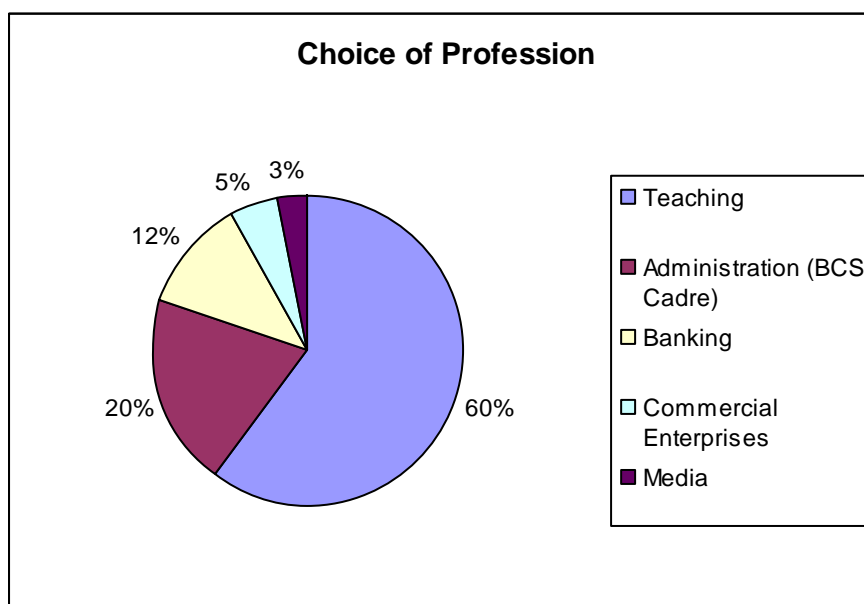
**Figure 03: Necessity of learning Grammar**

Figure 03 shows that sixty percent of the teachers think that the English students need to study grammar and thirty-five percent of them think that they need not be taught grammar at the university. Five percent of the respondents are not sure about the matter.



**Figure 04: Mode of Teaching of English**

The figure above shows that fifty-three percent of the teachers teach English through lectures. Twenty-three percent of the teachers think that an integrated, eclectic method should be followed. Seventeen percent of the teachers think that the mode of teaching English should be student-centered participatory method. Four percent respondents also suggest seminar methods and three percent respondents want the mode to be teacher-centered.



**Figure 05: The Choice of Profession of the English Students**

The teachers said that sixty percent of the English students of Bangladesh choose teaching as their profession. Twenty percent of them choose administrative jobs through BCS. Twelve percent of the students go for banking. Five percent of the English students join different commercial enterprises and three percent students work with the media.

### Results and Findings

#### Results: Document Analysis

1. Most of the private university syllabuses mention the objectives. The early syllabuses of the public universities did not mention the objectives. The objectives do not emphasize on the liberal humanitarian value of English and mentions the functional and utilitarian perspective of the course.
2. Earlier the English syllabuses were purely literature and gradually it became an integrated language and literature course.
3. The literature courses are distributed all through the syllabus genre-wise and period-wise. The classics are taught in translation. Unlike the earlier syllabuses the new syllabuses have added elementary to advanced courses on grammar and writing skills. There are also listening and speaking courses which were not there in the early days. There is a course on Bangla literature and culture and heritage of Bangladesh. There is a course on philosophy. The recent syllabuses have courses on linguistics, phonetics and phonology. Caribbean literature, post-colonial literature and American literature are also there in the syllabuses. There are also courses on literary theory.
4. The appropriate classroom pedagogy is not mentioned.
5. Tutorials, assignments and presentations are taken.
6. The syllabus apparently emphasizes most on reading.
7. The new syllabuses emphasize more on language proficiency and have added courses accordingly.
8. The syllabuses have grammar courses. There are no courses on functional grammar.
9. The recent syllabuses have communicative English courses, unlike the earlier ones.
10. The syllabuses have courses on media communication, business English, speaking and listening courses and computer studies. There are courses on ELT.

#### Results: Questionnaire Survey and Interview

1. The philosophy underpinning English as a subject should be classical humanism, which is the intrinsic value of the subject matter and its role is developing the learners' intellect, humanistic values and rationality.
2. The students think the objective of learning the subject is progressive which stresses the individual needs of the learners.
3. Teachers think the department aims to produce liberal human beings with broad minds and also to develop the English skills of its students.
4. The common profession that the students of English department choose is teaching, but the teachers of the department of English do not think that the department produces skilled English teachers and English literature scholars adequately.
5. The teachers think the department produces graduates with good qualities of head and heart and also caters the English language needed for the students now-a-days.
6. The teachers as well as the students agree that the students' English grammar is average at the entry level and they insist on the teaching of grammar at the initial levels, which in actuality occupies the space that should otherwise have been taken by some introductory literature courses.

7. Almost none of the teachers or the students want the English department to be of purely literature which shows that they have grown more job market oriented, unlike the early days.
8. The present method of teaching literature is lecture method, which used to be the classical method, but the teachers and students want it to be a combination of lecture, student participatory, teacher directed learning and seminar methods.

### Results: Classroom Observation

Five English classes with different batches were observed by the researcher. It was found that:

1. The students are taught through lectures.
2. Only some students are able to get to the literary value of the text, the rest of them are stuck at the very superficial level of the text.
3. The students are taught grammar in the first year.
4. The students' level of language proficiency is average.
5. The students often carry supplementary ready-made notes to comprehend the texts and give very less trials of free-hand writing about the texts, and do not spent enough time to analyze, think critically, or evaluate the texts individually on their own.
6. The students are not very good at taking down the lectures properly into their copy books.
7. Very rarely do the students ask questions on their own, though they come up with replies if they are asked questions by the teacher.
8. The students' study of English is not only limited to the reading of the texts and criticisms on them, they have to prepare presentations and write assignments and take tutorial classes.
9. All the texts are not thoroughly read in the classroom and the students do not read the texts thoroughly to understand and appreciate the style of the author or to comment on the features of the text.

### Summary of the study and Recommendations

In case of the teaching of English Literature the advanced aids of teaching, if used improperly, might take the students away from the essential literature.

With the technological advancements, teachers tend to update their teaching techniques by the use of multimedia, projector and overhead phones. These supplementary aids are to facilitate and enhance the understanding of the students not to limit their intellectual involvement and attachment with the text. The students tend to seek the shallower ends like images to know words and easily accessible internet information instead of going through the tiresome ends of reading and exploring references for better perceptions. They wrongly go for preparing a good presentation on a single aspect, no matter even if in poor English, as an end in it. The advantages of the introduction of the learner-centered participatory methods and the seminar-methods together with the teacher centered methods are undeniable. The fact also is that the learners tend to be busier with excelling in presentations than reaching the dignified depth of literature itself.

As the study shows, the humanitarian values that English carries, that is, the intellectually polished "gentleman" that it promises to produce, is impossible if the students do not get the proper essence of literature due the lack of proficiency in English. As the language proficiency of the students is below average they are bound to find literature to be a burden and will never feel the urge to read more and more from and about the text. The ultimate result might be that these learners a large portion of whom are to grow up to occupy the teaching positions would not be able to make the weaker learners get the proper education of English. As mentioned earlier, English is multi disciplinary. Students are supposed to develop their level of proficiency in English naturally in the process of studying and learning but if the initial level is below standard the tertiary level can not be expected to be much high.

The students are helpless and are incapable of enjoying to learn or to perceive the piece of work, the text. It is only after they are equipped with a standard level of language proficiency that they will start to know how to think about the text, the approaches to hand it and gradually think critically and appreciate the value of it.

Taking the proficiency of the students into consideration the syllabuses already have included several language courses. There is a great need to take central initiatives to monitor and rectify the teaching and learning process of the secondary and higher secondary English.

The study simply points out the fact that the learners are getting strayed due to their ignorance of the inner value of literature as already clarified through the research on the objectives of the study of English. Students should learn literature not only as a tool for getting a good job but also with equal care and justified sensitivity towards the essence of English as an important subject.

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**Appendices****Appendix-1****Checklist for Document Analysis**

1. Does the syllabus mention any objective of the entire syllabus and the individual courses?
2. Is the syllabus a purely literature one, or a language syllabus, or a combination of both?
3. What are the courses that the syllabus contains?
4. Does the syllabus suggest appropriate classroom pedagogy for individual courses?
5. Does the syllabus suggest learner-centered activities, like presentations to be given, or preparation of assignments, etc?
6. Which of the four basic skills of the language are emphasized most in the syllabus?
7. Are there English Language Proficiency courses?
8. Does the syllabus have grammar courses? Are there any courses on functional grammar?
9. Are there courses on communicative English?
10. Does the syllabus include courses, which will contribute to the technical sides of the common, major professions the students of the Department of English join?

**Appendix-2****English Syllabuses Evaluated through the Checklist**

1. B.A. Honours Programme, Dhaka University, Session-2007-2008,
2. B.A. Honours Programme, Jahangirnagar University, Session-2006-2007
3. M.A. Programme, Jahangirnagar University, Session-2005-2006
4. M.A. Programme, Jahangirnagar University, Session-1998-1999
5. B.A. Honours Programme, Rajshahi University, Session-2007-2008
6. M.A. Programme, Rajshahi University, Session-2006-2007
7. B.A. Honours Programme, Chittagong University, Session-2008-2009
8. M.A. Programme, Chittagong University, Session-2008-2009
9. B.A. Honours Programme, East West University, Session-2007-2008
10. M.A. Programme, East West University, Session-2008-2009
11. B.A. Honours Programme, Northern University, Session-2007-2008
12. M.A. Programme, Northern University, Session-2008-2009
13. B.A. Honours Programme, Asian University, Session-2007-2008

**Appendix-3****A Detailed List of the Universities and Number of Teachers and Students Selected for Questionnaire Survey and Interview**

SI No	Name of Universities	Surveyed		Interviewed	
		Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students
1	Dhaka University	04	10	04	12
2	Jahangirnagar University	03	18	03	12
3	Rajshahi University	09	20	06	11
4	Chittagong University	07	16	00	00
5	BRAC University	04	06	04	06
6	East-West University	04	07	04	00
7	Stamford University	04	07	00	04
8	Asian University (Dhaka)	05	10	00	00
9	Northern University (Rajshahi)	06	10	06	05
10	Asian University(Rajshahi)	05	06	00	00
Total		51	106	27	50

**Appendix-4****Questionnaire:**

This questionnaire is meant for preparing an article on the prospects of teaching literature. Your co-operation is essential and will be highly appreciated. All information or proposals will be strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this study. You can tick only one answer for each question.

Nellufar Yeasmin

Part-I: Personal Details

1. Name:.....

2. Designation:.....
3. University:.....

#### Part-II: Prospects of English Studies

1. What are the general goals of your Departmental syllabuses?
    - ☐ To produce liberal human beings with broad minds
    - ☐ To help with development of English language skills
    - ☐ To learn about Western or Anglo-American culture
    - ☐ To help students derive aesthetic pleasure
    - ☐ To enrich Bangla literature
    - ☐ To contribute to development, progress and prosperity of the country
  2. How does your program of study contribute to overall educational objectives?
    - ☐ By producing skilled human resources
    - ☐ By developing love for the country and it's people
    - ☐ By contributing to development, progress and prosperity of the country
    - ☐ By becoming good administrators
    - ☐ By becoming teachers
    - ☐ By becoming patriots, social conformists and good citizens in a democratic society
    - ☐ By becoming development agents
  3. Which of the following objectives are taken into consideration in designing the syllabuses for your Department?
    - ☐ To produce graduates with good qualities of head and heart.
    - ☐ Catering for English language skills that are very much needed now a day.
    - ☐ To produce good English teachers
    - ☐ To produce English Literature Scholars
  4. English department syllabus should be-
    - ☐ Purely literature syllabus
    - ☐ Purely language syllabus
    - ☐ A proportionate combination of language, literature, ELT, phonetics, linguistics, etc.
  5. There have been some changes in the syllabus from time to time; for example some linguistics, language and ELT courses were introduced; and for the literature courses, some African and Caribbean, Continental and Commonwealth literature also were incorporated. What were the considerations for bringing about these changes?
    - ☐ To help develop learners' English language proficiency
    - ☐ To cater for the local needs or market demands
    - ☐ To produce effective English language teaching professionals
    - ☐ To further expand their knowledge of literature
    - ☐ Others: (please Specify)
- 
6. What is the requirement of English language proficiency? Tick one option for each of the skills.
    - ☐ Reading:-    ☐ very high    ☐ high    ☐ medium    ☐ low
    - ☐ Writing:-    ☐ very high    ☐ high    ☐ medium    ☐ low
    - ☐ Speaking:-    ☐ very high    ☐ high    ☐ medium    ☐ low
    - ☐ Listening:-    ☐ very high    ☐ high    ☐ medium    ☐ low
  7. Which of the following skills are emphasized more in your syllabus?
    - ☐ Reading
    - ☐ Writing
    - ☐ Listening
    - ☐ Speaking
  8. What is the level of English proficiency at the entry level of students of your Department?
    - ☐ Excellent
    - ☐ Good
    - ☐ Average
    - ☐ Below average
    - ☐ Very Poor
  9. Do you incorporate courses to help the students with the gaps?
    - ☐ Yes    ☐ No
  10. Should there be courses on grammar at the University level?
    - ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Not sure
  11. If you think grammar should be taught at the University, at which level?
    - ☐ First year
    - ☐ Second year
    - ☐ Third year
    - ☐ Fourth year

12. Do you think the teaching procedure should be mentioned in the syllabus, so that teachers can follow, more or less, a uniform method of teaching?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Not sure
13. What are the methods commonly used for teaching in your Department?  
☐ Lecture method  
☐ Student centered participatory method  
☐ Teaching directed learning  
☐ Seminar method  
☐ Combination
14. Which method or methods do you personally use?  
☐ Lecture method  
☐ Student centered participatory method  
☐ Teaching directed learning  
☐ Seminar method  
☐ Combination
15. What are the common professions your students join?  
☐ Teaching  
☐ Administration (B.C.S. Cadre)  
☐ Banks  
☐ Commercial or business firms  
☐ Media (Print or Electronic)  
☐ Any other profession (Please specify)
- 
16. Should there be some courses like Introductory Computing, Professional English, Business English or English for the Media to help learners for some of the major professions they join?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Not sure
17. What percentage of weightage should be given to the following areas that exist in the present English Department Syllabus? (Please write the percentage)  
☐ English Language proficiency courses...  
☐ Grammar...  
☐ Phonetics and Phonology...  
☐ Linguistics theories...  
☐ Literary theory...  
☐ E.LT...  
☐ English Literature...  
☐ American Literature...  
☐ Continental Literature...  
☐ Commonwealth/African/Caribbean literature...  
☐ History of Politics and Society of England...  
☐ History of Western Ideas...

Why do you think so?