

CHARTER ACT OF 1813, POSITION AND PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ENGLISH

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CHARTER ACT OF 1813

The beginning of the state system of education in India under the British Rule may be traced back to the year 1813 when the East India Company was compelled by force of circumstances to accept responsibilities for the education of Indians.

The Charter Act of 1813 devised as well as extended the power of direction and superintendence of the Board of Control. One of the most important causes of the Charter Act of 1813 was that a sum of rupees one lac annually was to be provided by the Company for “the revival and improvement of literature” and “encouragement of the learned natives of India” and for the “instruction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India”. This was really one of the most significant steps taken by the British government with regard to India. It was obviously the first step towards acceptance of the principles of state responsibility of education.

The Charter Act of 1813 did not specify the methods to secure the objects of “revival and improvement of literature” “the encouragement of learned native of India” and “introduction and promotion of a knowledge of science among the inhabitants of the British territories in India”. The vagueness of clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 intensified the Oriental-Occidental controversy in India. Since the dawn of 19th century there had emerged two groups – one of them comprised the Orientalists or Classicists who wanted the promotion of Indian education through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian whereas the other group was of Anglicists or Occidentalists who were in favor of developing western education in India through the medium of English.

The sum of rupees one lac was the bone of contention between the two groups. Differences as regards the use of this money started in 1823 and these came to surface in 1834. On February 2nd, 1835 they would write to the Governor General to look into the matter and take decision.

During this violent controversy, Lord Thomas Babington. Macaulay (1800-1859), came to India as a law member of the Governor General’s Executive Council. Lord Macaulay was also

appointed president of the General Committee on Public Instructions by Lord William Bentinck the then Governor General of India.

Macaulay presented his lengthy minute to Lord Bentinck in 1835. In this minute, he advocated education of the upper classes in India and made a religious plea for spreading western learning through the medium of English. Lord Macaulay thought that it was possible through English education to bring about a class of persons, Indian in blood but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect.

The minute was accepted by Lord William Bentinck and it opened as new chapter in the educational history of India.

PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE STUDY

The study of English is compulsory now-a-days. But soon after independence, the position of English led to a great controversy and the language was found itself in a dilemma. The point is that even at present many people are talking against this language. The conditions prevailing in the schools are not favorable. The society at large is not quite favorably inclined towards the language and some even wish to uproot the language totally from the Indian soil which in reality is never possible with any living and dynamic language and is unquestionably harmful as far as discarding the English language is concerned.

The sad part of the situation is that even teachers are finding faults either with the language or the language learners. Sometimes they are seen cursing the language, sometimes the learners and sometimes both. The teachers grumble that it is next to impossible to show good results in English. We have a group of people who feel that now regional languages are developing fast in many states and since somewhere they have become the official languages, as well, so it seems quite futile to continue studying English there. Other groups of people feel that many students are being made to study the language even though they are not to use it at all in their lives. Teaching English as a compulsory subject to such students is of no use.

Many more difficulties may really disturb our mind but the thing is that we have to be very clear that “language is learning a skill rather than a content, an information or a mathematical formula”.

The great tragedy with English language is that it is not being taught as a language but as a subject. In reality there is no actual teaching by the teacher or learning by the learner.

Basically, while acquainting a learner with any language we need to teach and inculcate in him the four basic skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.

We can say teaching a language involves two main essential features; one the learner must experience the language being used in meaningful ways and second he must have a chance to utilize his own skills, i.e., he should be able to understand language when spoken, should be able to make him self-understandable to others. He should be able to read the language and make his writings readable and meaningful for others.

One who understands these main points really understands what language means and how it is learnt.

LANGUAGE FORMULA

There are many languages used in different states of India. This could be one of the reasons for the language problem for **every loves one's own** mother-tongue/regional language. Hence on the basis of recommendations given by UNESCO, a three-language formula was adopted in the Indian situation. UNESCO had recommended a three dimensional language formula consisting of L₁, L₂ and L₃. Where L₁ would be the mother tongue/regional language to achieve personal identity psychologically and pedagogically; L₂ would be national language – Hindi or Urdu to establish national unity and L₃ would be English language to achieve international recognition and thus a global identity.

The following are the recommendations of the Kothari Commission regarding problem of Medium of Instruction:

1. **Lower Primary Stage (Classes I – IV).** The study of only one language should be compulsory. It will naturally be mother tongue or the regional language.
2. **Higher Primary Stage (Class V – VIII).** The study of two languages should be compulsory at this stage:
 - a. The mother tongue or the regional language;
 - b. The official language of the Union or the associate language.
3. **Lower Secondary Stage (Classes IX – X).** the pupil will study three languages:
 - a. The mother tongue or the regional language;
 - b. The official or the associate official language; and
 - c. A modern Indian language.

It is obligatory to study the official or the associate official language which he had not studied at the higher primary stage.
4. **Higher Secondary Stage.** The study of two languages should be compulsory. The students should have the option to select say two out of the three languages studied earlier or a combination of any two languages taken from the following groups:
 - a. Modern Indian languages;
 - b. Modern foreign languages;
 - c. Classical languages – Indian and foreign.

Student can study one or more additional languages as an optional subject(s).
5. **University stage.** According to Kothari Commission there should not be language load on students. Suggesting study of languages even to university classes means waste of resource. So the study of a language should not be compulsory.

Thus, the tangle of language problem was solved and the study of English was not to be thrust upon the students. Those who really aspire for its study may start learning it in class V; others who just want to have an elementary knowledge of it can start its study in class VII. The students can study the language of their choice at higher levels. Those who are deeply in love with English will continue its study at college and university levels.

POSITION OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

To get better and clear view of the position of English language in India, we categorize it in two groups for the sake of convenience.

➤ **Position of English before independence.**

During the pre-independence period English enjoyed a privileged position. During that time, it was:

1. ***The queen of languages.*** During the British rule in India, English enjoyed the top most position. It was the first language in the whole country and was considered to be the queen of all the languages. The English language was pre-dominant over all other languages and was a vehicle of thought and action in all spheres of life and activity. It was pride for those who knew it and an object for the people who did not know it, although many people aspired to gain knowledge of this language.
2. ***Medium of instruction at different levels.*** Soon after Macaulay's Minute, English became the medium of instruction at school and at college levels. Even ardent patriots like Raja Ram Mohan Roy were in favor of the Anglicist movement for "dissemination of useful knowledge of science and literature through the medium of English language".
3. ***Englishmen teaching English.*** The study of English was made more attractive and interesting because the native speakers taught English. The class that got a chance to learn English from them were fortunate enough and they really did their very best in lives. The language passed on in its purest form to their immediate one or two generations.
4. ***Introducing of English language from the day of schooling.*** The study of English was introduced on the day a child entered the school. Thus we can conclude that by the time his school was over he could have good command over language. Thus, we find that English was of great importance before independence. It had made its unique and of course dominating place in the world of knowledge.

➤ **Position of English after independence.**

In 1963, the Parliament passed a bill according to which English was declared to be an associate official language of India for an indefinite period. The importance of English can be better understood in the words of Rajagopalacharya, "We in our anger and hatred against the British people should not throw away the baby (English) with the bath-water (English people).

The different points are explained here as under:

1. ***It helped in the growth of nationalism.*** The growth of nationalism ultimately freed the country from the British rule. Our national leaders drew their inspiration from the writings of great thinkers like Ruskin, Abraham Lincoln and others who wrote in English. It is only through the knowledge of English language that they could understand their writings.
2. ***As a link language or lingua franca.*** India is a multilingual country. People living in different states use their own state language for conversation. English is the only language that is understood by the educated people all over the country. Thus, English acts as a link between different states and people of India.

3. ***Educational importance.*** English played a predominant role in the past and is equally needed at present mainly in higher education in science, medicine, engineering, technology etc, as good books in these subjects are available in English only. Also, the students from all over the country can sit in competitive exams together where the language used is mostly English.
4. ***English – A library language.*** English is a key to the storehouse of knowledge all over the world because most of the knowledge available is in English only as compared to other languages.
5. ***English as an international link language.*** English is the most widely spoken and understood language in the world. If a person knows and understands English he is sure to be understood anywhere in the world. English language gives the person global recognition.
6. ***English is commerce, trade and industry.*** English plays a very important role in trade and commerce of our country. Maintenance of records is also done in English language.
7. ***English – a window on the world.*** English serves the purpose of a window on the whole world. By knowing this language we can see whatever is happening all over the world.
8. ***English – a foreign language already known to Indians.*** English is a language already prevalent in our country since long. Nowadays for knowing more and more languages is the need of hour. So instead of introducing any other foreign language it would be better if we learn this very language which is already known to many Indians.

ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN INDIA

In India, English was able to take over the position of associate official language. It continued to be the medium of instruction in some schools, colleges and universities. It is also the language of the administration. So adequate emphasis was laid on its study right from the school stage although the class from which to start learning it or the age at which to start is may vary from place to place. English has now become an element in the colorful Indian spectacle. It plays an important role in various fields. Let us take a quick glance at them.

1. English attained the status of an Associate official language of the union for an indefinite period as put forth by an act of Parliament in 1963. It is an official language of administration.
2. English is the court language.
3. English has entered every sphere of national and international trade and commerce. It is the language used for communication, commercial usage and language of trade and industry.
4. It has even entered into our social sphere. Highly educated sections of our society find it more convenient to converse in English.
5. English has been recognized as a library language.
6. English is a national and international link language.
7. English is important being a window on the modern world.
8. English provides us ample opportunities for the study of English literature which is so vast and rich.

9. It has made it possible for us to translate English terms, in medical, scientific and technical knowledge into Hindi terms thus strengthening our comprehension more and more.
10. We can deny the fact that a number of our leaders, philosophers, scientists, authors etc are the product of English education.

Thus we can conclude by saying that English plays an important and inseparable role in India. It was of great importance in the pre-independence period and is of great importance and significance in India today.

OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS 2nd LANGUAGE AT SECONDARY LEVEL

Let us first examine the qualities of good objectives as given by Dr Bloom.

Characteristics of Good Objectives.

They should be:

1. Specific and precise.
2. Attainable.
3. Based on psychological principles.
4. Suited for the development of the students.
5. Helpful in acquiring democratic aims.
6. Able to change and modify student's behavior.
7. Useful.
8. Tangible in ordinary in ordinary circumstances.
9. In terms of change expected in the pupils and not as duties of the teacher.
10. Each statement should have only one objective in it.

Objectives of Teaching English.

The objectives included in the development of literary taste:

1. Development of love for English literature by reading prose, poetry, short stories, novels etc.
2. Enjoying reading of English literature and trying to draw aesthetic pleasure.
3. Understanding criticism and critical views.
4. Development of translating ability.
5. Development of translating imagination and creative development.

For any language, one has to master the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Thus the objectives of teaching English as second language at secondary level may be finalized as:

1. To understand English when spoken at conversational speed.
2. To be able to speak English fluently and correctly.
3. To read English with comprehension so that it can be used for pleasure reading as well as a library language.
4. To be able to write neat and correct English at a reasonable speed.
5. To enjoy simple poems in English and draw pleasure out of them.

6. To be able to know grammar so as to have practical command of the language.
7. To be able to do simple translations as to translate common English words, phrases and sentences into their functional equivalents in the mother tongue and vice versa.
8. To develop taste for English language and its literature.

PROBLEMS IN EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS 2nd LANGUAGE

English has been included in our curriculum as a language of practical utility, still as a second language there are various problems for making English teaching effective. The great tragedy with English language is that it is not being taught as a language but as a subject.

The conditions under which English is taught and learnt and the reasons for low standards of English in our schools are as follows:

1. ***Time available.*** The worst possible reason for the deteriorating standards of English in India is the extremely insufficient time available for teaching and learning of English. We just have a 30 – 35 minute period.
2. ***Classroom conditions.*** The classroom conditions are very poor as per the requirement of standards. These include above all the number of students in a class. We have over-crowded classes. The physical conditions of the classrooms are very poor. Sometimes teaching materials such as chalk, blackboard, audio-visual aids, etc are not available. Sometimes there is no proper and sufficient seating arrangement.
3. ***The school environment.*** In our schools, we do not have very congenial and thought provoking atmosphere outside our classrooms to enable pupils to hear or see or use English. This is very important in effective teaching of English. The language teacher always need a new and functional situation.
4. ***Problem of the paucity of good English teacher.*** As we know, learning any language needs effective teaching – learning between the teachers and students. The main problem with teaching English is the lack of good English teachers. The teachers in the school teach English and the learners learn English but none of them is fully clear about the real purpose of teaching – learning English. Sometimes their pronunciation is incorrect and sometimes their bad handwriting has a very bad impact on learners.
5. ***The Textbooks in English.*** The textbooks available and prescribed for the students are bad and large uninteresting especially for the pupils. The books are not attractive and suitable as per the needs at various levels. Books appear dull and the essential element of pleasure in learning a second language is lost.
6. ***Faulty Syllabus.*** The main reason we fail to use English properly on various real life situations is the faulty syllabus. The prescribed syllabus for different school in different states varies. It varies even in different schools of the same state. The main problem being that students follow one set of syllabus at one level and when they go to senior level, the syllabus seems unsatisfactory.

7. ***Faulty methods of teaching.*** One of the main reasons which hinders effective teaching of English in Indian schools lies in the faulty methods of teaching English. Time has passed, decades have elapsed, the world had a revolutionary change but the methods of teaching English are all the same. Although a number of new methods of teaching English have evolved but the teachers still cling to the old and traditional methods and keep on blaming the system and the learners are not showing the proper output.
8. ***Defective examination system.*** The system of the examination is totally defective keeping in view what English language demands to be tested. English is a skill subject revolving round four basic skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. A test of English language means we have to test the quality and improvement in all the four skills. Nowhere do we find any examination system based on such pattern. The examination in English wrongly includes the testing of the crammed knowledge. The paper-setter/examiner sets the question paper to test the rote knowledge of a learner. The teacher and the student take English only from the examination point of view i.e., testing how much crammed knowledge the students are able to write. All other skills of the language are blindly ignored. As a result, our students are not able to speak English fluently. They know to read (without understanding the meaning of the content) and they know to write the content prescribed in their syllabus. Outside syllabus, they get lost in a wonder-world. Thus, the examination system still clings to the old methods and no attempt is made to realise the real aim of teaching English through examination.
9. ***Lack of suggestive correction.*** In the teaching of any language, the correction work is of utmost priority for we are teaching language – a skill and not imparting knowledge about inventions, discoveries or the animal world. Whatever little is taught in a language should be taught correctly and with 100% accuracy. Thus correction work becomes all the more important in effectively teaching English. It has been found that the exercise book of students lack in suggestive corrections.
10. ***Unproductive and faulty supervision.*** The supervisory staff sometimes is less qualified to maintain or improve the teaching standards in English. As a result they make unnecessary, irrelevant and unproductive suggestions while discharging the task of supervision.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Teaching-learning of a language is a matter of practice. The language teacher can teach the language anyway he likes but he needs the knowledge and application of certain principles which help him to teach the same language effectively. While teaching, the teacher must keep in mind the learner, his capability and capacity to learn and above all his environment. Some of the basic principles for teaching the language effectively are explained below:

1. ***Imitation.*** A great linguist H. E. Palmer says, “Language learning is essentially a habit formation process, a process during which we acquire new habits.” Learning of any language is based on the principle of imitation and through practice. From childhood language is best learnt through imitation. Whatever children see all around them, they imitate those things in

the same way because imitation is natural to man. So a teacher must be good through and through. He should have a model type of pronunciation. His handwriting should be very good. He must possess good habits.

2. **Practice and drill.** Learning of a language is a habit formation process. Habits are formed through repetition. Continuous practice and drill work is needed for it. All aspects of language learning, i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing can be acquired after a lot of practice. The teacher should give maximum exposure of new sounds to the child and constant repetition and accurate practice be given. Only then they will be able to learn it properly. Language teaching-learning is not a knowledge subject, it is rather a skill subject just like swimming, dancing, painting etc. So the learner will have to repeat and revise things in order to have mastery over the language. The various skills of language learning will be properly learnt through practice and drill work.
3. **Selection and gradation.** In teaching of a language, selection and gradation of language items are very important. Selection may be done by the teacher, in respect of grammatical items, vocabulary and structures. Selection and gradation should involve frequency, reachability, range of applicability, usefulness etc.
 - **Selection.** The selection of language items should be based on the following principles:
 1. Frequency of language item – its occurrence.
 2. Range of applicability, i.e., in how many context it is applicable.
 3. Coverage – a word conveying a number of meanings e.g., meals stand for dinner, breakfast etc.
 4. Availability – the items which can be conveniently taught e.g., actual objects available in the classroom like table, chair, chalk etc.
 5. Teachability – items which are easy from teaching point of view.
 6. Learnability – items which are easy for the students to learn should be taken up first.
 - Gradation means putting the language items in order of presentation. Thus simple items having more utility and better teachability will be taken care of. Gradation involves grouping and sequence.
 - a. **Grouping.**
 1. Group according to the sound, e.g., pay, bat, say, sat etc.
 2. Grouping according to words used in the same situation e.g., words connected with post-office master, postman, dak, letters, it is lexical grouping.
 3. Patterns of sentences which are similar should be taught together e.g., this is, that is my book, your book etc called grammatical grouping should be taught together.
 4. Semantic grouping – words that convey similar meanings are grouped together e.g., shelter, hut, house, tent, etc.
 5. Structure grouping – how the selected items fit with each other sounds into sounds, words into phrases, phrases into sentences and sentences into contexts.
 - b. **Sequence.** What comes after what.
 1. Lexical sequence – which words follow which e.g., sit, stand, come go.

2. Grammatical sequence – means which structure follows which e.g., ‘I am throwing a ball’, ‘I am throwing a ball to you’.
3. Semantic sequence – every word has a number of meanings. They are put in order and are taught at different occasions e.g., the word ‘there’
 - a) The pen is there. (place)
 - b) There are many pens. (introduction)
4. **Oral Approach.** Learning of a language is like learning of art. So it should be learnt like any other art by constant and accurate practice. Language is more connected with ears and tongue than with eyes because language primarily is speech so in teaching of English oral work should be given utmost priority. If a student is good at spoken language, he will automatically be good in reading and writing of the language. Moreover, whatever is learnt orally is remembered better. Therefore, a language should be learnt by speaking it. Oral work introduces activity and language is learnt.
5. **Principle of Interest.** Motivation or interest is of great importance in teaching learning process. Language is learnt quickly if interest is created in it. So teacher should generate interest by active involvement of students. Interest can be created by group activity, parallel writing, flash cards, pictures, charts, drawing, creating situations etc.
6. **Principle of Learning by Doing.** Some maxims are of general importance in the teaching of every subject. “Learning by doing” is the maxim (principle) that a language teacher should always bear in mind. Variety of activities should be part of English class.
7. **Principle of Correct Language Standard.** The correct language standards are to be acquired by the students and teacher should help them in actually getting used to new sounds and patterns and also intonations and rhythm of the language.
8. **Attitude Towards Target Language.** a language teacher should teach the language effectively but should also create interest and love for the culture of the people who speak this language because language is the first thing of a culture.
9. **Natural Way of Teaching Learning.** Natural process of learning the language should be followed. Listening and speaking should precede reading and writing. The teacher should lay more emphasis on the first two aspects, i.e., listening and speaking. Then the learners will automatically be good at reading and writing of the language.
10. **Language should be Learnt in Context and Situations.** Language is taught so that the learners are able to make use of it in their day-to-day life situation. Different language items say vocabulary, structures etc should be dealt within the context of some appropriate situations so that the learner may find them very nearer to life.
11. **Teaching the Language and not its Literature.** The child should be taught the simple use of language instead of introducing him to the realms of literature of the language concerned.
12. **Inspirational Motive.** Teaching should be based in inspirational motive. The inspiration should lead a learner to learn more and more with the zeal of an internal urge.