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## The Development of English Language in India

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### **Abstract:**

*The paper discusses the complete history of English language from its emergence to the present status in India. The study pays attention to the accurate position of English language from colonial period to the present time. In order to obtain meticulous figure, the paper focuses on all the legal commissions, factors and rigorous grounds which brought about the tremendous approach of English language in India. Here, the study pays whole concentration to the prime circumstances which provided English language a paramount controlling role over all the regional, vernacular, native and mother languages. English has spread its possession from business to education and in literature, science, art, technology, sports and so on.*

*The paper hits on the prevailing changes brought by the social reformers, Britishers, orientalis, linguists, translators, writers and educational moderators who promoted the English language directly and indirectly in Indian educational system. The study draws our focus to the important historical and situational factors which granted English language a authority of second language, official language and somewhere prime language in India. In this study, we will see the collage of circumstances which were in favored to the establishment of the English language.*

**Keywords:** *Indian educational system, English language in India, colonial period, second language, English language learners, commissions.*

### **Introduction:**

Today, we never can even think about anybody's magnitude of education without the knowledge of English language. Nowadays, we can observe the dominance and intense possession of English language over the entire education system. From the historical aspect, English is not the native language in India infect, multiple factors had worked together to provide it a role of super power in India. English language was introduced to India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when English business tycoons came to the India as traders. Even after the British rule was over in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, English remained in use in India together with Hindi and other vernacular languages.

Gradually, English used as the official language of the Indian government and prime language of education.

This paper discusses the foremost steps in favor of the establishment of English language in India from the colonial period to present scenario. The core objective of the paper is to comprehend the factors and legal commissions and contributive causes which took place in the promotion of the use of English language for different purposes. The various educational reformers also strived for the formation of English language on the land of multi lingual country India. The study reviews different educational progressive steps in following paragraphs.

**Orientalists** promoted the Oriental learning rather than the Anglicans. Hence, they created paramount opportunities to the British India Company to promote their languages and cultures among Indians. The educational system in India became excursive between Orientalist-Anglicist and then Macaulay's resolution come across with the clear picture of the British educational system. Orientalists preferred local traditions, classical learning's and Indian languages but they also brought about significant changes in social, political and educational aspects. Orientalists translated various Hindu Scriptures in English language and they generated a need of English language among Indians directly or indirectly. Although, they encouraged Indians for getting education in their own terms or language but they also paved the path of English learning. They brought a change in Indian education system by introducing and promoting English language and English literature among Indians. They made Indians fascinated to be intellectual enough and created a captivated need of the knowledge of International languages.

In 1792-93, the house of Commons debated the renewal of Charter of East India Company, Wilberforce suggested the sending of school masters and **missionaries** to India. The missionaries were heavily invested in setting up their institutions in India. However, their main aim was not mass education but rather spread Christianity and conversion. Their core objective was to convert people into Christianity. In order to achieve this, they undertook the process of education. Before Missionaries, the education was the privilege of nobility and elite class but missionaries supported education for the common people in their native or vernacular languages. In order to achieve their objectives they started teaching the converted Indians in their mother tongue as a medium of instruction but the knowledge of English language was also given together. They translated Bible, English stories, historical theories in Indian languages and spreaded a charm and need of English language. They created a charm of western Christian values and literature with the knowledge of English language among Indians. For that Missionaries got prominent supports from the East India Company.

#### **Charles Grant Commission- 1791:**

Charles Grant often referred as 'Father of Modern Education in India'. Charles Grant, one of

the Directors of Company, submitted a memorandum in which he lamented the low moral conditions and moderate educational values of the people of India. In 1791, He asked the company to improve Indian educational condition by imparting its people knowledge of English language which was to serve as, “a key which will open to them, a world of new ideas.” He preferred English teaching to Indians as it would be extremely easy for government to establish at moderate expenses, in various parts of provinces, places of gratuitous instruction in reading and writing English, multitudes especially of young would flock of them. There will be Hindu English teachers and also can be employed for public services. Due to these political reasons, English language teaching remained in full force. Charles Grant and William Wilberforce, who was missionary activists, compelled the East India Company to give up its non-invention policy and make way for spreading education through English in order to teach western literature and preach Christianity.

- Charles Grant gave recommendations for introduction of English education in India.
- He recommended the English to be official language of the company for the local affairs, but his intentions and methods were not accepted by British Parliament, as he was a part of the Evangelical Sect and wanted Christian missionaries to convert the religion of locals and teach them English.
- The introduction of English as the medium of instruction in an Indian educational system that included literature, natural sciences and mechanical invention.

**Raja Ram Mohan Roy** chiefly advocated English language teaching in India as he felt that youth should not cling to Sanskrit language and Vedantic philosophy. He also promoted to Forman association for founding an institution where Hindus will receive instructions in European languages and sciences. On 11<sup>th</sup> December 1823, Raja Ram Mohan Roy wrote a letter to Lord Amherst that the education of Sanskrit language and Vedantic literature would do nothing and had no practical use. Rather he requested him to promote the western education and European language in India. As Braj B. Kachru states, “In India, religion determines the loyalty to Arabic and Sanskrit, prestige and job consideration to English, and in certain areas, national and regional feeling to Hindi or regional language.”

**Elphinstone in his Minute of 1823** urged the establishment of schools for teaching English and European Sciences. Elphinstone gave the idea of providing a high degree of education to the upper classes than to diffuse a much lower sort of it among the common people. He proposed the establishment of schools at Bombay where English might be taught 'classically'. By this demand English language had increased tremendously. English classes were also attached to Calcutta Madrassah and Sanskrit College at Calcutta, and also in Agra College. The Anglicists also maintained that all instructions should be given in English language.

**Maculey Minutes-1835** – When Lord Macaulay was appointed the Chairman of the



Committee in 1835, he wrote a Minute which turned the scales against the Orientalists. He discussed the Charter Act 1813 which provided a sum of money for the revival and promotion of literature.

On February 2, 1835, British politician Thomas Babington Macaulay circulated Minute on Education, a memoir that endeavored the definitive reasons for why the East India Company and the British government should spend money on the provision of English language education. It promoted both the knowledge of European language as well as the cognition of sciences in India.

Later, the Minute became policy, when William Bentinck, the governor general of India, signed the resolution. The Macaulay's Minute clearly stated these intentions that education was to "form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect". He wanted to create a bridge of Indians who would be able to serve British interest and be loyal to them. Macaulay Minutes promoted following points:

- The minute promoted European literature and sciences among the natives.
- It recommended the extensive knowledge of English literature and sciences through translated texts.
- It assisted the branches of native learning by more useful studies.
- He advocated the shutting down of all colleges where only eastern philosophy and subjects were taught.
- Here, Macaulay triumphantly westernised the education system in India; English was offered to make the official language for the government and courts.
- English was made the official language for Government (Legislature and Executive), Courts (Judiciary) and Official Medium of Education.
- In 1835, English replaced Persian as the official language of the East India Company.
- During this period, the British gradually introduced the English language and Western Language in order to create a class of Indians who could serve the imperial rulers as officials or functionaries, as well as, function as a communicative link between the rulers and the masses.
- The policy attempted to create a system of education that educates only the upper strata of society through English.
- Persian was abolished as the court language and English become the court language.
- The Anglicists, Macaulay included, while vociferous in their advocacy of English, stood for what they described as the "filtration" of education. This meant that only the upper echelons of society would be provided instruction in English, and they, in turn, were expected educate the natives down the order. English education became important when the lower levels of the bureaucracy had to be staffed, creating a demand for babus, or native clerks.

Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-general approved the minute of Lord Macaulay. The resolution was passed on 7<sup>th</sup> March; 1835. He advised that English was taken as the medium of instruction in India by the William Bentinck.

### **Wood's Dispatch-1854 -**

Wood's dispatch was to educate Indian people in order to create a class of civil servants. It also wanted to impart Western knowledge and information about Western culture and ethics to the Indian people. The main objective of the Wood's Dispatch was to educate Indian people in order to create a class of civil servants. It also wanted to impart Western knowledge, literature and information about Western Culture to the Indian people. The Wood's Dispatch also recommended the use of English language. He promoted:

- Teaching of English language along with the study of vernacular language.
- The importance of female education.
- He Suggested that primary schools must adopt vernacular languages, high schools must adopt Anglo-vernacular language and at college-level.
- English should be the medium of education.
- The constitution of Separate Department for the Administration of Education. As a result of this charter Education Departments were established in every province. Universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were opened for higher education.
- It gave importance to vocational courses. The quality of teachers should be improved and they should be given regular training and a better salary.
- He recommended English as a medium of instruction for higher studies and vernacular at school level.
- He focuses on educating the masses and common people in both native languages and English language.

### **Hunter Commission (1882-83)-**

It recommended two division of secondary education- Literary up to university and Vocational for commercial career. He also promoted female education and knowledge of moral science as well. Although, he didn't directly promoted English language but as English was the official language that time, so the knowledge of English language couldn't be avoided. He also declared the ratio of private and government school, it was 2:1 that means there were more private schools in number than the government schools. It reflects that English language was being practiced in private schools. So, now It is quite obvious that there were private enterprises which were doing well in education and teaching English language.

### **Sadler commission- 1917**

Calcutta University Commission was determined by the government of India under the

Chairmanship of Mr. Michel Sadler, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds. This Commission was appointed for the purpose of making recommendations to reform Calcutta University. The commission focused on the teaching facilities for applied scientific and technical education, teacher's training, female education, vocational and professional education. The commission also recommended the establishment of intermediate colleges with the proper teaching facilities in Arts, Science, Medicine, Engineering, Education, Agriculture etc.

Hence, the commission didn't focus on English language teaching but the knowledge of science, medicine, technology, vocational and professional courses are not possible without the proficiency in the English language.

#### **Education Commission-1964**

The Education Commission-1964 gave the provision of Free and Compulsory Education for children aged from 6 to 14 years. In the context of medium of education, the Commission recommended adopting a three-language formula at state levels. It intended to promote a language of the Southern States in Hindi speaking states. It designed to promote Hindi, English and a regional language in non-Hindi speaking states.

#### **The Kothari Commission-1964-66**

Kothari Commission also took part in developing and cultivating the English language in India. Till now, English has become an imperishable preservable factor in India. The Kothari Commission recommended three language formula, promoting regional languages, Sanskrit as well as International languages, especially English. The English was using in all the institutions over the time as people understand the necessity of English language with other subjects. Now, the Kothari Commission recommended the adequate command over English language as the need of small but English proficient group was understood. Students too considered the need and value of English proficiency in education over the time.

The three language formula was adopted by the state governments at the secondary stage. It intended to promote a modern Indian language, Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking States. Hindi and English along with the regional language were to be the part of the non-Hindi speaking states in India. The commission emphasized the need of international languages especially English in India. This was also aimed to promote the study of science and technology in India.

#### **Other factors:**

- **A country' foreign policy** will decide how it will work with other countries economically, politically, socially and militarily. A country's growth is depending on its strong foreign policy. The importance of English language can't be avoided in making success of International affairs and foreign policy. English provides us with such an effective medium to communicate across the world. In the late 1920s onwards, Jawaharlal Nehru, who had a long-



standing interest in world affairs among independence leaders, formulated the Congress stance on International issues. After the independence, as a prime minister, Nehru articulated India's approach to the world as he said, 'The idealism of today will be the realism of tomorrow'.

India has diplomatic relations with 201 states around the globe. Globalisation has also created the need and obligation of English language. Due to globalisation, the need of the English learning became chronically requisite issue as it opens the door of International marketing, trading, education, business and smart employments. So, it is crystal clear that International foreign policy created the essential need of the knowledge of foreign language.

- **Establishment of public school and private school** was the biggest contributive factor to develop and spread the charm towards English language among Indians. It was properly established by the Jesuits in 1793 as the oldest school in Kerala. Although, there was the tradition of private schools since before as St. George's school in Chennai (1715), St. John Vestry Anglo Indian School (1763) in Tiruchirappalli and many more. In India, all the private / public schools are competely English medium. However, these schools also specify the Native/Stately/Official languages according to political compulsions. There were both types of private/public schools where English is introduced as a second language from the grade fifth onwards and English is taught from nursery standard.

Most of the public Schools have adopted the complete English medium syllabus with 'advance English pedagogy' in which all of formal and informal interaction is in English right from nursery grades. Many public schools generally have been banned the use of native language in their school campus. So, it can be analysed that private schools/ public schools have been generated the English learning environment for the high academic excellence. These schools have been triggered students for the mastery in English language. Nowadays, English is the dominative language of our education as most of the authentic study material and books are written in English. It can be observed that school education have promoted the maximum use of English language. Braj B. Kachru opines, "It is rare to find 'mother tongue' given to as 'second language' for census purpose and 'second language' listed ad 'mother tongue'."

- The importance of English language can be seen by the **iconic literature** written in English language by the famous writers even before independence. We can analyse that the concept of writing English literature in India evolved before independence for example, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Romesh Chandra Dutt, Toru Dutt, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, Ruskin Bond, Khuswant Singh and many more. It reflects that there was an intense traditional of writing in English in India. The

impact of English language in India can be observed by the literature written by its writers. Literature is the mirror of society; it reflects the gradual incessant development of English language in India.

- English is the language that contains the **diverse cultures** with it. It bounds of the disparate cultures of different countries. English is the super power that has achieved the rank of Lingua Franca. English is the International language; people use English language to attain different purposes. It reflects that English language carries the diverged cultures with itself. If we share any language in conversation, then simultaneously we adopt the culture of that language also. We also retain English cultural by reading and writing English literature. Nowadays, the English literature is being written by the writers of every country. So, we can proclaim that English language contains the difference cultures and values of different countries. So, we can observe the tremendous impact of English language on Indian cultures as well.
- **On social media**, English is the most controlling mode of communication across the world. In present time, social media has become the part of everybody's life, everyone is engaged in different activities and modes of communication like talking, typing, posting, uploading, twitting, reeling, videos and many more. The communication done on social media is in English language. Infact, we never can imagine the use of social media and Internet without the knowledge of English language. English is the dominative language of computer, Internet, technology and social media. People use social media and Internet to get knowledge on any topic, it is basically used as a search engine. All the communication, sharing ideas, views, dealings, conferences are being commenced only in English language on different social networking sites.

So, it can be concluded that English is the prime language of social media and Internet. Social media has become part of our life as people spend a big span of their important time on social media. The English is the key through which people can connect others and obtain advantages of Internet and social media to fulfill different purposes.

### **Conclusion;**

The development of English language goes through different steps or stages. The study tries to comprehend the overall journey of English language in India. Here, the paper focuses to bring into light all the accountable factors which have constructed the commanding metamorphic picture of English language on the land of multi- lingual country like India. The study tries to assimilate the developing process of English language in India with its core concepts. The study reaches onto the conclusion that multiple factors worked together to provide a controlling and dominative throne to the English language.



In the present time, English is being used as a second language in entire country or as a primary language in the few states of India. English has achieved the honour of Lingua Franca. English is the language of Education, Media, Textbooks, Technology, Internet, Science, Researches, Medicines and so on. In India, people not only have adopted the English as a second language but they have completely assimilated its cultures and ethics as well. To some extent English has replaced the linguistic cultures and way through which mother tongue is spoken. Today, English is not mere a language, but it has become part of anybody's way of life, part of culture, medium of education, approach to Internet/ Social media and breath of lifestyle.

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