CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
Importance of English in India:

Developing countries, like India, working hard at acquiring an approach to modern knowledge have, by and large, known the value of English in education. These countries very rightly see the English language not merely as the language of foreign rulers once used for administrative convenience, but as a means for gaining new technological and scientific knowledge quite important for all kinds of development. In India, no matter how many efforts are made to excite emotions by presenting the English language as 'an alien language' and trying to create an atmosphere against it by some politicians for trivial political reasons, its importance in education cannot be denied due to its overpowering impact and, thus, it is on continuous increase.
The power of the role of English in the Indian educational scene is unquestionable. It has become so much a part of that even Hindi and regional languages have integrated many English words into their lexicon. Even the native speakers of these languages have to make a conscious search to find equivalents for certain English words which have become a part of their language. It is true, however, that English as spoken by Indians, bears the impression of their mother tongue, yet in some cases an approximation exists to an acceptable standard. 'Indian English' represents "the evolution of a distinct standard — a soul the body of which is correct English usage, but whose soul is Indian in colour, thought and imagery, ... It is illustrative of a special type of language phenomenon — a language foreign to the people who use it, but accepted by them because of political and, recently cultural reasons." ¹ In fact, English should be considered as one of the languages of the many diverse cultures and ethnic affiliations which form part of this vast country of ours, and not an alien language any more. Just as Urdu flourished and became one of our languages as a result of historical events, so might English demand a dwelling here having become a part of our daily life.

English is the L₁ (first language) of England, U.S.A., Australia and Canada. It is the L₂ of several countries like India, France, Germany, Russia etc. Today, of all the languages of the world it is English which deserves to be esteemed as a world language though as far as the number of speakers is concerned, Chinese occupies the first place, yet it is confined to China only and is not spoken as widely as English. At the same time English is spoken almost all over the globe. It holds the honour of being the respected mother-tongue of more than 200 million people living in all the six continents. Randolph Quirk points out, "There are now something like 250 million people for whom English is the mother-tongue or 'first language'. If we add to this the number of people who have a working knowledge of English as a second language (many Indians, Africans, Frenchmen, Russians, and so on), we raise the total to about 350 million."² Thus, English-speaking people are scattered all over the world.

We Indians can not give up the use of English for more than one reason. Its significance as an international language can be denied by none. English is also demanded by the international relations upheld by the countries of the modern world, where every country needs to move

outside its own narrow orbit in order to maintain diverse areas of communication with other countries. At present, there is no better language than English which can perform this function. With its help we can maintain political, social, cultural and economic connections with other nations of the world. A wide network of global relations become available to us. It stops us from getting locked up in the four narrow walls of nationality. Today, when the whole world has been reduced to the size of a global village we need to keep abreast of the latest development. We must bear in mind that English is no longer the language or property of England alone; it is the language needed by the world for better comprehension as "it is the most international of languages." 3

In a nation as diverse as India it is English alone which can preserve our unity. The census of India (1971) proclaimed that 380 languages or dialects are spoken in India. Hindi used by nearly 30% of the population occupies first place. However, in large areas Hindi is not spoken, and a large number of persons living in those areas speak other languages. It will not be fair and democratic to thrust Hindi to an official position. If we do so, the other language groups will be pushed down to an inferior place. English is regarded as the only

3. ibid, P.5.
language known to educated people all over the country. Consequently, English is needed as an inter-state link language in matters of administration and management; trade; social affairs; and educational and cultural affairs. What Sanskrit did in India during the past, what Latin did in Europe, English is doing today in India. It is seeking to join together all the different parts of India into one and India herself with the rest of the world.

The doors of modern Western arts and sciences have been opened to us by English. English is the language in which nearly all contemporary learning is accessible. English has been and is important as the language of science and technology, trade and commerce, economics and political science which will bring economic and industrial awakening. On account of their knowledge of English several Indians not only got a peep into the Western sciences and arts but some of them also achieved sway over them. It is heartening to note that English-based Indian bilinguals constitute the third largest pool of trained and technical manpower in the world.

Such are the causes that have made English a valuable language in India. English, like Persian and Arabic, has become a part of the Indian heritage, and so much now, if we banish English from the Indian life, traces
of its influence will be seen in many ways for a long time. If under some emotional provocation, we should abandon English, we would cut ourselves off from alive flow of our growing knowledge.

A Short History of English and its Teaching in India:

With the coming of the British, English came to India. At one time, the different parts of the Indian sub-continent (India, Pakistan, Burma now Myanmar and Sri Lanka) were able to join through the medium of English under the British Rule and several of their normal functions were performed by the English language. English was the language of the rulers and, for this reason, of those who wanted to try to be equal with their masters socially and professionally. Thus, it began to occupy the position of lingua franca of Indian communities.

It is a fact that English had come with the British, but the interesting aspect is that they did not concentrate their attention on its teaching from the very beginning. They had come as traders; hence their first and last concentration was focused on their business. Nevertheless, with them had come some missionaries, who established a number of outstanding educational institutions in different parts of the country where English was
taught as one of the subjects. Thus, the teaching of English began in India. A brief survey of the history of the English language and its teaching in India will not come amiss here. For the sake of convenience, we will have to consider the position of English before and after independence respectively. The developmental history of teaching English in India before independence may be divided into the following periods:

**Earliest Period (1765 - 1813):**

During this period, the British rulers of the country never thought of teaching English to Indians. The reason was that they were frightened of teaching their language as they had lost colonies in America by giving English education. They thought that they did not need to repeat that mistake in India too.

However, the situation began to differ after the battle of Plassey. As the traders began to become rulers, they decided to establish educational institutions so that they could win over the people whom they had started to rule. They opened institutions of classical learning, namely Calcutta Madarsah (1781) and Benaras Sanskrit College (1791). Though they were institutions of classical learning, yet in them provision was made
for the teaching of English also. Thus, the teaching of English was begun by the English rulers.

The Charter Period (1813 - 1834):

When the charter of the East India Company was renewed in 1813, an education clause was attached to it. According to it, a sum of about one lac of rupees was to be expended every year on the revival and development of literature. But the clause was not given any effect. However, the Indian leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy raised their voices in favour of teaching English, opposing oriental education. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, David Hare and Radhakanta Deb opened the Hindu College (1817) to meet this demand. Soon, thereafter, the missionaries established the Serampor College (1818) and the Bishop's College (1820).

The General Committee of Public Instruction came into existence in 1823. It resolved to stimulate oriental education and proffered that a Sanskrit college should be set up in Calcutta. Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed this proposal in his well-known letter to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General of India. This letter was responsible for the beginning of the famous Anglicist Orientalist Controversy.
Macaulay's Period (1834-1853):

The year 1834 is regarded as the turning point in the history of English education in India. In 1834, Macaulay was invited to preside over the General Committee of Public Instruction. Due to this event Macaulay found the opportunity for writing his famous and controversial 'Minute' (1835). There were three types of schools at that time in India: Vernacular School, Government (Company) schools teaching in English and vernaculars, and Missionary Schools teaching in English. These schools succeeded tremendously in their anglicizing policy, though the Company Directors wanted to stimulate merely oriental education.

The members of the committee of Public Instruction were of the view that oriental education should be encouraged but Macaulay tipped the balance of the Anglicists with powerful arguments. He proved that according to the Act of 1813 (according to the Charter of 1813, article 43, the then Governor-General-in-Council was given right to expend a sum of about one lac of rupees every year on the revival and development of literature and for the introduction and development of knowledge of science among the English estates in India.) the term 'learned native' implied deeply learned in Sanskrit or Arabic and in English. He further argued that Science Education
was possible through English and not through Sanskrit or Arabic. English being the language of trade and commerce, was more beneficial. It was the only means of establishing contact with foreign nations. English was considered more easily comprehensible as compared to Sanskrit or Arabic. Macaulay vigorously proposed that the extent of Western knowledge could only be possible through the medium of English language. He advised the British to teach Indians what was good for their health and not what was palatable to their taste. This conclusion that English should be taught was further confirmed by Lord Bentinck and Lord Auckland who diverted all funds to the encouragement and rise of English education.

In Macaulay's saying that 'no Hindu who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion', the political future of India was transparently foreseen by the British rulers who pleaded for English education alone. This gave a massive impulse to the study of English and the need and demand for English schools went on increasing.

The Period of Wood's Despatch (1854-1881):

Wood's Despatch, known as the Magna Charta of English education in India, ratified what Macaulay had recommended, English was to be the medium of instruction.
A large number of English medium schools and colleges began to come into existence and naturally the vernaculars started to be neglected. Though it was not the intention of Wood's Despatch, what they claimed, to substitute English for the vernaculars, yet with the opening of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Hindu College and Duff's English College, a missionary institution at Calcutta, the social prestige of English grew by leaps and bounds. So the real damage had been done to the vernaculars much before the Wood's Despatch and this continued after the Wood's Despatch, rather we can say it somewhat increased. English was enjoying the favour of conditions whether educational, cultural or political. It was presumed that English would bring to the doors of Indians the substance for the formation of a national literature; that the knowledge of Europe would become accessible to the citizens of Asia particularly citizens of India, in their own languages; that Persian, the court language of that time, was used and understood by a small minority and it was essential to replace Persian by a more widely known and simple language and which language could be better than English; and that to the entire India there was no vernacular acceptable and to have more than one medium of instruction in the respective provinces would have caused limitless
discomforts. Therefore, the prevailing place was given to English and the vernaculars began to be neglected.

The Period of Commissions:

It will be interesting to note that the missionaries in India had, from the very beginning, learnt the languages of the people. Moreover, they used these vernaculars as the medium of instruction in their primary schools. They thought it as the best way of providing modern European knowledge within the reach of Indian people. This opinion was particularly appreciated by the Bombay Government and the result was the opening of new Vernacular Schools. In this way, needless to say, Indian vernaculars stood out as rivals to English as the medium of instruction. The Anglicists had not sufficient means to educate the masses, so they changed their strategy. Now, they laid full emphasis on educating the classes in order to make a class of educated people who would hand over the torch of learning down to the rest. This policy was accepted in the governing bodies of East India Company and the vernacular schools, fared badly in this game. The Vernacular schools became more unpopular after Macaulay's 'Minute' and Wood's Despatch which ratified that English was to be the only medium of instruction.
The 'Indian Education Commission' (1882) lodged a protest against the exclusive use of English as the medium of instruction. The 'Indian Universities Commission' (1902) expressed dissatisfaction at the neglect of vernaculars. The 'Calcutta University Commission' (1917) sought the adjustment of the claims of English and vernaculars by allotting to them different fields of action. This Commission was of the opinion that the educated classes in the various provinces of India would wish to be bilingual, to use their mother-tongue for those near and dear things that form part of life and to use English as a means of inter-communication crucial for the subsistence of the unity of India, and of touch with other nations.

Although the 'Calcutta University Commission' had sanctioned the use of English with the Indian languages, yet the common Indian sentiments were against it at that time. Particularly, they never wished English to be the medium of instruction at all. Mahatma Gandhi had also made his plan of Basic Education by this time that was built up on the principle of teaching through the mother-tongue of the learner. The various contentions were presented against English as, (i) the Indians absorbed the lessons of freedom which English literature taught. They used English to seek political independence,
no doubt, but opposed its exclusive use as the medium of instruction; (ii) to rescue Indian culture and nationality it was essential to preserve Indian languages; (iii) Europe had realized the pride of nationalism in the 16th and 17th centuries and Latin had been replaced by vernaculars in all the countries of Europe. Why then, should India suffer the pain of being dominated by English?; (iv) Sir George Grierson, an authority on Indian languages, was of the view that Hindi and some other Indian languages were prosperous enough and had a complete apparatus for the expression of theoretical ideas and were capable of giving a spontaneous education; and (v) as far as the teaching is concerned, an alien language as the medium of instruction seemed infirm and the teaching through English medium remained divorced from reality. These aspects kept masses away from any respect for English and they could not embrace it whole-heartedly. Even then for nearly one century, English dominated the scene in India.

After independence, massive changes were apparent regarding the position of English in India and a contradiction had started. Some people including a number of renowned politicians supported its continuation. But there were persons who, under the influence of so-called nationalism and patriotism, fiercely advocated that English should quit India with the British. As
it was a language of the British rulers who had perpetrated cruelties over Indians, their reaction was to detest English and dethrone it from its supreme place. What the nationalists argued had some reason in it. India also craves a national language to take pride in it. English is the sign of foreign authority. Language is the most prominent cultural institution whose principal function is to expand knowledge, give words to hopes and desires of the people, transmit and maintain literacy and cultural traditions of the society. We can afford to neglect Hindi and other Indian languages only at the cost of social breakdown. It is not essential to rely upon English only for industrial, scientific and technological progress. Many advanced nations like Russia, France and Japan are continuing their industrial, scientific and technical works in their respective national languages. English cannot become the lingua franca of India simply because it is an alien language and not rooted in the Indian soil. On one hand, it is the language of classes in India, while on the other, Hindi is the language of the masses. English creates a distance between the rulers and the ruled, the learned few and the illiterate majority, urban and rural society. Therefore, the honour of being the lingua franca must go to Hindi.

As a consequence, Hindi was declared the official language of the Union by Indian Constitution. In order
to give Hindi enough time to replace English as an official language, English was to be continued as an associate language for a period of 15 years, that is, till 1965. It means that English lost the dominant position and did not remain the medium of instruction. Regional languages became the medium of examinations. The State Governments began using regional languages in administrative affairs. Besides, English ceased to be a compulsory subject. It is clear that English failed to occupy the same place after independence which it had before independence.

Soon after the fury of dethroning English was over people began to feel that English might be a language of cruel rulers but its growing value could not be overlooked any more. Since "for a successful completion of the first degree course, a student should possess an adequate command of English, be able to express himself with reasonable ease and felicity, understand lectures in it, and avail himself of its literature. Therefore, adequate emphasis will have to be laid on its study as a language right from the school stage. English should be the most useful 'library language' in higher education and our most significant window on the world."\(^4\)

It was also being felt that English was not merely the language of classes but of masses. It was obvious by the protest that burst forth in several parts of India particularly in South India just after the declaration of Hindi as an official language. The opposition was so furious that in South some people were ready for self-sacrifice. Consequently, the Parliament had to approve an act in 1963 for making English an associate official language for an indefinite period. This agitation hinted that English was of huge significance for us and could not be ignored.

These days English occupies a place in Indian education structure as a second language as well as a foreign language. Now English is no more the medium of instruction except in some public schools and convents. It was not being taught in lower primary stage except in public schools till recently. Regarding its position in lower secondary stage, there is no constant policy. In M.P., Punjab and Haryana its teaching starts from 6th class, in Himachal Pradesh from 4th class and in Gujarat from 8th class. There is also no regular policy about its place in the higher secondary level in different states. English is compulsory for some students at this level and optional for some. It is not a compulsory subject at the graduation level. The position of English in present days clearly indicates the want of uniform
policy about its place. Undoubtedly, English could never be fully detached from India. Even today, Hindi or a vernacular is the medium of instruction, but English, due to its global value has a place in the Indian life and culture. Consequently, the necessary step must be taken to give an appropriate place to this language in the curriculum.

**Aims and Objectives of Teaching English in India**

The aim of Education is that learning should take place. It is of supreme importance that a teacher should perceive clearly what his work is and what he is seeking to achieve by teaching English. A teacher without the knowledge of aims and objectives is like a vessel which has no port to reach. The resolution of aims enables the teacher to judge the method and plans that he will use to attain the standard, he has set before him. In teaching, it is desirable to know exactly what one is aiming at. If this can be perfectly perceived, then the best method of teaching ordinarily becomes clear. The teacher should, therefore, weigh carefully what he is trying to achieve when he is teaching a second language like English.

English held a very important position in the list of school-subjects during the British regime. In
those days, almost all subjects were taught through English medium. So the pupil could gain the knowledge of English to a considerable degree while studying other subjects like History, Geography, Political Science, etc. The student had more opportunity for listening to English than for listening to his own mother tongue in the atmosphere of the school. The teachers as well as parents were animated by the one aim — the utilitarian aim of teaching English. Thus, more English was learnt than anything else, despite the methods, good or bad.

We no longer have the predominant English atmosphere in our educational institutions. English does not own a privileged place in the school and college curriculum and it is treated either as a second language or as a third language. It is not given the attention needed for its full bloom. The system of Basic Education does not approve teaching of foreign language at the rudimentary stage, therefore English is introduced in class VI at the Junior High School stage in many states. Due to this provision, there is a lot of wastage in our schools. This wastage can be checked if we define the aims and objectives of teaching English in clear terms and then advance with up-to-date, valuable and scientific methodologies of teaching for realising these objectives.

For a good and useful teaching, the teacher must go through three conditions — planning, performance
and evaluation. Planning implies to judge beforehand what to teach and how to teach. Performance is the practical phase of planning, when the teacher takes the plan to the class and teaches pupils in genuine classroom situation. Evaluation is to decide if learning has taken place. The same is true with English teaching. If a definite learning is a prerequisite of English teaching, the teacher should plan his lesson beforehand.

The international aims of language teaching can be explained as helping students learn a language or languages to perform a variety of functions. The aim in teaching a language is to enable the student to act in such a way that he can participate to some degree for fixed purposes as a member of a community other than his own.

The objectives of teaching English in India must be different altogether from those that are considered necessary for an English child. For the Englishmen, English is their kinship to other people, their friendship, their character, English is everything. English is not a language, it is their life. But this is not true for English in India, because it is an alien language
here. It is taught as a second or third language in schools and colleges. So the aims have to be defined in the light of what we perceive our needs, for English to be in a multilingual setting, at both the national and individual levels. This is related to the following questions: What are the roles of Hindi, English, regional languages, foreign languages, and the languages of minority groups in our multilingual setting? What are the conditions that will compel the use of English? What is the type and quantity of English that the students will need?

At the national level, English must function as our 'window on the world', as the language in which almost all contemporary learning is accessible. It must serve as the language of science and technology, trade, political science, economics and global contacts. It will be necessary for industrial and economic growth. English will act as the 'language of growth'. At the individual level English remains 'the language of opportunity' and 'the language of higher social mobility'. Any individual longing for socio-economic progress will find ability in English an asset.

It is clear, therefore, that English has significant functions in communications of various kinds. For us the main importance of English will be functional.
In modern India, the chief objective should be the use of English as a medium of communication rather than a conveyance of culture - Geoffrey Broughton and his colleagues observe, "As far as the foreign learner is concerned, the history of language teaching shows emphasis on a very limited range of competence which has been called 'class-room English' or 'textbook English', and has often proved less than useful for any 'real' communicative purpose. That is to say, as long as the use of English as a foreign language was confined to largely academic purposes, or to restricted areas like commerce or administration, a limited command of the language chiefly in the written form, was found reasonable and adequate. But in modern times, the world has shrunk and in many cases interpersonal communication is now more vital than academic usage. It is now important for the learner to be equipped with the command of English which allows him to express himself in speech or in writing in a much greater variety of contexts. What is needed is that we, in India, should lay greater emphasis on the communication needs of our pupils while teaching them English as a second language.

Keeping in view these functions, the principal objective of teaching English as a second language

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at the junior level should be to give the students an effective mastery of the language, that is, to help them acquire the fourfold objects of English which are:

(i) the skill to read easily, and with comprehension, books in English written within a prescribed extent of vocabulary and sentence pattern, and to read with enough understanding (if not with speed) easy unsimplified texts on known subjects, completely glossed and annotated in their familiar language;

(ii) the skill to write in English, and without common mistakes;

(iii) the skill to comprehend a conversation in English on a topic of common acquaintance and interest;

(iv) the skill to carry on a talk in English on a subject completely within the range of both of their experience and interest.

The four skills mentioned above are not only significant but also interrelated. Attention should not be focused on one or two at the cost of others. As far as the practical command is concerned, the first
and third objectives are to have passive command over the language. The process of understanding of spoken and written language is a receptive one and leads to passive command. The second and fourth objectives are to have active command over the language. The act of speaking and writing is a creative one and leads to active command. Some scholars, like M.P. West, believe that for Indian learners a passive learning of English is sufficient. This may be true in the case of other second languages but not in the case of English which possesses an important place on the world stage. English may be extremely valuable to them who learn it well and have an active command over it. A fragmentary possession over this language will not serve any useful purpose other than simply passing an examination. Such learners must utilize their time and energy in the study of some other subject. The ability to speak and write English and the ability to listen and read English should be considered as of identical value, and none should be set above or below as an object in teaching English. They should receive the very same attention in practice also.

At the senior level, the aims of English are both (i) language development, and (ii) literary development. It means that in company with the four-fold aims of
language development which are related to hearing, speaking, writing and reading, the literary development is also a significant aim at the higher secondary stage and college level. The literary objective should not be followed at junior stage. If we aim at literature in the beginning, we shall miss the way to language.

The logic for introducing the aim of literary development at the senior stage is the development of 'creative conception' in pupils when they are in legible age of creative thinking. Reading English literature can make this development easy. The literary aims will be (i) increasing an interest for English literature by reading prose, poetry, stories, fiction, drama etc.; (ii) drawing aesthetic joy from reading English literature; (iii) comprehending critical views; (iv) development of translating skill; and (v) developing concern in English literature.

Besides the common objectives of teaching English, the teacher should have a determinate and precise objective for each lesson. Each lesson has its own aim to obtain. If the teacher has got a clear-cut idea of this aim, he can begin the right kind of activities in the class. The general objective will remain the same, but the particular objective will alter from day to day, from
topic to topic. The particular aim helps both the teacher and the taught. The students recognise clearly what quite they are needed to master so that they can make their mind firm on the specific content, form of structure. By selecting particular aim for each lesson the teacher can make his teaching more productive and interesting. He advances in the class with exactness and precision, leaving no place for doubt and hindrance on the part of his students. Application of modern audio-visual aids will put more life into his work.

The list of aims should be as precise as possible. The chief points to be borne in mind while specifying the aims are: (i) aims should be worded in terms of changes desired in the student rather than as responsibilities of the teacher; (ii) aims should be in terms of remarkable changes in the students; (iii) each statement should be unitary containing only a single aim; (iv) the list of aims should be according to the mental processes such as remembering, reasoning, appreciating etc.

A more valuable objective of teaching a second language like English, if it is properly taught, is the progress of imaginative 'insight' into the way of life of the people who speak it. Such an insight
is of greatest importance in extending the student's experience and, thus, in contributing to his general education. The study of a second language imparts an 'insight' into the standard of the mother-tongue by means of comparisons — comparing the two cultures. By gaining knowledge of a foreign language, we get a chance to compare our own way of life and social system with those who are the native speakers of that language. There is one loftier objective of teaching a foreign language — developing a consciousness of social understanding and responsibility as citizen of the world.

So, our purpose in teaching English to our pupils is to enable them to use English with ease and satisfaction, that is, to use it both instrumentally and integratively. That is to say, they should be able to speak and write English effectively and develop a skill to apprehend the culture of the English-speaking people. Knowing English as a foreign language, that is, knowing it instrumentally, will not meet our needs sufficiently in our communication within India and with those outside India.

Teachers and students are the best resources available to any society. The principal objective of our educational system should be to furnish a decent
atmosphere and facilities, to allow all individuals to realize the full potential of their intellectual capacities; and to inspire them to employ these capacities in every appropriate way both for the ornamentation of their personal lives and for the benefit of society as a whole. It is possible only when we successfully recognize and cope with the problems of teaching English as a second language.

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