## Chapter I

### Introduction

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

To start with English, with its own long evolutionary history, is progressing as a living language towards a greater utilisation. It is a flexible language like all other living languages of the world. As a language, it touches life at almost every point. It describes and stores human experiences in different walks of life.

1.2 Teaching of English in India

Teaching of English in India is a many-sided problem. The teacher of English who has to face these problems should be familiar with the nuances and scope of these problems and should know how best to organise the teaching at various levels, in order to minimise their adverse effects. Some of the problems have become especially challenging in the context of a complex Indian situation in which the child must study its mother-tongue, and learn English as well. Despite researches and investigations done in India and in other countries to discover better techniques of teaching English, there is nothing to show in the results achieved, that language teaching lends itself to any easy, simple remedies and it remains a long, hard road for an average Indian student to traverse.

The first and foremost problem is regarding the goals in teaching English. If the student community can grasp correctly the meaning conveyed through Standard English, the aim of teaching English is fulfilled. So, comprehension should be the main objective of teaching English. But comprehension is never developed in isolation. Expressions in writing, speaking, and understanding go along with it. In theory, more importance is attached to the ability to
understand written and spoken English, but in actual practice, other aspects are developed side by side.

1.3 Important Purposes in Teaching English

The teaching of English in India can have four distinct purposes, each requiring a different approach and different conditions for its success.

Social purpose: A social objective will aim at making the pupil capable of easy adjustment with modern social surroundings.

Technical purpose: In almost all branches of modern knowledge, proficiency is dependent on continuing contacts with sources, which are easily accessible to Indians through English. This objective should receive the highest priority in higher education.

Administrative purpose: This objective was accepted as the primary aim of University Education before Independence. Even now this objective is valid as long as it is confined to the top stream of students with the right bent of mind. They should be well-prepared for the jobs requiring high degree of proficiency in quick and complete intellectual processes.

Cultural purpose: This aim will enable our intellectuals to establish and maintain contacts with international current of thoughts enabling the young men and women to make their own contributions to the universal thinking concerning human thoughts and welfare. This aim is the most difficult to realise.

There has been an ever-increasing rush for secondary education and on account of this the classes have become overcrowded. The urge for secondary education has been growing among the masses bringing more pressure on schools which have shortage of buildings, lack of funds and paucity of experienced teachers. The increasing number in the class room is bound to affect teaching of English adversely. Language learning is a skill to be acquired through constant
drill and continuous practice. The problems regarding the methods of teaching, reading material, desirable age to begin English and the problem of declining standard are also evident. This realisation has called for many-sided reforms in the teaching of English. New text-books have been produced and steps are being taken to reform the evaluation-techniques by laying emphasis on the teaching of different basic skills in the language. Thus English is trying to regain its balance by removing the defect in the procedure of teaching.

1.4 Teaching of English at Secondary Level

English is the subject in which teachers and parents are most vitally interested, for it is not only the groundwork of all the other studies but the foundation of career. In realising the aims of teaching English in India, there are several initiatives which are common principles followed by teachers in developing language skills.

In order to realise the aims of teaching English in the secondary stage, the teacher will have to adopt the following principles.

- The teacher will use audiovisual aids to help the pupils to perform the task of understanding speaking, reading and writing language.
- The teacher will ask the students to begin simple conversation in English with him and gradually he will allow the students to make English conversation between themselves.
- The students will be asked to read extracts of prose and poetry, write paragraphs and write a letter in English
- The students will be given opportunities of speaking in English in seminars.
- The teacher needs definite detailed direction. The lessons, which present actual methods of work, are to be guided as a key source of these directions.
Finally, the teacher will also try to humanise the teaching of language, to raise it above a mere monotonous study of mechanical details and yet to make it an educative force in the lives of average boys and girls, and to bring out its character-building power.

1.5 Teaching of English at Higher Secondary Level

English language plays a very important role in Education. In India, we need English to serve us as a vehicle of knowledge, especially, of Science and Technology. The knowledge of this language enables a man to read a very large number of Modern Medical Science, Space Craft, Engineering, Chemistry, Physics, Mining, Geography and Agriculture. Without the knowledge of English, it is no easy task to achieve remarkable success, these days. The learning of English as a Second Language (ESL), in schools, is far from being satisfactory. The attempts have been made to improve learning English as a Second Language (ESL).

There are so many factors that affect the teaching-learning process. The students can be divided into two groups. The first group is having the regional language as medium of study from the primary level. The second group is having English as the medium of study. Hence the problem of teaching English starts from the pre-schooling. The teachers need to develop the tendency of recognising the educational problems in their day to day life and to give general introduction to the method of study.

The first outcome of the language curriculum is culture. It is the appreciation which comes from carefully reading and understanding and sharing the best and noblest thoughts of good and noble persons. Certainly, youths in higher secondary school are made to grow through contact with selected works of literature, with a cultured teacher as a guide and an interpreter.

The second outcome of the language curriculum is discipline. It comes from consciously forming habits and performing acts according to a pattern. The rules of language supply the
pattern. If we force the student to express himself in exact terms, we shall drive him to perceive objects precisely and to think exact thoughts. Briefly, that is the purpose of the language discipline in higher secondary school.

Teachers should realise that one of their most effective influences in the formation of the student is personal contact. Greater reserve, refinement, and distinction of speech at all times on the part of our own teachers would enhance in the students’ eyes the objectives of a good English course. Again, teachers in every subject must be seriously concerned with the use of at least correct written and oral expression in the classroom situation. In a very real sense, every teacher is an English teacher. In each school, the objectives of the English course should be carefully worked out, clearly and explicitly stated, and proposed for the conscious aim of teachers and students.

The objectives of higher secondary school courses are almost the exact counterpart of what are felt to be the major deficiencies today: firm and accurate knowledge of grammar and syntactical construction; steady and notable progress throughout the four years in richness and accuracy of expression, clarity, and firmness in expressing simple judgments in successive sentences, without jumbling them together; a sense of coordination and subordination; the power to achieve force in expression by the syntactical structure, not by underlining or other graphic and artificial means; the definite beginning of artistic appreciation of literature.

1.6 Teaching of Prose

The main aim of teaching of English prose is to increase their knowledge of the language and to increase their knowledge of the subject-matter or to enrich their intellect.
The general aims of teaching prose lessons are:

i) To enable the pupils to read English passage loudly with correct pronunciation, proper articulation of voice and with desirable stress;

ii) To enrich their vocabulary;

iii) To help them to comprehend the passage and grasp its substance and meaning

iv) To enable the pupils to get enjoyment through reading;

v) To kindle their imagination;

vi) To enable them to grasp the meaning by silent reading;

vii) To enable them to express orally and in writing, what they have read.

English, being a foreign language, is difficult to teach without proper aids. So only those material aids which create interest, and help pupils to grasp the meaning should be used. New knowledge should be imparted in the light of previous knowledge, experience and learning. Before actual teaching in the class, the teacher should know what the pupils already know, then he should proceed to utilise their previous learning to create new knowledge. The teacher has to make special efforts to impart knowledge of new words in English. If wrong meanings are conveyed in the beginning, it becomes very difficult to change this habit afterwards. English being a foreign language, pupils easily get tired and feel bored if special efforts are not made to sustain their interest in the lesson. The success of the teacher at this stage mainly depends upon two things—motivation and interest. All questions, actions, conversations, demonstrations and use of illustrative aids should contribute to make the things more meaningful and worthy of attention.

The teacher is the sole source of learning correct grammar, apt pronunciation, proper intonation and proper stress in spoken English, the ideal speech which the pupils readily imitate.
The technique of comparison and contrast is more effective and should be frequently used in language teaching. Referring to earlier situations, demonstration of action words, gestures, facial expressions also help in giving meanings of words. Questions of recapitations are mostly test questions and they slightly differ from the questions of comprehension. The teacher can also put application – questions to judge whether they can use the newly acquired knowledge in their own way. All the teaching points should be covered in recapitulation and there should not be repetition of any kind. Blackboard is the most important aid in teaching language. It should be fully used at the time of exposition of difficult words, in correcting wrong speech habits in pronunciation or in removing reading difficulties and for giving assignment.

1.7 Teaching of Poetry

Teaching of poetry also needs elaborate planning just like a prose lesson. General aims of teaching Poetry:

- To provide model reading of the poem by the teacher.
- To enable the pupils to read a poem loudly with proper intonation and enjoy its rhythmic beauty.
- To enable the pupils to understand and appreciate the poet’s style and imagination.
- To enable the students to recite a poem individually and collectively.
- To enable the pupils to understand the subtle thoughts conveyed by the poet.
- To enable the pupils to enjoy a poem, its poetic beauties and to develop a taste and love for poetry.
- To develop pupils’ imagination and their aesthetic sense.
- To identify the figures of speech used in the poem to bring out the aesthetic beauty inherent in the poem.
The specific aim may vary from poem to poem according to the situation, scene, feeling and thought depicted in the poem. Every poem brings a message from the poet or from Nature. It should be specifically mentioned before teaching the poem.

According to Thompson and Wyatt, a poetry lesson can be introduced in three ways:

- The best method is to give parallel poem to draw attention of the pupils and to create suitable atmosphere for the teaching of poetry.
- The second method is to give the gist of the poem to be taught.
- Descriptive poems may be introduced with the help of a suitable pictorial representation.
- Poems on familiar subjects may be introduced with the help of questions, reviving their past experience and learning.

Coleridge once defined prose as “words in their best order” and poetry as “the best words in their best order”. As such, poetry is a more powerful form of expression than prose. It appeals to the whole personality of man appealing to his intellect and emotion. It senses the rhythm and music, the regular ‘beat’ of word sounds put the mind in such a state that the full message of the poem is received and felt by the human spirit. So in teaching poetry the teacher is required to visualise things more clearly. The teacher who fails to visualise the different aspects of the poem in hand, fails to make his pupils appreciate the poem, hence he fails in teaching poetry. In teaching poetry, right association of ideas is more important than mere ‘meanings’ of words. For proper appreciation of the poetic beauty, the teacher must be able to supply the images similar to those in the poet’s mind. He should be able to feel as the poet feels in those lines, and then only he can grasp all the aspects of a poem – its central idea, its message, the images it creates, its music of the rhythm, rhyme and the tone. Poetry is a powerful stimulus to the aesthetic consciousness, so it should be organised and taught with this end in view.
So, poetry should not be taught for the sake of language training, as the study of a prose passage always gives better training in language than a poem. The teacher who is going to present a poetry lesson should keep this in his mind and no effort should be made to give training in language. The steps of presentation of a poetry lesson are quite similar to those of a prose lesson, but there is a felt difference in teaching. No explanation or exposition is desirable as it kills the aesthetic enjoyment of the poem.

The art of reading aloud is the best approach to the appreciation of poetry. A teacher must aim at turning out readers of poetry, not students of poetry.

1.8 Teaching of Drama

Using drama to teach English results in real communication, involving ideas, emotions, feelings, appropriateness and adaptability. The conventional English class hardly gives the students an opportunity to use language and develop fluency in it. Drama is a unique tool, vital for language development as it simulates reality and develops self-expression. Drama is considered by many students to be important for the development of social and communication skills and tolerance when working with others. Students can use the conventions of drama as a means of exploring and discovering what lies beneath the surface of the texts they engage within the English classroom.

Students can be encouraged to:

- explore the issues within the story before meeting the text
- enact scenes in the original text
- take the roles of characters or ‘voices’ from the text and be questioned about motives and intentions
use space and objects (including costume) in a variety of realist and symbolist ways to represent meanings in the text; to physically represent the psychic or cultural distance between characters, for instance

create ‘missing’ scenes or moments that are suggested but not fleshed out in the original text

explore how to use gesture to convey ‘sub-text’; how inner speech can be visibly played for instance; script, or improvise, alternative scenes or endings

to resort to monoacting to create the desirable atmosphere of a scene or to bring out the mental makeup of the characters in the play.

extend the story back in time or forward into an imagined future.

add or expand minor characters and their lives and involvement.

demonstrate to each other that there can be a variety of ‘possibles’ when it comes to the interpretation and representation of meanings (different groups will respond to the same task in different ways).

Using drama to teach English results in real communication involving ideas, emotions, feelings, appropriateness and adaptability; in short an opportunity to use language in operation which is absent in a conventional language class. Such activities add to the teachers' repertoire of pedagogic strategies giving them a wider option of learner-centred activities to choose from for classroom teaching, thereby augmenting their efficiency in teaching English.
1.9 Teaching of Supplementary Reader

In order to develop reading comprehension, vocabulary and extra reading among pupils, they must be taught supplementary readers apart from the intensive class readers. The following steps are involved in teaching a supplementary reader. It may be a collection of short stories, a small novel or a one act play. The teacher must ask some introductory questions or he can give an introduction to the lesson. The teacher may sometimes ask the pupils to read the content of the reader at home and can ask afterwards some questions on it.

If there are any unfamiliar and difficult words in the passage or story, the teacher should give meanings or explain the meaning of those difficult words. The teacher may read the story or passage aloud or ask one of the pupils to read the reading material aloud and explain the important facts and events. The students can do silent reading on that particular portion.

The teacher may now ask the questions on the reading material / story given in the supplementary reader or he may allow some lively discussion on it during the period of questions. The teacher should encourage the students to give answers in simple English and may correct their answers when necessary.

1.10 Discussion and summarisation

The students can be asked to reproduce the story or passage briefly in their own words. They may be asked to express their views orally on the passages which they have read. The teacher may also help the pupils to draw conclusions or morals and give central ideas or important facts and events in the passage or story.

1.11 Assignment

The teacher can give home assignments to write about the story they have read and thus can improve their writing skill.
The supplementary readers help the pupils in developing extra reading and gives pleasure in reading. It also increases the spread and comprehension of reading.

1.12 Teaching of Novels at College Level

The use of novel is a very beneficial technique in today’s foreign language teaching classes. If selected carefully, using a novel makes the students’ reading motivating, interesting and entertaining. Though many students find reading a novel written in a target language difficult and boring, not motivating, the novel is a very effective way of building vocabulary and developing reading comprehension skills. It is through reading that the students broaden their horizon of knowledge, become familiar with other cultures, and hence develop their intercultural communicative competence, learning how to view the world from different perspectives. The result will be the possession of critical thinking and writing.

The use of novel is a useful technique for mastering not only linguistic system but also life in relation to the target language. In a novel, characters reflect what people really perform in their daily lives. Novels not only portray but also enlighten human lives.

Using novel in a foreign language class offers the following educational benefits:

- Develops the advanced level readers’ knowledge about different cultures and different groups of people.
- Increases students’ motivation to read owing to its being an authentic material.
- Offers real life / real life like settings.
- Gives students the opportunity to make use of their creativity.
- Improves critical thinking faculty.
- Paves the way for teaching the target language culture.
- Enables students to go beyond what is written and dive into what is meant.
- Stimulates their imagination.
- Helps students to identify the emotions of the characters so that they can learn how others cope with situations and problems similar to their own experiences.
- Helps them master the skills that will enable them to acquire information, process this knowledge, identify problems, formulate alternatives, and arrive at meaningful, thoughtful, effective decisions and solutions.
- Develops oral and written language skills.
- Serves as a springboard for a multitude of holistic learning and critical thinking activities.
- Presents a unique way of teaching by getting students involved and excited about the reading process.
- Motivates students to become lifelong readers.

In sum, literature provides students with an incomparably rich source of authentic material over a wide range of registers. If students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, then they can effectively internalise the language at a high level. Especially, for students with verbal / linguistic intelligence, the language teacher’s using literature in a foreign language class serves the purpose of creating a highly motivating, amusing and lively lesson. Literature is not only a tool for developing the written and oral skills of the students in the target language but also is a window opening into the culture of the target language, building up a cultural competence in students.

1.13 Teaching of English Through ICT

One of the most influential recent changes in higher education is the application of information communication technologies (ICTs). These rapid changes have not affected all
societies equally. In other words, the history of the use of modern ICTs in higher education is quite short but spreading at different rates in different contexts.

Used in a wide sense, ICTs refer to all manifestations of communication technologies such as computers, videos, and the associated hardware, networks, and software that have the potentials to be employed for educational and research purposes. They allow teachers and learners worldwide to work with them in teaching, learning, and research. The use of these technologies in higher education systems can be strongly affected by social contexts, appreciations of usefulness, and a combination of factors that may promote or limit their use.

The potential benefits of ICTs in higher education cannot be limited to teaching and learning. They can be very valuable resources for research conducted by teachers and students in institutions of higher education. Tools such as emails, wikis, and blogs, databases, analysis software, and many other forms of ICTs can be employed in all stages of the research process from choosing the research topic to collection of data, to data analysis, to summarise the findings, and to drawing practical implications from the discussion of results. ICTs can, therefore, help the teachers in both instruction and research.

1.14 Pedagogical Gains With the Use of ICT

Searching for information on the Internet, chatting and game playing are obvious parts of the lives of many young people in the twenty first century. The opportunities that digital media provide today's language teachers with are enormous. Never before has it been so simple to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts. Many teachers, however, are still afraid of bringing computers and the Internet into the classroom.
There are several pedagogical gains to be made with the use of ICT which are:

- the possibility to connect the teaching of English to reality, that is to “bring the world into the classroom”, by, for instance, using authentic texts, reading or listening to current news and creating opportunities for “real” communication
- the possibility to offer more variation in one’s teaching compared to only or mainly using a textbook and workbook
- the possibility to offer a form of teaching which is more adapted to individual students’ interests, learning styles and abilities

The conclusion is that the use of ICTs as weapons against ignorance may be limited not only because of individual human failures but also because of socio-cultural influences. Making sure that there are enough qualified teachers who can operate computers and use ICTs in their learning and teaching is a very important part of today’s educational reform and development. Training for these purposes is so important and vital in education that some researchers claim if insufficient effort is put into training teachers to use technology and to use it imaginatively then it is probably better to dispense with technology altogether. If ICTs are now powerful and if they are becoming even more and more powerful, they will not probably win the battle against ignorance in higher education when there is human failure and a lack of investment in training teachers who use ICTs in developing countries. Technology can reduce social stratification or enhance equal research and educational opportunities for men and women. All these may, of course, depend also on how willing human sources in positions of power are to implement changes for the better use of ICTs.
1.15 **Teaching of Novels Using Multimedia**

The multimedia encompasses delivering a novel, in this case, through this multiple media of text, video, sound, power points, animation, graphics and so on. These multimedia components in a stand-alone mode, with a judicious combination, can be adopted for effectively teaching an English novel to students. This assumes greater significance when it is used for the benefit of the students hailing from rural background and hence this research assumes a greater significance in teaching English novels to the identified target group with a focus on a specific novel *Oliver Twist*.

Literature teachers can use popular films as a means to show students that the popular movies they love and the books they so often avoid have much in common. If teachers were to ask students if they would rather watch a film or read a book, most of them unfortunately, would probably respond, “watch a film.”

Using popular films to teach students about literary concepts is an effective way to help students make connections between the book whose themes and concepts may seem foreign to them and the movies that they may already admire.

Films are narratives, but students may not see popular movies as anything other than simple entertainment. However, by teaching students to “read” and compare movies, literature teachers can show students their favourite movies have some of the same literary qualities as the books they read. And by drawing this comparison between books and film, students will grow in their appreciation of both the media.

Films can provide far more than just entertainment. These days it can be a deeply engaging way to learn everything from character education to science. With the diversity of
accessible multimedia content available online and off, there are more ways than ever to use film for educational purpose.

From engaging story telling that makes history pertinent and meaningful to illustrating complex scientific principles with detailed animations and contextual explanations, movies can give students more insight and understanding than lecture or textbooks alone.

Movies and films also provide an alternative way to teach children with learning disabilities or other problems, and to teach English as a second language (or other language). The key to using movies for education is the quality of discussion and activity that follows film viewing. Television, of course, is the most accessible of educational film resources.

1.16 Using Movies to Teach About Life

Movies can also be used to teach specific aspects of life and living, and to provide character education. Movies related to topics like sportsmanship, friendship, courage, respect or honesty are readily available.

1.17 Teaching of Oliver Twist Using Multimedia

Literature is a part of life and can be judged only in its relevance to life. Life is not static but moving and changing. One has to see both literature and themselves in history, not as abstract entities. Criticism is aesthetics in motion. Art is life-communicating; it must give us a sense that what is being conveyed across to us by the words on the page is life or, at any rate, has something of the quality of life. A good novel does not simply convey life; it says something about life. It reveals some kind of pattern in life. It brings significance. It must be emphasised that the two elements – life and pattern are not separate. As far as life and pattern and its representation is concerned, Charles Dickens can be considered as a representative novelist of the Victorian Age.
Dickens’ novels reflect a vivid picture of the life of the poor in London of his day. Dickens was well-conversant with the sorrows and suffering of the children of his age, who were made to work for as many as thirteen hours a day. In his novels, he toiled to awaken the slumbering conscience of an age which was insensible and insensitive to the ill-treatment of its poorer children. His humour and pathos reveal the various social ills and evils of the day.

*Oliver Twist*

*Oliver Twist*, also known as *The Parish Boy's Progress*, is the second novel by the English author Charles Dickens in 1838. The story is about an orphan Oliver Twist, who endures a miserable existence in England. *Oliver Twist* is notable for Dickens' unromantic portrayal of criminals and their sordid lives. The book exposed the cruel treatment of many a waif-child in London.

An early example of the social novel, the book calls the public's attention to various contemporary evils, including the Poor Law, child labour, the recruitment of children as criminals, and the presence of 'street children'. Dickens mocks at the hypocrisies of his time by surrounding the novel's serious themes with sarcasm and dark humour.

*Oliver Twist* has been the subject of numerous film and television adaptations, and is the basis for a highly successful musical play *Oliver!*

This novel was adapted into a feature film version by the director, Roman Polanski, in 2005. In it, the nature of a child’s mind is delineated clearly. The craving for pure and unselfish love and the longing for a sympathetic look are beautifully portrayed in the movie. The researcher experimented a teaching method using multimedia. The researcher had taught the novel to the respondents using the film version and was successful in bringing out a positive result.
The purpose of this thesis is to exploit the advantages arising out of the application of multimedia to the tasks of teaching in a classroom situation in general and make a detailed analysis of how Charles Dickens’ novel *Oliver Twist* can be theatrically demonstrated to drive home to the First year M.A. English Literature students not only the thrillingly delightful story of *Oliver Twist* but also Dickens’ social criticism.