On Interpretation of the Verbal form in –(i)te in Bengali

Mrs. Ekaterina Kostina, MA

Assistant lecturer,
Department of Indian Philology,
Faculty of Oriental Studies,
Saint-Petersburg State University.
199034, 11, Universitetskaya naberezhnaya,
Saint-Petersburg, Russia.
E-Mail: e.kostina@spbu.ru, helkari@mail.ru

Abstract

Bengali is spoken by a great number of people both in India and the People's Republic of Bangladesh; it is the mother tongue of Nobel Prize winners – R. Tagore, A. Sen and M. Yunus. Despite the fact that Bengali grammar has been studied and analyzed for centuries, a learner of the language still has to face multiple therminological problems, arising from different approaches to certain grammatical categories. This paper deals with with the non-finite verbal form(s) ending in –(i)te, described as the infinitive, or the imperfective adverbial participle, or both in one, or two independent forms with one plane of expression. The author first explains what will be understood by the terms "non-finite form", "infinitive" and "adverbial participle", and then goes on to summarize existing interpretations of the form in question, so as to attempt to prove that Bengali has two homonymic forms with this marker.

Key words: Bengali, non-finite verbal forms, imperfective adverbial participle, infinitive.

Introduction

Bengali is a language rich in non-finite verbal forms. These forms can be used subordinate to other parts of speech (verbs, adjectives or nouns) or independently, forming non-finite clauses. They are also used in formation of finite verbal forms of agglutinative nature and compound verbs. The non-finite verbs in –*(i)te* are wide-spread, partly because of the very wide range of grammatical meanings they can express. However, all these meanings and syntactical functions based on them can be arranged in two groups: nominal (purpose, object, compliment etc.) and adverbial (additional simultaneous action, immediately preceding action etc.). To represent the action as a noun is the infinitive's function, while it is the adverbial participle that is expected to represent the action as an adverbial modifier. This fact resulted in contradictions in the form's interpretation not only in scientific researches, but also in Bengali text-books. Contradictions always have bad influence on students' perception of the language as an integral system, moreover, they may lead to misunderstanding and wrong translations. To the author's knowledge, the form

in *–(i)te* has never become the main subject of a paper yet (at least outside the Bengali-speaking area); therefore, it appears necessary to conduct a research on this subject.

1. The infinitive and the adverbial participle: what they are and what they are not

Both the infinitive and the adverbial participle belong to the group of the so-called non-finite forms or verbs. Traditionally non-finite forms have been described as the forms not inflected for person and number. Unlike finite verbs, they have no special conjugation markers – *endings*, changing together with the change in person and number of a verb[1].

In Bengali linguistic tradition, non-finite verbs are called *asamāpikā kriyā.* The term is derived from the Sanskrit root *āp* with prefixes a- and sam-, and means "not completing, not finishing". These verbs (ending in *–(i)te*, *-iyā/*-e and *–(i)le* + the gerundial participle in *–ā*, sometimes referred to as a verbal noun or verbal adjective) are called so because they are supposed to be unable to deliver the sense of a sentence in full or to complete its structure (Caṭṭopādhyāẏ 1966, p. 135, Hak 2011, p. 180). This concept, traditional for India, is nowadays supported by many modern linguists outside South Asia. At present, finiteness is often described in its association with the independence of predication, which allows us to list some historically nominal verbal forms among the finite ones: these forms do not change in person, but can serve as independent predicates (e.g. Russian past tense, Hindi preterit and conditional mood).

However, it should be noticed, that the "native Bengali" definition of non-finiteness does not suit the real situation with the "non-finite" forms in this language, as Bengali gerunds and participles serve as predicates in "subject – predicate" structures quite regularly. The gerundial participle (GP) should be named first. Although not every grammarian would include it in the list of non-finite verbs, those who do so cannot avoid the contradiction between the accepted definition of non-finiteness and the nature of this form, acting as the independent predicate (without any copula) in structures like *ye bāritā* (Subj., Noun in Nom.) *āmār kenā* (Pred., GP) *āmār bāṛi nāi* – "The house that is bought by me (lit. *Which house my bought*) is not my house".

Conditional adverbial participles (CAP) and forms in *–(i)te* can also form independent non-finite clauses with their own subjects in Nominative:

āmār banduk thākle tāder guli kartām (ŠC D) – "If I had a gun (lit. My gun if being), (I) would have shot them".

barań choṭobābu pakeṭ theke sigreṭer pyākeṭ bār kartei … surendr tār theke ekṭā tule nila (SG GBh, 409) – "But as soon as Little Master took the cigarette pack out of his pocket (lit. Little Master only taking the cigarette pack from (his) pocket) … Surendr took one out of it".

Although the structures *banduk thākle* or *choṭobābu … bār kartei* do not form absolutely independent sentences (except for, maybe, short answers to a question like "Under what circumstances would you have shot them?" – "If I had a gun (āmār banduk thākle)"), we cannot say that they are unable to deliver the full sense. Therefore, we have to admit that, at least in Bengali,[2] the capability of being used as an independent predicate cannot explain the difference between finite and non-finite verbs. In our opinion, based on the theory of *finiteness* formulated by prof. *V.G. Guzev* (2006), this difference lies in the field of the verb's capability to provide the recipient of the sentence with *any* information on the subject itself (not only person or number, but also gender, subordination or any other property) along with the details of the

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[1] In some grammars non-finite verbs are also described as those deprived of the categories of tense, aspect and mood (Hak 2011, p. 180); however, it is not true for all languages.

[2] Unlike Bengali or Hindi, a non-finite verb cannot have its own subject, for example, in Russian.

action. In the examples above this function has been successfully executed by the structures *guli kartām* "would have shot" and *tule nila* – "took out". The ending *–tām* tells us that the subject is 1st person, and *–la* is the marker of is 3rd person neutral[3], while thākle (or bār kartei) can be used with any subject, compare:

uni nā <u>thākle</u> rājnītiṭā eto miṣṭi hato nā… - "Without him/her the politics wouldn't be so sweet" (lit. <u>he/she</u> not <u>existing</u>) - 3rd person respectful;

<u>āpni thākle</u> āmār sārā jīban biye na haleo calto – "With <u>you staying</u> my life could go on even without getting married" - 2nd person respectful.

Besides being incapable of providing complete information on the subject, infinitives, gerunds, participles and other non-finite forms share a common grammatical meaning: all of them may be described as forms of secondary verbal representation, representing the action as a subject, an attribute or an adverb.

The infinitive (Bengali: *nimittārthak asamāpikā kriyā,* i.e. "the non-finite verbal form of purpose") is a verbal form, representing the action as a subject (a noun) and thus sharing both verbal and nominal properties. It may be described as "the most non-finite" of all the non-finite forms, representing the action in its "pure" form. As soon as in some languages (English and Bengali among them) the infinitive shares part of its functions with *gerund*[4], another nominal verbal form, it is necessary to mark the difference between them.

It seems impossible to find a solution applicable to all languages; however, for Bengali we may say that the gerund (unlike the infinitive) is declinable, and thus it is the only nominal verbal form to be used before a postposition[5]. Besides that, Bengali infinitive can be described, following Matthew's *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics*, as "characteristically used in clauses and other constructions subordinate to another verb" (Matthews 1997, p. 178) and very seldom appearing as a sentence subject, unlike the gerund.

The other term applicable to the form in *–(i)te*, is *the imperfective adverbial participle.* The imperfective character of the action denoted by the form manifests itself in comparison with the perfective participle in *–iyā/-e*: *karte* "doing" vs *kare* "having done", though sometimes this aspectual opposition becomes irrelevant (especially in case of iterated forms or use of the emphasizer *i*). In the author's opinion, it is important to underline the *adverbial* nature of this form, since its main function is not to serve as an adnominal or adverbal attribute, but to picture the external setting of the action – the function usually executed by the adverbial modifier. Besides that, there is a "proper" participial form in Bengali, i.e. the already mentioned gerundial participle in *–ā*, this time, in its adjectival hypostasis. Sometimes a participle being used adverbially is called "absolute"/ "absolutive", but here we prefer the term "adverbial" as there are no declinable participles of the same origin in Bengali to oppose the indeclinable "absolute" form.

To resume the aforesaid, we may define the infinitive as *a non-finite (i.e. incapable of providing any information on its subject) verbal form representing the action as a subject and used primarily subordinate to other parts of speech,* while the imperfective adverbial participle is understood as *a non-finite verbal form whose main function is to represent the non-complete action as an adverb.*

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[3] Bengali verbs have degrees of subordination instead of numbers.

[4] It should be noticed that in some works on Indian languages (especially, Sanskrit) the term *gerund* is used to denote adverbial (non-declinable) participles (ending in *–tvā* or *-ya*), such as *uktvā* (having said), āgamya (having come) (see Whitney 2004, pp. 355 – 360). As for Bengali, the term *gerund* or *gerundial participle,* is applied here to a verbal form in of complex nature, functioning both as a noun and as an adjective and ending in *–ā*.

[5] Similar observation has been made for another Indo-Aryan language, Marathi (see Kuznetsov 1978, pp. 30, 79)

2. The form in –(i)te: its formation and typical usages

The form in question is built with the help of the affix *-te* (calit bhāṣā) /*-ite* (sādhu bhāṣā)[6] added to the verbal root. In *calit bhāṣā* this process is followed by mutation of the root vowel: in closed syllables *e -> i* (lekh -> likh-te «to write, writing»), *æ-> e* (dækh -> dekh-te «to look, looking»), *o->u* (bojh -> bujhte «to understand, understanding»); the final *ā* transforms into *e* (khā -> khe-te «to eat, eating»), the final *e -> i* (de -> di-te «to give, giving»), and the *o->u* (šo ->šu-te «to sleep, sleeping»). The roots belonging to the so called second conjugation class and causative stems (both often described as extended verbal roots) do not undergo any changes (berā -> berā-te «to come out, coming out»; karā – karā-te «to make smb. do smth., making smb. do smth.»). Conjunct and compound verbs, as well as passive constructions, also can have forms in –(i)te, e.g. *prakāš dite, paṛe yete, šikhe nite; šonā yete* etc.

Before we try to define the grammatical status of the form in question, let us point out its most typical usages. It was not the task of this research to list all the contexts and combinations in which this form can occur; therefore, in case of existence of a number of synonymous (or close in meaning) constructions only one of them will be illustrated[7]. All usages are grouped in three categories according to the meaning and the syntactical role of the form, i.e. participial, infinitival and controversial.

2.1 Participial use

-        Iterated (continuous or repeated action parallel to the "main" action described by the finite form): *tyāksi niye hoṭele <u>āste-āste</u> haẏe gela dašṭā* (SR JBF, 9) – "As we were going to the hotel by taxi, it got to be 10 p.m." (lit. "<u>coming-coming</u> to the hotel …)

-        Iterated with the particle *na: 2012 <u>āste nā āste</u> šeṣo haẏe gela?* – "<u>Having not properly started</u>, the year 2012 has already finished?"

-        With the particle (emphasizer) *i* (immediate change of events): *… āmi jege šabda <u>kartei</u> pālāẏ…* (BB A, 150) – "… as soon as I wake up and make any sound, runs away…" (lit. "I having waken up and <u>only making</u> a sound…").

-        With the particle (emphasizer) *o* (concession): *emanki tār aparādh ki chila tā <u>jānteo</u> se bindu mātra agrah dekhāla nā* – "<u>Even knowing</u> what his crime was, he didn't show any interest"

-        "Bare" (quite rare in classical language, but popular nowadays): *… khabar <u>āste</u> se cale gela bāṛi theke* (BB ŠG, 19) – "As the news came, he left the house" (Lit. "the news <u>coming</u>…")

-        With *thākā* "to stay" and verbs of motion (continuous or iterated character of the main action): *tāmāker badale du'janke gobar khāiyā khub <u>hāste thāke</u> paban* (SG GBh, 404) – "Having fed two people dung instead of tobacco, Paban <u>keeps laughing</u>".

2.2 Infinitival use

-        The subject (rare): *<u>khete</u> ki kono jiniš šikhte haẏ* (ŠC D) – "Is <u>eating</u> something to be learned?"; *āphrikā adbhūt <u>sundar dekhte</u> – kintu āphrikā bhayaṅkar* (BB CP)– "Africa is incredibly <u>beautiful to see</u>, but Africa is dangerous."

-        An attribute to a noun: *āmār samudra <u>dekhte</u> <u>bhīṣan icche haẏ</u>* – "I've got a terrible <u>desire to see</u> the sea."

-        Subordinate to adjectives: *āpanār ceṣṭā <u>byartha hate</u> <u>bādhya</u>* (SR JBF, P. 5) – "Your efforts are <u>sure to be vain.</u>"

- Subordinate to verbs:

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[6] On difference between colloquial (calit) and literary (sādhu) functional styles of Bengali see, for example, Thompson 2012, pp. 6 – 9.

[7] A more detailed list can be found e.g. in Thompson 2012, pp. 173 – 176.

With the verb *haoẏā* – "to be, to become" (obligation): … *tāhār … ābār sāt-āṭṭi nānā baẏaser sañginīr sañge ei bāṛiṭite thākte haẏ* (BB ŠG, 46) – «… again she… has to stay in this very house with 7-8 neighbors of different age".

With the verb deoẏā – "to give", "to let, to allow" (permission): *du-ekjanke … deoẏā haẏechila kāchākāchi sandhān karte* (SR EBŠ, 65) – "Some people were allowed to look for (the buffalo – E.K.) in the neighborhood".

With the verbs of beginning (lāgā, ārambh karā, šuru karā): *sutā kṛmi ghāmte šuru karla* (HA CAT, 38) – "The worm began to sweat".

With the verbs of like/dislike (bhālobāsā; bhālo/khārāp/manda lāgā (nā lāgā):

(Agent in nominative) *se nācte bhālobāse* (SG GBh, 404) - «He likes to dance».

(Agent in genitive) *o sab kathā āmār šunteo bhālo lāge nā* (ŠC D) - «I don't like even listening to such words».

With the verbs of desire (cāoẏā, icche karā): *āmi samaẏ kāṭāte cāi* (ŠC D) – "I want to spend some time".

With the verbs of learning/knowing/forgiving e.g. a skill (šikhā, jānā, bhulā etc.): *šikṣak mitya kathā balle chātra-chātrīrāo mithya kathā balte šikhbe* (a newspaper heading) – "If a teacher lies, his students will also learn telling lies".

With the verbs of ability and permission (pārā, pāoẏā): *gānkhāni sei bẽdheche, kintu nije gāite pare nā* (SG GBh, 404) – "It was he who started the song, but he cannot sing himself".

In "reported imperative" constructions (comp. tell smb. to do smth.) with the verbs *balā* – "to tell", *likhā* – "to write" etc.: *jāẏgāṭāẏ pāũchanomātra jip thāmāte ballam* (SR EBŠ, P. 30) – "As soon as we arrived at the place, I asked to stop the Jeep".

- With the verbs of movement (purpose or intention): *feludā topse ār lālmohān … galite berāte beriẏechila* (SR EBŠ, 69) – "Feluda, Topshe and Lalmohan went out to walk along the lane".

bhāratī jijñāsā karila, āpni kata dite ẏācchilen? (ŠC PD, 96) – "Bharati wondered, "How much are you going to give?"

2.3 Controversial usages

There are at least two categories of structures where the role of the form in –*(i)te* can be considered both participial and infinitival. The first of them will remind us of the *complex object* structure in English: *padmā setur upar diye ẏānbāhan calte dekhechi* – "I've seen transport passing (or pass) over Padma bridge".

Having analyzed this structure, S.K. Chatterjee arrives at the conclusion that as the absolute usage is more typical of participles, here we also have a participial construction (See Chatterjee 1926, p. 1015). Other Indo-Aryan languages (in which participles and infinitives are not identical in form) may support the theory:

Sanskrit: *tato vanarān… kampamānānavalokya pakṣibhiruktam* (Hitopadeša 3,2) – "Having seen the monkeys shivering, the birds said" (lit. was said by the birds).

Hindi: *mãĩne mare hue kutte ko calte hue dekhā* – "I saw a dead dog walking"

However, this theory is not universally acknowledged. According to a famous sanskritologist M. Müller, this structure may be treated as an example of locative usage of the verbal noun: "For instance, the phrase *āpan putrake mārite āmi tāhake dekhilām,* can be translated, I saw him beating his son; but it can be explained also as … I saw him in the action of beating his own son" (Müller 1848, pp.345-346). This theory may be supported by the fact that Bengali, unlike Sanskrit or Hindi, seems to be incapable of forming a similar structure with a perfective adverbial participle.

In the second construction we see the form in –*(i)te* subordinate to a noun:

sbādhīnatār 41 bachar paro bijaẏ dibase ānanda karte āmār lajjā lage (ArRe S41) – "Even 41 years after I feel shame being exited on Victory day".

If we compare this structure with a similar construction in Hindi, as we have already done earlier, it will seem to have participial nature:

tumhẽ aisī bate <u>karte</u> šarm nahī̃ ātī? (P N, 115) – "Don't you feel shame <u>saying</u> such words?"

However, if we change the word with the meaning of *shame* by a word meaning *difficulty* or *problem,* e.g. *māke <u>chere yete</u> yata <u>kaṣṭa</u> nā hacche, tata hacche tomāÿ cheṛe yete* (BB ŠK, 19) – Lit. "What <u>difficulty</u> is (in) <u>leaving</u> one's mother, the same is (in) <u>leaving</u> you", Hindi will show an infinitive with a locative postposition:

yadi āpko us vicar ka <u>citran karne mẽ</u> dikkat ho… (MR ZNMD, 76) – "If you have any difficulty (<u>in</u>) <u>visualizing</u> this idea…"

The latter example may support the theory of Max Müller, who thought that every Bengali phrase with the imperfective participle can be explained as a locative case of infinitive, and so there is no need to treat the participle as an independent category (See Müller 1848, p. 347).

The problem of these structures surely requires more research; but even if we do not take them into account, still there will be enough structures of more or less clear semantics treated by different scholars in different ways.

3. Grammarians on the status of the form in *–(i)te*.

The whole set of theories regarding the status of the *–(i)te* form is represented in Fig. 1.

Figure 1. Interpretations of the form(s) in –(i)te

3.1 The "one-form" theories

The "one-form" concepts are based on the formal criterion - from the "material" point of view, there is only one form in *–(i)te*. But should this form be referred to as the infinitive or the adverbial participle? To answer this question, the researchers suggest addressing to the form's origin.

Those who prefer to treat the form as the (adverbial) participle, usually refer to "The Origin and Development…" by S.K. Chatterjee, who explains that the participial form in *–(i)te* originates from the locative form (in *–e*) of the Middle Indo-Arian present participle (sansk. –anta => beng. –ita) (See Chatterjee 1926, p. 1002).   Oblique participles are used adverbially in many other new Indo-Aryan languages (see Zograph 1976, p. 219), and these structures trace back to the Old Indo-Aryan *Locativus Absolutivus* construction, requiring a participle and a nominal part of speech in the locative case, and is commonly translated into English using a "when", "as" or "while" clause: *atha <u>gacchati kāle</u> … kaḥcit šṛgālastatrāyātaḥ* (*Pañcatantra 1.1*) – "<u>As the time was passing</u>, … a jackal came there."

The theory of participial origin of the form in *–(i)te* appears to be quite trustworthy; even those scholars who admit the existence of the infinitive in modern Bengali, sometimes note that the infinitive was originally a participle (Beames 1891, p. 50, Milne 1913, p. 173). A. Dakshi, although referring to the form in *–(i)te* only as to the infinitive, comments that "… infinitival affix -ite- … seems to be derived from Sanskrit participial suffix –anta…" (Dakshi 2000, p. 47).

H.R. Thompson also supports the participial theory, but for another reason. In her own words, "In some cases the imperfective participle is equivalent to the English infinitive with *to* <…> The term INFINITIVE is also in use for this form, but for a language with multiple non-finite forms the term INFINITIVE seems too vague" (Thompson 2012, pp. 173-174).

Followers of the participial concept usually do not comment anyhow on the difference in semantics between the two *balte* in *āmī <u>balte</u> pāri* – "I can speak" and *mobaile kathā <u>balte balte</u> se jamite paṛla* "Speaking on the phone, he fell on the ground". At best they say that in some cases the imperfective adverbial participle in Bengali may have infinitival meaning (Zbavitel 1970, pp. 74-75). So maybe it is

incorrect to interpret the structures listed in paragraph 2.2 as infinitival ones, the mistake arising from our *expectation* to see the infinitive in such environment? This supposition may be supported by the fact that there are examples of usage of other adverbial participles (perfective (PAP) and conditional (CAP)) in the same structures:

+ pārā/pāoÿā (ability)[8]: *āmi yeman kariyāi* (PAP) *pāri, mā-bāber mata kariba* (ŠC D) – "(If) I can do something in that or another way, I will do it as my parents (suggest me to do – E.K.)" (lit. "How I <u>having done can</u>…"). *tā āmāder hyārken niye geche, bale gelei* (CAP+emphasizer *i*) <u>pārta</u> (SG GBh, 407) – "She's gone having taken our lantern, I mean she <u>could go</u>".

+ haoÿā (obligation): *cikitsakder aphis ṭāim mane kare kāj <u>karle</u>* (CAP) *<u>habe nā</u>* (newspaper heading) – "Doctors <u>will not have to work</u> keeping in mind their office time."

Such sentences have not yet been properly analyzed in comparison with the respective *–(i)te* structures, but they do exist in Bengali and are used quite often[9]. If we treat the forms in *–(i)te* as adverbial participles here, existence of other modal participial constructions will be easier to explain, since the formula will look like "an adverbial participle + a modal/semi-modal verb", not "infinitive or an adverbial participle + a modal/semi-modal verb". However, any conclusion on the matter will look premature before we find clearly participial equivalents for more "looking-infinitival" constructions and explain the possible difference in meaning/usage between the two variants. In the meanwhile, we should analyze the argumentation of those scholars, who insist on the opposite point of view, calling the form in *–(i)te* "the infinitive".

If we pay our attention to the formation of the *–(i)te* non-finite verb once again, we will notice that almost the same affix (*–te*) is used as one of the Locative-Instrumental case markers of Bengali nouns (*ei <u>nadi-te</u> māch nei* – "There are no fish <u>in the river</u>"). This fact makes some scholars believe that the form in *–(i)te* originates from the old verbal noun in *–i* plus the locative affix *–te* (See Müller 1848, p. 346; Chatterjee 1926, pp. 1014-1015, Raćová 2012, p. 27 etc.), and therefore, is nominal, i.e. *infinitival* by its nature. The mechanism of using an oblique form to work as the infinitive is not new for Indic languages: the Sanskrit form used together with verbs like *iṣ* - "to want" or *šak* – "can" (*aham <u>dṛṣṭum</u> icchāmi, aham <u>dṛṣṭum</u> šaknomi* – "I want <u>to see</u>, I can <u>see</u>")*,* is nothing but "the accusative case of a verbal noun formed by the suffix *tu*" (Whitney 2004, p. 347). This mechanism can be explained as representation of movement by a subject towards or into the state, denoted by the verbal root; thus *āmi bai <u>likhite</u> ešechi* – "I came to write a book" - used to mean "I came to the state of writing a book", and *āmi bai <u>likhite</u> pāri* – "I can write a book" can be interpreted as "I'm able in the state of writing a book".

The verbal noun (gerundial participle) of contemporary Bengali is also able to add the locative termination: *to strī <u>jid</u> <u>karate</u>* (GP *jid karā* "insisting" in Loc.) *se strīr pāše šuye paṛlen* - "So as the wife insisted, he fell asleep by the wife's side" (Lit. … <u>in</u> the wife's <u>insisting</u>…). Existence of such structures made P. Sarkar suppose that "the word 'balte' … is indeed the shortened form of 'balāte'" (Sarkār 2011, p. 284). This assumption would lead us to the conclusion that all infinitive forms are nothing but the result of the reduction of the locative form of the gerundial participle. However, it seems a bit too early to make such

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[8] One cannot but remember here the modal structure of ability in Hindi (+ saknā or pānā), where the verbal stem (equal to the perfective adverbial participle) is used: *mãĩ inkī <u>sevā kar saktī hũ̃</u>* – "I <u>can serve</u> him…" *harbans islie udhar <u>nahī̃ ā pāyā thā</u>* – "For this reason Harbans <u>was unable to come</u> there." However, even in Hindi occasional usages of infinitives before these modal verbs can be met: *ataḥ … mãĩ rāste kī or dauṛā, par thoṛī hī dūr <u>jāne pāyā</u> thā ki…* (AK VŠK, 205) – "So … I rushed to the road, but <u>I was able to cover</u> just a small distance when…"

[9] 49 800 search results for "karle habe" and about 9 600 results for "kare pāri" in Google (Request of 17.03.2014).

a conclusion before proper research in the field is completed. First, the reduction of -ā- in non-finite Bengali forms may indeed take place with the so called *extended verbs,* where this reduction is not expected to change the sense of the structure (See Thompson 2010, P. 359). This is surely not the case with infinitives, which can be formed on the base of both extended (causative) and not extended verbs of the same origin (like *dekhāte* – "to show" from *dekhā-* and *dekhte* – "to see" from *dekh-*). If we reduce the *–ā-* in *dekhāte,* we will end up with a verb of another meaning, and this makes P. Sarkar's assumption not universal. Besides that, if we assume that Bengali infinitives are being derived from contemporary gerundial participles, we will have to somehow explain the appearance of *-i-* before *–te* in *sādhu bhāṣā,* which also makes us prefer the first theory, that of the verbal noun in *–i + -te,* since it requires less additional explanation.

The credibility of this theory of the form's origin, and maybe the desire to find in modern Indo-Aryan languages equivalents for all categories, described in grammars of Sanskrit and/or European languages, made some Bengali scholars treat the form in *–(i)te* as primarily infinitival (nimitārthak asamāpikā), whose main function is to denote the *purpose* (sansk. *nimitta*) (B. Mazumdar, P. Sarkar, A. Basu, A. Dakshi etc.). A number of western authors of Bengali textbooks (Dimock, Radice etc.) followed them. In most cases they either do not mention clearly participial usages of this form at all (just like the supporters of the participial concept do it with the infinitival usages!), or restrict the sphere of participial use to the iterated infinitives: "the gerundial infinitive may act as a verbal adjective when iterated" (Basu 1976, P. 329); "remember that repetition of the infinitive <…> turns it into a present participle" (Radice 2003, P. 218)[10]. The "only-infinitival" theory is also supported by M. Müller (for the reasons stated above) and, as far as we can conclude from his not mentioning any "imperfective participle" in his works, by a contemporary specialist in Bengali and Indo-European studies, *M.H. Klaiman.*

Some scholars insist on referring to this form as to the infinitive even when they speak of its ability to substitute other participles: "The conditional conjunctive plus the emphatic suffix /-i/ can mean, as it does in sentence 2, "as", "just as", "just when" or "since". <…> The infinitive plus the emphatic suffix /-i/ is in some circumstances used … to mean "as" or "just as". <…> /hotei/ could also have been used in sentence 2" (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1964, p. 295).

Most "one-form" theories almost absolutely ignore the semantic factor, i.e. the fact that the imperfective participle and the infinitive are supposed to represent the action in two different, almost incongruous ways. An interesting attempt to explain differences in semantics and usage of the non-finite verbs in *–(i)te* and, at the same time, to remain within the frames of "one form" theory, has been made the by P. Dasgupta (2007). He invents for the form in *–(i)te* a new name "*Infini[tive-Parti]ciple*", or *Infiniciple,* and states that "it is infinitival as a single verb… and an active adverbial progressive participle as an iterated verb…" (Dasgupta 2007, p. 406). This interpretation may be considered "the first step" towards the "two-form" hypothesis, shared by S.K. Chatterjee and most Russian researches in the field of Bengali grammar.

3.2 The "two-form" theories

According to the two-form concept, the imperfective adverbial participle and the infinitive are two independent forms of different origins, which became homonymic in the course of time. Grammarians of this "school" support both theories of the forms' origin, formulated by S.K. Chatterjee (verbal noun in *–i* + locative ending *-te* for the infinitive, and participle in *–ita* in the locative case for the adverbial participle).

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[10] This assumption is not really correct, as single forms in *–(i)te* (with or without an emphasizer) may also sometimes be used in participial meaning (see paragraph 2.1 above).

Despite the fact that in his popular grammar book written in Bengali S.K. Chatterjee notices only three types of non-finite verbs (in *–(i)te*, in *–(i)le* and in *–iyā*) without giving them any names (see Caṭṭopādhyāẏ 1966, p. 135 and further), in his fundamental work "The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language" he insists on necessity of understanding that the two forms in *–(i)te* have different origins and thus must be described separately (see Chatterjee 1926, pp. 1002, 1015 – 1016). His opinion is shared by E.M. Bykova, who postulates the difference between the infinitive and the imperfective participle (conjunctive in her words) on the level of semantics and combinability:

"The infinitive is identical to the form of conjunctive ending in *-ite*. However, it is not too difficult to distinguish between these forms because of the difference in their semantics and combinability. The conjunctive denotes an action that accompanies another action or occurs parallel to it. The infinitive has no such meaning. The conjunctive form always indicates an action of the subject. The infinitive can express an action of both the subject and the object. Lastly, the conjunctive knows no lexical restrictions in its combinability with other verbs, but the infinitive can combine only with a restricted number of verbs. Besides, the infinitive can be adverbal and adnominal" (Bykova 1981, P. 84).

This explanation, though very practical and easy to understand, does not solve the problem of possible double explanation of some constructions with the *–(i)te* form and is even incapable of doing so. The matter is that it (as well as most other works on the subject) contains the idea of *complementary distribution* of the infinitive and the participle, i.e. the fact that the areas of usage of the two forms do not cross, and the infinitive appears where the participle ceases to exist, and gives way to it and vice versa. Even in case of the so called "controversial forms", the verb in *–(i)te* can be considered *either* infinitive *or* participle, but not both of them (comp. the *complex object* structure of the English language, where both the participle and the infinitive can appear, and the choice between them is made according to the aspectual characteristics of the action it denotes). However, if we look again at the list of our form's usages, we will see that it can appear in combination with the verbs of motion in both adverbial and nominal meanings. The author of this article would like to present one more reason to distinguish between the infinitive and the imperfective adverbial participle, putting them in similar circumstances.

4. The form in *–(i) te* and the verbs of motion

It has already been shown in paragraph 2, that the form in *–(i)te* can be used in combination with the verbs of motion, such as *jāoẏā* – "to go" and *āsā* – "to come". Such structures are very popular in Bengali, but they may differ in meaning. The most wide-spread interpretation will be that of moving somewhere with a purpose, e.g. *ek cor kamalā bāgāne kamalā <u>curi karte gela</u>* - "A thief <u>went</u> to an orange garden <u>to steal</u> oranges". This sentence shows the infinitival usage of the form, and can be interpreted in the way Max Müller had done: "A thief went to the state of stealing oranges". Here we can replace the infinitive with the gerundial participle in Genitive, accompanied by a postposition of purpose: *tinjan cor ḍāb <u>curi karār janye gela</u>* (a tale) – "Three thieves <u>went to steal</u> green coconuts".

The verb of motion in the sentences above retains its lexical meaning, but it also can lose it partly if the structure denotes someone's intention (comp. English *going to*) or activity change (comp. English *go on to do smth.*). In this case we may treat the combination as a fixed expression: *šeṣ paryanta netāi yakhan ek kalasī jal ene or māthāẏ <u>dhele dite yabe</u>, sei samay nijei lāphiẏe uṭhe ho-ho kare haste lāgla* (SG GBh, 409) – "In the end, when Netai brought a jar of water and was going to pour it on his head, he stood up himself in a jump, laughing with the 'ho-ho' sound" (lit. <u>will be going to pour</u>).

On the other hand, in the sentence … *seṭār janye mithye <u>ceṣṭā karte giẏe</u> myājisṭreṭer kopānale paṛba* (RTh G) – "… If I, <u>going on trying</u> in vain for it, fall into the fire of anger of the Magistrate…", the combination of *karte + jāoẏā* denotes the continuous action, i.e. going on *doing* something. We cannot

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replace the form *karte* with a verbal noun (gerund) here. There is no idea of physical movement or intention in the sentence, and the construction reminds us of the much more popular structure with the verb *thākā* "to stay": *āgei ābār phire yāi … gharer kāche, adūre dã̃riye <u>apekṣā karte thāki</u>* (DP M, 42) – "I had returned to the … house before it, and kept on waiting standing not far from there" (lit. "<u>stay waiting</u>")[11]. The continuous character of the action expressed by the form in –(i)te here can be enforced by its iteration: an *yadi kã̃dte kã̃dte āpatti <u>karte karte yāẏ</u> tabuo tāke yetei habe…* (RT ŠK) – "Even if the <u>heart goes on crying and objecting</u> to it, he will have to leave anyway".

It seems unlikely that Bengali, a language rich in methods of expression, would not only use one form to denote the circumstances of an action and a verb's compliment, but also express both the purpose (or intention) and the continuous action in one and the same way. In the sentences above, the conjunct verbs *curi karte* and *ceṣṭā karte*, being placed in the same environment, aquired different grammatical meanings and began to play different roles, which makes us believe that these are different verbal forms, i.e. the infinitive and the participle.

Conclusion

The non-finite verbs in –*(i)te* in Bengali are used in two major types of structures of infinitival and participial nature. This situation resulted in total therminological confusion, as some researchers treat them as two independent forms, while others describe them as one single category named either "infinitive" or "participle" disregarding of the differences in meaning and syntactical roles of the two non-finite forms. A new term "infiniciple" has also been suggested with the purpose of better reflection of the form's mixed nature. The analysis of existing theories has shown that it is impossible to solve the problem of the form's status on the basis of its origin as there are two equally trustworthy hypotheses of its appearing in the modern Bengali language. Neither can it be solved by addressing to the grammatical meaning: most structures of evidently participial character can be interpreted as the infinitival ones, while some typically infinitival constructions can be substituted by nearly synonymous phrases with other participial forms involved. Differences in combinability do not help either, for they may be described as special "nominal" usages of the participle or "adverbial usages" of the infinitive, as the spheres of infinitival and participial usages almost never cross. The solution appears to lie in the analysis of combinations of the " –*(i)te* + *yaoẏā*" type. These structures can express both "movement with a purpose/intention to do something" and "going on doing something". As one form is unlikely to denote quite different things in the same environment, it leads us to the conclusion that it is reasonable to distinguish between the infinitive and the imperfective adverbial participle in Bengali and consider them two independent (though homonymic) non-finite verbal forms.

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[11] There are similar constructions (imperfective participle + the verb of movement/staying) denoting continuous progressive/ continuous action in Hindi. To make the comparison more evident, we have chosen the examples with the same conjunct verbs (to try and to wait/expect): *uske sāre … prašn, jinhẽ ... <vah> dabāne kī ceṣṭā kartā jātā thā…* (A ŠEJ) – "All his … questions, which he… went on trying to suppress…"; … *jin kāmõ kī maĩ tumse <u>apekṣā kartā rahā hū̃,</u> tum use … pūrā karne kī ceṣṭā karoge* (TRG MRS, 31-32) – "… you will take every effort to do the things <u>I've</u> <u>kept expecting</u> you to do…". We can also compare the Bengali phrase *pathe āste āste yašodā krodh-abhimāner anek kathā mane mane <u>abṛtti karite karite āsiẏāchila</u>* – "On the way Yashoda was going on repeating in her mind many words full of anger and pride" from Š. Caṭṭopādhyāẏ's novel "Debdās" with its Hindi translation: *yašodā rāste par krodh aur abhimān bharī ḍher-sārī bate <u>soctī āyī</u>*. Both phrases contain the structure "imperfective participle + the verb of motion".

Figure 1. Interpretations of the form(s) in –(i)te
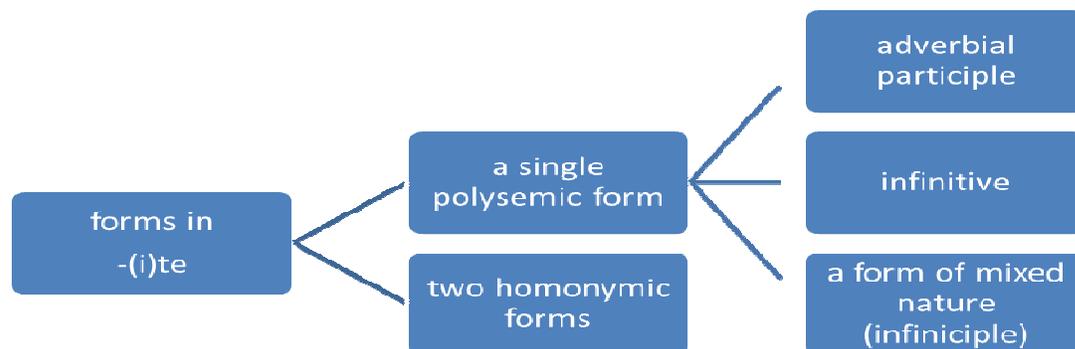
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