

## AKSHAY DATTA, RAMENDRASUNDAR AND BENGALI SCIENCE TERMINOLOGY

ASHISH LAHIRI\*

---

*Akshay Kumar Datta and Ramendrasundar Trivedi are the two stalwarts in the sphere of Bengali scientific terminology. The former was a true pioneer. He introduced many terms which we still use. But owing to over-emphasis on Sanskrit words, some of his innovations, remarkable in his time, have failed to stand the test of time. Although in principle he was in favour of using colloquial Bengali words, in practice he did not try them out. Moreover, apparently he did not think much of using English terms directly. Ramendrasundar, more than forty years his junior, went much deeper into the problem, attacking it on three fronts : 1) Using or constructing Sanskrit words, as shown by Datta, 2) Directly taking over English terms and 3) Taking over colloquial Bengali words. The language of science for him was almost as important as science itself. Showing instances from the history of science, he opined that great scientists themselves have contributed to the development of scientific language, including scientific terms. While advocating grammatical and etymological correctness in translating foreign terms, he also spoke of 'boldly taking liberty with grammatical and etymological niceties in the interest of usability, simplicity and euphony. He went on to discuss the basic principles of forming technical terms in any language, showing a remarkable catholicity of mind.*

---