CHAPTER - I

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1.1. ROLE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

English had a unique place before the independence of India. It was the language of administration, a compulsory subject at the school and college. It opened the doors of employment and those who had no knowledge of English were considered as uneducated. A knowledge of English was a must to climb up the social ladder.

After independence there was rethinking on the place of English. The constitution of India adopted English as an official language for fifteen years. The union government took upon itself the promotion and the development of Hindi as the medium of expression during the period of fifteen years. South Indian people could not understand Hindi. So they opposed to consider it as an official language. As a result, the parliament passed in 1963 a Bill declaring English as the Associate Official Language of India for an indefinite period. The union government has repeatedly affirmed that both English and Hindi would be used at the centre till the non-Hindi States agree to the discontinuance of English.

The British introduced English in the Indian Educational System in order to produce cheap clerks for their colonial administration. Macaulay introduced English in India. Even ardent patriots like Raja Ram Mohan Ray supported the learning of English for the dissemination of useful knowledge of science and literature through the medium of English.
Modern thought freed India from the British Yoke. It is also interesting to note that the founder of the Indian National Congress, Allan Octavian Hume, was an English man. English served as a unifying force for independence. Study of English enriched the Indian languages and literatures. Indian languages have freely borrowed words from English and have coined words and phrases on English model to enrich their vocabulary. English has greatly contributed to the growth of knowledge in India, particularly in the field of Science and Technology.

The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) has also recommended the continuance of English in the interest of national integration and for higher academic work. According to 1971 census nearly two hundred thousand Indians use English as their mother-tongue. Besides, a few Indian States and union territories have adopted English as official language. The Sahitya Academy of India recognizes English as one of the Indian languages and Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to include it in the Schedule of the constitution thus giving it statutory recognition as an Indian language. It plays an important role in the world affairs. It helps in establishing healthy international relations. It helps in integration of ideas on all aspects of human life, political, social, educational, cultural and economic. It has importance in each and every faculty. It covers all aspects of life relating to humanities, sciences, arts, philosophies and religions.

1.2. PRESENT STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

English still occupies an important place in the educational system in India. It continues to dominate the national scene. It is taught compulsorily
in most of the States in India. It is a medium of instruction in some schools and colleges. It continues to be the medium of instruction in technical, medical, law and other institutions. It is the language of communication between the Union Government and the State Government. It is the language most used in Parliament, State legislatures, the High Court and the Supreme Court. It is the means of inter-state communication.

Ghosh and others have summed up the present place of English in India thus: “The fact is that in India English is something more than a foreign language and something less than a second language. It has many more users and many uses, than a foreign language has.”

1.3. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH

English is the language which is generally understood throughout the world and one can go to any part of the globe and carry out one’s job with the help of the English language. It has created a better understanding among the people of the world and has broken down the barriers of nations and brought the people of various nations closer and into an interdependence. The following four topics display the importance of the study of English in India.

1. English as an international language.
2. English as a window on the world.
3. English as a library language
4. English as a link language.
1.4. ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

English is the mother-tongue of 300 million people in the world. The countries where English is the native or first language are the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. English is used as a second language in India, Pakistan, Africa, France and Soviet Union. It is spoken by 700 million people in the world, which is next only to the Chinese language. Chinese language is used only in China. But English is used in all parts of the world. It is understood by all sorts of people in various countries.

English is the language of politics, trade, commerce and industry. One out of ten persons in the world knows English. Fifty percentage of the Newspapers, Periodicals, sixty percentage of Radio Stations, fifty percentage of T.V. Stations, seventy five percentage of the world’s mail and more than fifty percentage of the world’s scientific and technical periodicals use English as medium.

English is one of the six official languages of the U.N.O. It is also a link language of the Common Wealth countries. F.G. French Says, “By accidents of history and by the rapid spread of industrial development, science, technology, international trade and something like an explosion in the speed and ease of travel and by all the factors which have broken down frontiers and forced nations into closer interdependence. English has become a world language, it is the means of international communication; there is no other.”

It creates better understanding among the nations of the world. It has been responsible for cultural development. It opens worldwide opportunity for employment.

1.5. ENGLISH AS A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

English is described as a window on the rapid progress of technology and science. It has been described as the pipeline for the stream of knowledge in all branches of learning. The Radhakrishnan University Education Commission observes “English is a language which is rich in literature, humanistic, scientific and technical.” If under sentimental urges people should give up English, they would cut themselves off from the living stream of ever growing knowledge. Unable to have access to this knowledge their standard of scholarship would fast deteriorate and their participation in the world movement of thought would become negligible. It’s effects would be disastrous for their political life, for living nations must move with the times and must respond quickly to the challenges of their surroundings. English is the only means of preventing people’s isolation from the world and they will act unwisely if they allow themselves to be enveloped in the folds of dark curtain of ignorance. Their students who are undergoing training at schools which will admit them either to university or vocation must acquire sufficient mastery of English to give them access to the treasures of knowledge, and in the universities no student must be allowed to take a degree who does not acquire the ability to read with facility and understanding works of English authors. F.G. French says, “Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the whole
Nehru said that English was Indian’s major window on the modern world. English is a common, social and cultural link among various States of India. It is a major trade link language with the outside world.

1.6. ENGLISH AS A LIBRARY LANGUAGE

English is a storehouse of knowledge. It has a unique place as a library language in India. The Kothari Education Commission has rightly stressed that English would play a vital role in higher education as an important language. The Commission has said that no student should be considered as qualified for a degree without proficiency in English. According to the Commission, “The implications of this (English as a library language) are two fold; all teachers in higher education should be essentially bilingual in the sense that they should be able to teach in the regional language and in English, and all students and particularly Postgraduate students should be able to follow lectures and use reading materials in the regional language as well as in English.”

The fact of the matter is that it is very difficult for a person to be a specialist in any line unless he is proficient in English. With the explosion of knowledge, a vast amount of scientific and technological knowledge has come out in the form of books, periodicals, journals and manuals which are mostly available in English language. The developing nations have to get this all, either in the form of translations or through the medium of English language. A study of English is therefore, very important as it would take much time to get all the modern technological knowledge in Indian
languages. Many universities have shifted to the regional languages as their medium of instruction but it would take time to open these facilities to science, engineering, medicine, law and agriculture. Thus knowledge of English is indispensable. It improves the skill of reading. Oral practice is important to improve a language. Reading is improved through speech. Rapid-reading is developed through library reading. Students can improve their communication skills through library reading.

1.7. ENGLISH AS A LINK LANGUAGE

English is a link language in India. It is the only language which is understood by the educated people all over the country. It is used in the trade correspondence. Without a knowledge of English, there will be no dialogue between persons from different states. It helps to foster national integration. It played a significant role in bringing together Indian national leaders from various regions of the country. The correspondence between the Union Government and the State Government is mostly conducted in English. Through medium of English, people carry out their trade, commerce, business relations, day-to-day State matters, National policies, discussions and other such activities.

Speaking about the role of English as a link language, Nehru once said, “If you of common interest, push out English, does Hindi fully take its place? I hope it will. I am sure it will. But I wish to avoid the danger of one unifying factor being pushed out without another unifying factor fully taking its place. In that event there will be a gap. The creation of any such gap must be avoided at all costs. It is very vital to do so in the interest of
the unity of the country. It is this that leads one to the conclusion that English is likely to have an important place in the foreseeable future.\(^6\) The Indian Education Commission (1963-66) has also recommended the continuance of English in the interest of national integration and for higher academic work. Morarji Desai appreciated English language through his words to Callaghan (The British Prime Minister) “We will not deny to ourselves the practical as well as cultural benefits of familiarity with English, this most eloquent and popular of languages.”\(^7\)

1.8. ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

There has been a lot of controversy regarding the medium of instruction at the higher level. So far as medium of instruction at the school stage is concerned, there is no dispute. All are agreed that the mother-tongue should be the medium of higher secondary school level, but it is divided with regard to medium of instruction at the university level. Politicians press the mother-tongue as medium of instruction. Kothari Education Commission recommended, “Mother-tongue has a pre-eminent claim as the medium of instruction at the school and college stages. Moreover, the medium of instruction at the school and higher education should generally be the same. The regional language should, therefore be adopted as the medium of instruction at the higher stage.”\(^8\)

Some educationist oppose to a change over from English to regional language. It will affect the mobility of the students and teachers from one university to the other. It may deteriorate the educational standard and lead
to the Balkanization of the Country. But most of the people are in favour of replacing English by regional language as medium of instruction.

Kothari Commission suggested that university students should have enough proficiency in English to get a degree. They should have equal proficiency in Mother-tongue and English.

1.9. ENGLISH AS A LITERARY SUBJECT

The study of a language as a medium of comprehension and secondly as a library subject are two aspects of study. English should be offered only as a medium of comprehension to enable students to use it as a window to the higher studies of their subject. Those who wish to excel in its study for literary pursuits are of course free to study English as a branch of literature and literary excellence, for which the universities would provide opportunities.

1.10. ENGLISH IS A SKILL SUBJECT

The power of expression in English language is a matter of skill, rather than of knowledge. It is a power that grows by exercise, not by knowing merely meanings, or rules. Like music, dance or painting, language is also a skill subject. Constant practice is very necessary in it. Language is an over learned skill. It is a habit forming process and regular intensive practice is the basis of habit formation. The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages and the British Council have adopted the communicative, child centered approach, for the Teaching-Learning Process of English, to be developed as a skill subject.
1.11. ENGLISH IS A HOSPITABLE LANGUAGE

Communication is a two way dynamic process. There can be no doubt that among the living languages in the world, English has been the most ‘hospitable’ language in the sense that it has welcomed into its fold hundreds of words from other languages which have contributed to its rich expressiveness. It was Oscar Wilde who said that Art was the perfect use of an imperfect medium. This medium may be chisel, hammer in the hands of a sculptor or in the hands of a painter, or words in the case of a writer and so on. These media are imperfect (i.e.) they are very inadequate to express the oceanic amplitude of thought and feeling in the artist. But the artist who makes a perfect use of his imperfect medium has an undisputed claim to greatness. This is the hallmark of every great artist.

To take a simple example. The young lover in Sheridan’s Rivals says to his beloved, “Won’t you come into my garden? I want my flower to see you.” This is art at its best.

A Whitehead once said that language could not be taught, but it might be learnt. For instance, “Science subjects can be taught but a language is caught” K.S.S. Sarma says, “Teachers should expose the students to the spoken word as much as possible and at the same time encourage them to talk only in English.”

1.12. ENGLISH IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

For almost 200 years English dominated the school curriculum. It was the medium of instruction not only at the university level but also at the
school level until the early thirties of this century. Even when it ceased to be the medium of instruction, maximum number of periods were devoted to it and the students' main preoccupation was the impossible task of acquiring a mastery of the kind of English written by the great English writers of the past. This was a highly frustrating situation except in the case of very few brilliant students. The standard of achievement in English was extremely poor. This leads to still worse consequences. Teaching of English should be made more practical and language oriented in order to achieve limited objectives. The requirement of knowledge for comprehending English is mainly a matter of understanding the basic grammar and structure of that language and thereafter, principally, a question of widening the vocabulary in the desired direction.

The three languages formula, first suggested by the National Integration Commission (1962) and later recommended by the Indian Education Commission (1964-1966) envisages compulsory study of English either as a second language (L₂) or as a third language (L₃) for a duration of six years. The Regional language or the first language (L₁) is to be taught from class I to X and the second and the third languages are to be introduced in class III and Class VIII respectively. In Hindi-speaking areas the third language should be a modern Indian language other than Hindi. The mother-tongue or the regional language should be the medium of instruction at all levels of education.

All the States have accepted the three languages formula with necessary modifications to meet local requirements. Three languages
formula seems applicable to the non-Hindi regions only. At the same time it is also realised that Indian students will have to learn all the three languages for different purposes to be of service to each of them. The expected level of achievement in these languages will depend on whether the language is learnt as $L_1$, $L_2$ or $L_3$.

Though most of the universities have switched-over to regional languages, they have (except the universities in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar) retained English as a compulsory subject of study to the graduate level.

1.13. OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

English is to be taught in schools primarily as a "language of comprehension". It is taught only for limited periods in schools. It is required to gather knowledge from books and journals. Schools try to teach four basic language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. There has been some controversy about the inclusion of translation as a language skill at the school level.

The objectives of teaching English at the school stage may therefore be summed up as developing in the pupils the following skills and knowledge

i) To speak English correctly and fluently.
ii) To read English with comprehension and at a reasonable speed so as to use it as a library language for gathering information and for enjoying reading.
iii) To write neatly and correctly at a reasonable speed.
iv) To enjoy simple poems in English.
v) To acquire knowledge of the elements of English for practical command of the language.
vi) To translate common English words, phrases and sentences in their equivalents in mother-tongue and vice versa.
vii) To develop interest in English.

As regards life-situations, the aim at the school stage is to enable the students to use English in ordinary every day situations, such as carrying on ordinary conversation, listening to radio news and talks in English, reading non-technical prose, enjoying simple poetry, writing personal letters, applications, reports etc.

1.14. SPECIAL EFFORTS TAKEN BY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO IMPROVE ENGLISH TEACHING IN INDIA

In the fifties, soon after independence the public attitude to the teaching of English was in favour of total rejection of English. University Education Commission (1948-49) recorded that English be studied in high school and in universities in order to keep in touch with the living stream of ever growing knowledge. It is evident that the commission did not make any outline or syllabus for study of English.

In 1953, a conference was conducted under the control of Kabir. Kabir said that they should not minimise its (English) importance for international contact. It recommended the attainment by pupils of a good
working knowledge of English at the end of the secondary stage. A group of Professors of English for the first time referred to the course in English which should consist of detailed study of texts of simple modern English prose written within a larger vocabulary of about 2500 essential words, non-detailed study of books in prose and verse with a larger vocabulary for "rapid reading and simple composition". It recommended that English is taught for six periods of fifty minutes each per week. This was the first deliberation on the reading matter in English studies in a newly independent country. At that time books prescribed for studies in English were the same as for native speaker of English.

1.15. ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION – 1957

A draft syllabus was prepared by the council keeping in mind the principles of structural syllabus, as English was assigned the role of second language. This was to begin from class VI for six years. Six periods of forty minutes duration per week were assigned to the learning of a foreign language. Then the structural syllabus was introduced from class VI onwards. The traditional ways of teaching, teacher training, and syllabus-making needed an all out effort in this direction. There were a number of difficulties involved in this process.

1. Lack of understanding of the basic principles behind the structural syllabus.

2. Ineffective practice of techniques of teaching.
3. Big gap in the learning of English between VIII and XI students text books; as a result of lack of co-ordination in text book writing.

4. Lack of co-ordination between the preparation of Syllabi of IX to XI grades and pre-university class in English.

5. Varying speeds in paces of learning among pupils.

6. Remedial measures are inadequate.

1.16. DEPSE – NCERT CONFERENCE 1963

The Directorate of Extension Programmes for Secondary Education of the NCERT, held a conference in 1963, and found that the structural approach was surely complicating the teaching of English. A study group was appointed in 1964 which submitted its report to the Education Commission in 1965. It framed the Syllabus for XI to XII. Since 1975, there are two parallel courses namely “core” and “elective” at (the +2 stage – )XI and XII classes.

The syllabus for classes XI and XII comprises in addition to these 245 points an additional list of 92 more points, well graded in order of difficulty serving the requirements of “core” course. For elective course another 38 points are to be mastered, this being the higher secondary course in English language. Higher Secondary Students should acquire 2500 vocabularies and 150 structures. The Education Commission of 1964-66 suggested English as a source language. Two-tier Systems from class IX to 3 years degree course was started from 1975.

1. These guidelines draw up LSRW – Listening, speaking, reading and writing.

2. Grammatical and lexical terms form the basic structure of language.

Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hydrabad, Regional Institute of English, Bangalore, Directorate of Extension Programmes for Secondary Education, New Delhi, NCERT Delhi and SCERT try to develop English languages in India. NCERT frames syllabus nation-wide. SCERT frames syllabus for each and every state separately. SCERT gives inservice training to teachers. District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) provides inservice training to each and every district of the teachers of a State. It prepares aids, methods of teaching and teaching techniques to improve the skills in teaching English. Many efficient resource persons are being trained by DIET to train more teachers by them.

The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages and the British Council have adopted the communicative, child centred approach for the Teaching --Learning Process of English. It is used to develop English as a skill subject.

1.18. PROBLEMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN INDIA

In India, English is taught in different types of schools in various states using different approaches and in different circumstances. In India, some of the drawbacks in the field of teaching English are:
(i) **Very little clarity about aims**

India has failed to fix the aims for the teaching of English. So the teachers of English are left free to have their own aims. Their sole aim is to encourage pupils to mugup the answers.

(ii) **No uniformity in policy**

Some of the Indian schools introduce English from III Standard and some other States introduce from II Standard. So there is no uniform in policy.

(iii) **Sub-Standard teaching materials**

The text books which are available are mostly sub-standard and the teaching material contained in these hardly satisfies the needs of the students in learning English as a second language. NCERT and SCERT help in text book preparation.

(iv) **Old system of Examinations**

Students can pass the examination by preparing some expected questions from the cheap notes and not by picking up the skills in language-use and may even not purchase a text-book.

(v) **Crowded Classes**

Due to population explosion the classes are overcrowded and there are sometimes 60-70 pupils sitting in some classes. There is hardly any scope for individual guidance, in these circumstances.
(vi) **Out Dated Methods of Teaching**

English teaching is mostly done by the Translation Method or the Bilingual Method in which the teachers generally use English and regional languages both side by side. English speech is used to 25 to 30 per cent, while the other tongues play a major role.

(vii) **No Oral Training**

The teaching of a language requires models of good language. There is no chance for this in Indian schools. Communication skill is not developed in Indian schools.

(viii) **Lack of Supplementary Reading**

A language is learnt easily by going through easier books specially prepared for students. But students are not encouraged to read supplementary readers to improve their English language skills.

(ix) **Enough Teaching Materials are not available**

Teaching material aids are not supplied to the students to learn English. Record players, Audio visual aids, Cassettes and language laboratories are not available or existing even in very good public schools. For the teaching learning activities of English, this is an important aspect. Students thus do not get a chance to listen to good models of English language. They don’t read books during their free time nor are they encouraged to do so. They do not speak or listen to good English.
1.19. PREPARATION OF TEACHERS IN COLLEGIATE EDUCATION

In college, lecturers adopt lecture methods of teaching in English. This method is economical. Lecturers can teach without teaching-learning materials. They never care for interaction of the students. They teach to adult students and so they need not motivate the students. Their aim is to express their view vividly about the lesson. They have to refer to more books to teach their lessons. They teach important points from different books. They can not teach only the prescribed lesson but also extra matters connected with the lesson. They try to improve comprehension power of the students to a certain degree. They find it is a method, quite easy and useful. They have to stimulate students to encourage them in research work. They try to produce more innovators in different fields. English is to be retaught in college education. No one will deny that college education must be different from school teaching in both form and content. A way has to be found, therefore, of bridging the gap between real and assumed standards of proficiency in English, quickly and effectively without lowering the standard of higher education. This is a major challenge that teachers of English have to face. The CIEFL took up a project, financed by the University Grants Commission, to device a remedial programme for under achievers in English. A remedial course in English for colleges was produced at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, as part of a project initiated by the University Grants Commission, intended to help weaker students. It reaches the levels of proficiency in English. Teachers prepare their students for a variety of
learning activities catering to all round language ability, including the learning of grammar and vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, comprehension, note-making and composition and even the speech skills. The four to six periods a week normally allotted to English are not at all adequate for such a course.

Teachers should introduce unfamiliar idioms and sentences. Teachers encourage students to guess the meanings of words and phrases from the context in which they occur-instructions accompanying exercises are simple enough for students to understand on their own. Oral and written exercises are taught in colleges.

Some of the important skills which language teachers require are
(a) eliciting responses from students.
(b) receiving responses and providing “feedback”.
(c) utilizing student responses for further language activity (e.g. discussion)

1.20. SPREAD OF ENGLISH THROUGH MASS MEDIA

English is spread through the bulletins of All India Radio, Television, Internet, Computer, Newspapers, Magazines and Journals. English is spread through Audio-visual media. Television is the best medium to improve the English language. Proper pronunciation of English is improved by British Broadcasting Corporation. Newspapers improve the structure of the language. Reading skill is improved through newspaper. Vocabularies are improved through intensive reading habits. Reading habit
is encouraged by novels and short-stories. Students can rectify their mistakes in pronunciation through observing Television. English films help the students improve their fluency in English. So Television is the mass medium to develop English language. In India, Gnanadarsan (T.V.) telecasts many programmes to improve education.

Jenifer Arul, of NDTV, advocated communicative competence among the users of the English language. Seline Augustine, of the Hindu, Professed that the English language because of its multinational nature, truly reflects and mirrors the aspirations, crisis and contradictions of the world.

About eighty-five percentage of the computers store and use information only in English, said T.N.Boovarahan, of Aspire Systems, Neuro-physician, R. Kamakshi Shanbhog who has specialized in language disorder, averred that the musical sonance of the language is the cause for its popularity. In the era of computerised medical transcription, there is a crying need for the spread and use of English.

S. Neelakandan, retired Assistant Director, All India Radio, spoke on the need for the communicative link language for e-business and e-commerce. It is only the English language which could provide the vital link. It’s high degree of adaptability and flexibility can link the past and present with the future.
is encouraged by novels and short-stories. Students can rectify their mistakes in pronunciation through observing Television. English films help the students improve their fluency in English. So Television is the mass medium to develop English language. In India, Gnanadarsan (T.V.) telecasts many programmes to improve education.

Jenifer Arul, of NDTV, advocated communicative competence among the users of the English language. Seline Augustine, of the Hindu, Professed that the English language because of its multinational nature, truly reflects and mirrors the aspirations, crisis and contradictions of the world.

About eighty-five percentage of the computers store and use information only in English, said T.N.Boovarahan, of Aspire Systems, Neuro-physician, R. Kamakshi Shanbhog who has specialized in language disorder, averred that the musical sonance of the language is the cause for its popularity. In the era of computerised medical transcription, there is a crying need for the spread and use of English.

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1.21. ENGLISH IN TRANSITION

At the recent seminar, which focused on English language in transition, organised by the department of English, Quaid-E-Millath Government College for Women, Chennai, several interesting points pertaining to its linguistic divisions and its transitional status emerged, proving without doubt that English has slipped from the hands of the British and today it belongs to anyone who can use it effectively.

Dwelling at length on the aspects that initiated and accelerated the transition, Rev. Dr. Francies Soundararaj, Principal, St. Thomas College, Chennai, pointed out that the maturity of mind among the users of the language and the invention of the printing press were two instrumental factors. English became a proficient language with foreign words finding a free entry into its portal.

The printing press brought about changes in spelling and structures. The language wriggled and struggled to answer to the requirements of the scientific and technological advancements. The innate generative capacity of English has enabled it to accommodate many changes through various processes of simplification, functional shifts and morphological uses of affixes. The gap between the teachers and learners of the language and users of the language should be bridged, is felt by Jane Mangalam, Head, Department of English, Quaid-E-Millath College for Women.

Outlining the historicity of linguistic divisions of India, S.Anbukodi, Principal, Quaid-E-Millath College for Women, said the
unifying force, ironically, came only after colonisation, through the English language – the gift of the coloniser to the colonised. In this era of electronic revolution, the language has taken an indispensable position and hence the importance of the language can not be ignored, was the argument of D.Victor, Director of Collegiate Education.

1.22. GENERAL PROBLEMS IN THE SPREAD OF ENGLISH

English is an unphonetic language. So the main problem in the spread of English is pronunciation. English is taught only from the examination point of view. Proper environment and circumstance are not available to spread the language. People prefer mother-tongue to English. Poor methodology of teaching English is also a hurdle to improve the language. Standard goes down in the name of revamping education. There is no correlation between English and Indian languages. Sentence patterns and structures do not resemble those of any Indian languages. Inconsistency and irregular structure of English restricts its improvement. Translation methods of teaching is a problem in the spread of English. Political intervention affects the spread of English. Low motivation of the primary teachers affects its spread. Proper teaching learning materials are not used to teach the language. So learners have to face many problems. Mother-tongue interference and influence of the students’ apathy are also there. There is no help from parents. Many of the parents have no minimum educational qualification. Politicians insist on improving vernacular languages to get votes. Students have insufficient opportunities to improve
their communication skills. Shyness and fear of the students act as restrictions.

1.23. PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN INDIA

Graduates and post-graduates were appointed as Teachers of English six decades ago. An Honours in English used to be rare and rarer were post-graduates in English. About three decades ago, teachers in English were in short supply. Even in colleges, it was very difficult to have the full team of lecturers in English. In schools and junior colleges or intermediate colleges, teachers were in short supply in English teaching. After science subject, if there was any subject, in which there was any demand for teachers, it was only in English. At that time, even a degree or a diploma in education was not insisted upon. But that situation has changed now. Teacher training degrees have become a must for the teachers in English. In mid sixties the NCERT started a few colleges specifically to train inservice teachers of all discipline.

When the higher secondary courses started in late seventies a spate of State Institutes in Education developed and refresher courses or inservice training were started to equip the teachers for teaching higher classes. The Central Board of Secondary Education also started a teacher training degree for post-graduate teachers and lecturers.
1.24. SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

English teachers have to face many problems. The following problems are the problem of English teachers.

1. Environment of the English language can not be created.
2. Language laboratory, teaching learning materials are not available in their schools. So the teachers can not create a proper atmosphere to improve the language.
3. Modern methods and advanced methods of teaching are not known to all the English language teachers.
4. Proper training and enough inservice training are not given by the Government.
5. Students have no interest in learning English language.
6. Teachers are not interested in teaching by direct method.
7. Teachers often employ translation methods.
8. Lack of student' reading habits.
9. Necessary books are not available in libraries.
10. Students are weak in basic grammar.
11. Teachers have to teach the very rudiments of the language.
12. Enough periods are not allotted to teach English.
13. Teachers are not able to create the proper atmosphere.
14. Students have no proper attitude to learn English.

1.25. PROBLEMS OF STUDENTS STUDYING ENGLISH AS A COMPELLARY SUBJECT

Some people argue that English should not be a compulsory subject of study. Their arguments are as follows
(i) When the regional languages are coming into their own and are becoming the official languages in the States there is no reason why a student should be burdened with the study of English.

(ii) Millions of students have English as a compulsory subject at school but it is not used later in their life.

(iii) English should be taught as a compulsory subject at the school stage. Pupils need to know English to pursue higher education.

In all countries of the world, there is a trend to teach foreign languages. Indians already know English which is an international language. Knowledge of English will help a person in Inter-state Communication. It may also help him in getting a job in another State. If English is made optional, a majority of students will opt for it. The reason is that English still continues to dominate people’s life.

The modified three languages formula as suggested by the Kothari Education Commission is the only the sensible solution of Indian language problem. Under it everybody is required to learn English, the other two languages being Hindi and mother-tongue. Therefore English is to be retained as a compulsory subject at the secondary and higher secondary stages.

1.26. ENGLISH IN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS

English is an international language. It is a link language of the different countries and states. It is an official language. So it is evaluated
in competitive examinations. Its skill is checked in the following examinations of Government TNPSC, BSRB, IAS, IPS, IRS, ARMY, IFC, R.R.B, U.G.C., TRB, SLET, NET, Staff Selection Committee and Viva Voce. Private sectors recruit candidates through checking their skill in using English. Foreign recruitments prefer fluency in English. Competitive examinations check up grammar, structure, sentence pattern, vocabulary, precise writing, summary writing and general essays. The newspaper THE HINDU conducts essay competition every year and selected to encourage students to read and also develop their creative potential inherent.

1.27. PROBLEMS OF TEACHING AND EVALUATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) has chosen “Teaching English to young learners” as the theme for its 31st annual conference to be held on February 4 and 5 at M.O.P. Vaishnava College for Women, Chennai.

This heralds a refreshing paradigm shift from the usual focus on issues related to higher education only. Unless ELT experts, practitioners, researchers, publishers and administrators realise that it is imperative to identify and nurture the potential of young learners, reforms at higher education level can have no meaningful impact.

This conference aims to do exactly that by providing a common forum to this diverse group of professionals. Fiction, journals, text books and syllabus for young learners are few of the thrust areas that this
conference plans to examine. Problems of teaching and evaluating them are other concerns.

Founded by late Padmashri S. Natarajan in 1967, ELTAI, which recently became an affiliate of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English, as a Foreign Language, U.K.) is the only professional organisation solely concerned with issues related to the teaching of English at various levels.

1.28. ENGLISH AND RURAL STUDENTS OF TAMIL NADU

In Tamil Nadu, most of the students are from rural areas. Parents of the rural students are uneducated. So the students can not clear their doubts from their parents. They have no chance to improve their abilities. They are not encouraged by their parents. The circumstances are not suitable to improve the English language. Most of their parents are conversing only in Tamil. They have no chance to learn English at their home. Most of the people of Tamil Nadu depend upon agriculture. So the students have no opportunity to learn English.

Rural students are engaged in agricultural work and help their parents in different ways. So they fail to concentrate fully on their education. Their families do not encourage them to learn English. The vernacular pattern of pronunciation affects the pronunciation of English. They are afraid to learn the language. They consider that the language fatigues them. They determine that it is difficult to learn and hence neglect it.
1.29. ROLE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE

English studies in India, as a genre, are at Crossroads today. Despite its indelible stigma of colonial associations, English continues to be relevant in India and seems to be destined for a more significant role in future too. However, the field of English studies in the country is faced with new challenges and new responsibilities, and its future will be largely dictated by the degree of success, it achieves in meeting them. The concerns of a by-gone age have to give way to the changing agenda of the present.

Paradigmatic shifts, necessitated by historical factors occur in English studies in the natural course. However, it is to be admitted that the English teaching community of India has by and large remained indifferent to the dynamics of these shifting emphasis in their own profession. The attention of English teachers at the university level has had its focus conventionally on the minimum requirements of teaching as a vocation. The search for a self-perspective, in terms of the changing orientations in the profession in its larger historical context, has now produced a commendable body of work with inputs from a number of erudite academics.

The contemporary debate has thrown up diverse approaches to the issue of English studies. However, there is one thing that remains with undiminished emphasis – the realisation that English will have to stay in India. The conventional notion about English alone being the link language in a country of such linguistic plurality as India is relevant even today. The
demand of Indian democratic policy for the development of regional languages and their literatures can not in anyway mitigate this role of English as a link medium. And this situation again tends to reinforce the other traditional notion that English remains a window to the world, howsoever some may try to play it down.

Again, the recognition that English has won as a medium of creative expression in India, with its well-acclaimed literature, has secured for it a place integrated to India's cultural life, strengthening the belief that English is one of the Indian languages. Add to these the fact that English as a language is no more Anglo-Centric, that there are many Englishes indeed, and that greater literature in English is created often in nations outside England, the argument for English as an Indian language becomes all the more irrefutable. Parochial centres of political power as well as growing powers of revivalism, which often join hands to overthrow English, fail to make much headway in the country primarily because, for historical reasons. This language has become inalienably integrated to the living culture of India, although its mass basis still remains relatively uncertain.

English is, it is true, undeniably a part of the colonial legacy but its role in the shaping of India has been paradoxical. It is Indian experience that English has acted not only as a powerful tool of colonial hegemony but as weapon for the cause of decolonisation. No doubt it was instrumental in the gradual conquest of the sub-continent by the colonial power. English education was a means by which the governors of imperialist establishment sought to achieve their subtle designs. Macaulay's "infamous" minutes of
1835, the Woods Despatch of 1854 and the establishment of three British model universities in 1857 – all these and their consequential developments point to the imperialist underpinnings in the introduction of English education in India. But, notwithstanding this genesis, it is also true that this same alien language, in the Indian soil, tended to release those energies and help those energies and help those forces, which gathered strength to destroy the foundations of the same colonial power.

Rammohan Roy’s famous letter to Lord Amburst in 1823 and the entire orientalist -- Anglicist debate which indicate the growth of a new perception in India at that time of English language as a welcome modernising influence. The reformist movement served as a Cradle for the emerging spirit of freedom in different ways. The liberal ideas released through English education in turn helped in concretising the yearnings for freedom. It is only natural that many leaders of the freedom struggle – Gokhale, Gandhi, Nehru, Rajaji and others – not only used good English but used it in strategically significant ways in the fight against Colonialism. This is a grand instance of what Soyinka calls in the African situation as “the conversion of an enslaving medium into an insurgents’ weapon.”

This, however, is not to give undue importance to the role of English in India’s freedom struggle, but to emphasize that the role of English as a language should be understood with all the complexities involved in it. In the post-independence situation, decolonisation, again, in Indian major agenda since the old “colonial structures of subservience” persist in every walk of life. The colonial world-view has permeated India’s ideals,
education, jurisprudence, customs, economic life, intellectual and cultural transactions in general. The age of cultural imperialism, with its process of globalisation and massive manipulation of media, tends to strengthen and consolidate these colonial value systems. In combating the negative value systems, English as a language still has its role to play. English is one of the Indian languages today; it has learnt to co-exist with regional languages, and it is used to face many challenges posed by the present epoch. To shut it off on the ground of its alien lineage is to forget the history of languages like Sanskrit and Persian which have become part of Indian legacy.

Role of English is necessary today, especially in the context of India’s transformation into a democratic society. Indians should, first of all, learn to repudiate that inflated notion of an inherent superiority, attached to English studies traditionally. To cast off attitudes in a hierarchical society is more easily said than done; yet there should be a growing realisation that such a notion of superiority is a creation of the colonial psyche and that it is tanta-mount to a negation of the popular roots of culture. Nowhere does this attitude manifest itself as badly as in the area of comparative literary scholarship. Where Indians are yet to learn to speak on equal terms. G.N.Devy rightly points out that comparative literary study in India is “the study of dynamic literary culture by a society whose own literary culture is ‘tired’. It is the study of a so-called superior culture by a people who have acquired an inferiority complex about their own literary culture.”¹² The present trend of imitating and reproducing western canons
in critical theory, disregarding indigenous and regional traditions in critical thought, is a manifestation of this sub-service.

Second, English literary studies in India should get rid of its present propensity for being exclusive. Students of English language and literature often find themselves in a world of alien realities, divorced from their own native traditions and live cultures and even tend to consider it a privilege to be indifferent to the environment around. Courses and curricula are often, framed without any relation whatever to the living cultures of their own milieu. This will not only alienate them from their immediate environment but also weaken their perception and understanding of the very subject of study. Gayatri Spriak’s observation in this regard is pertinent, “the teaching of English literature can become critical only if it is intimately yoked to the teaching of the literary or cultural production in the mother-tongue.”

The divorce between English studies and mother-tongue, literature is poor achievement in the field of translation. The crucial issue involved is hard to produce quality translations on a major scale. English study programmes in India are seldom planned – though these are exceptions – to meet the requirement of translation expertise.

No wonder, even the best writers in Indian Vernaculars are rarely known outside their language, both within and outside the country, with the result that, even to those literary enthusiasts abroad. Indian literature means the work of a few writers like Tagore, R.K. Narayan, Arundhati Roy or Vikram Seth. It is equally important to note that Indian Literature in
English Translation (ILET) has not yet achieved any respectability in Indian academic circles and barring a few isolated instances, the English study programmes in Indian universities are yet to give it due recognition.

Third, English as a language, with its true internationalist propensities, breathes a broad cosmopolitanism, which is of great relevance in Indian contemporary context. Revivalism is at active work in India today, on a scale seldom seen before, abetted by political and cultural forces. Pre-renaissance value systems seem to be staging a big come-back, with the resurrection of decadent beliefs, superstitions and rituals and the progressive weakening of Indian secularist ethos. Countering this ominous process is the need of the hour, and obviously, in any such confrontation, language has to be a powerful medium. In the Indian context, English is a language that has the potential for offering effective resistance to this new revivalism. To sum up, English studies in India today should aim at facilitating the national agenda of democratisation and decolonisation.

History shows that English language is capable of playing this role in its own way. Dynamic as it is, the language and its literature have been undergoing radical changes over the years. English is adequately meeting the changed requirements of the information age even as it readily absorbs radical shifts in literary culture, incorporating feminist and other new preoccupations.

English should be used as a tool of transformation; to respect Indian cultures and mould English studies in active relation to them. It is used as an effective antidote to the rising changes of revivalism.
1.30. DOCUMENTATION


10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.
