UNIT 1 LANGUAGE: CONCEPT, ITS NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The world is shrinking rapidly today. Advances in information technology, scientific knowledge and applications have transformed a sprawling earth into a global village. People of various cultures and nationalities now meet, interact, trade, socialize with ease on a daily basis. English becomes official language of the administration, medium of instruction, and subject of study in the Indian Schools and University. A knowledge of English is considered as necessary for activity, thought and employment.

Making this possible is the use of a common language—English. English is used by over 500 million people across the globe. One person out of every four persons in the world can be reached through English. 50% of the world's newspapers, scientific and technical journals and over 60% of the world's radio stations use English as a means of communication. It is also the official language of the UNO.

Speaking English became a fashion. It is an important foreign language that has attained the status of link language in different countries of the world. It holds important place in education system. Even, we can say, that it holds unique position in India. Besides, being a link, it is our major window to the modern world.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the different role of language
- To familiarize with the nature of language
- To enable the students to understand the place of English.
- To enable the students to understand the need and importance of the language.
- To enable the students to understand the significance of the language in human life.
- To enable the students to know the basic characteristics and functions of the language.
- To enable the student-teachers develop linguistic skills among their pupils.
- To assess the status of English language.
- To view the central role of language in human society.
1.3 ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English has been playing an important role in our educational system as well as in our national life. It was supreme in the pre-independent India. Though, in free India, English could not be allowed to occupy the position of privilege. This was acknowledged by all the persons consequently. It was decided that regional languages should be developed and that Hindi should replace English. Nothing can be said against these things. Independent India must have its own national language.

1.3.1 Meaning of the Term

Derived from Latin Lingua which means tongue and the French term langue, language is the "entire complex of phenomena associated with human vocal and auditory communication of emotions and ideas."

Language is called a social phenomenon, because it has relevance only in a social setting. Language undergoes a continuous, though unnoticed, process of growth and change. It becomes sharp, crisp, refined and versatile with the passage of time. Pick up the historical background of any language; you will be astonished to notice the major changes in spellings, meaning, pronunciation and its connotation and denotation. Hence, language is a living phenomenon.

In its broadest and most general sense, "language may be said to be any means of expression or mental concepts by any living beings whatsoever and of communicating them to, or receiving them from, other living beings."

Language is a very complex human phenomenon; all attempts in define it have proved inadequate. In common parlence it may be said that language is an organised noise used in actual social situations. That is why it is defined as contextualised systematic sounds. 
Patanjali defined it as that human expression which is uttered out by speech Organs. 
Encyclopaedia Britannica defines language as "a system of conventional, spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate".
1.3.2 Definition

1. "Language is a primarily human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols" (Sapir).

2. "Language, in its widest sense, means the sum total of such signs of our thoughts and feelings as are capable of external perception and as could be produced and repeated at will" (A. H. Gardiner).

3. "Language may be defined as the expression of thought by means of speech-sounds" (Henry Sweet).

4. "A system of communication by sound i.e., through the organs of speech and hearing, among human beings of a certain group or community, using vocal symbols possessing arbitrary conventional meanings." (Mario A Pei & Frank Gaynor).

5. Language is human...a verbal systematic symbolism... a means of transmitting information...a form of social behaviour... (with a) high degree of convention" (J. Whatmough).

6. "A language (is a) symbol system... based on pure or arbitrary Convention... infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers" (R. H. Robins).

7. "A language is a device that establishes sound-meaning correlations, pairing meanings with signals to enable people to exchange ideas through observable sequences of sound" (Ronals W. Langacker).

8. "A language is "audible, articulate human speech as produced by the action of the tongue and adjacent vocal organs... The body of words and methods of combining words used and understood by a considerable community, especially when fixed and elaborated by long usage; a tongue" (Webster).

1.3.3 Place of English Language in India

Pandit Nehru was certainly correct when he said, "English is our major window on the modern world". Its importance as an international language can be denied by none. It is only through English that we can establish social, economic, cultural and political relations
with other countries of the world. It opens a wide window of international relations for us. If we close this window, we will shut ourselves up in the four walls of our nationality. This will certainly bring about our decay and downfall, because modern science has reduced the vast dimensions of the globe to the size of a small ball. Under, such circumstances we cannot ignore English we should give Hindi the place of national language. But this never means that English should be completely eradicated from the Indian curriculum.

"English is a language which is rich in literature, humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we should give up English, we would cut ourself off from the living stream of evergrowing knowledge."

-University Grant Commission

"No language ancient and modern can be compared with English in the number of its speakers, writers and readers all over the world."

-F.G. French

"English literature in quantity and quality is second to none in the world." -Champion

1.3.4 Development of English

This can be traced back to the period 1150 to 1400, ending with authors such as Chaucer and Gowen. Thus, upto the 15th century it was a period of middle English with Chaucer "the unecloped sun of modern English began to rise and shine." The origin of the language can be related to Germanic Languages, although it plainly differs from them. Historically, it came to Britain, as the language of the invaders, the Angels Saxons and the Jutes. Hence, it is felt that English is an offshoot of the Anglo-Frisian Group. Initially there were about 170 million native speakers in 1920 and to date 10% of the world population speak the language. It has become a language of universal culture embracing many aspects of knowledge. This has been mainly due to its flexible and liberal nature to adopt to new changes. In the 16th century, the language was more subjective. Long sentences were used to explain simple things. In the 18th century, the language became /very laborious. The more difficult words and phrases were used the better it was. But now the trend has changed, it is more simplified and the use of foreign words and phrases is prevalent.
1.3.5 Importance of Teaching English

The importance of teaching English in India as a modern foreign language lies in the following things:

1. **International Importance** - English claims to be the first rate international language. It can even be called a universal language. Hence, its knowledge promotes international understanding. Thus, it is very helpful in fostering true internationalism and co-operation among the nations of the world.

2. **Educational Importance** - English is a direct medium of acquiring a knowledge of modern arts, science, humanities, technology, etc. It is equally important for statesmen and politicians, scientists and doctors, engineers and educationists, businessmen and research workers. They enrich their knowledge and experience by reading English books and journals. Consequently, they contribute to the progress of their country particularly when it is underdeveloped like India.

3. **Vocational Importance** - Study of English as a modern foreign language has tremendous vocational importance for us. It offers opportunities for many and varied vocations, like diplomatic and foreign services, business, commerce, medicine, teaching law, etc.

4. **Cultural Importance** - English widens one's cultural and intellectual horizon. It develops scientific, technical and commercial relations with other countries. It imparts a knowledge of foreign nations and cultures. Thus, it further requires mutual understanding and co-operation.

5. **Disciplinary Importance** - The study of English enables a person to compare and contrast the good and bad things of his country with those of other nations. Thus, he acquires a new insight into various resources of thought and expression.

6. **Recreational Importance** - English is a good source of recreation and useful employment of leisure. Persons knowing English can enjoy the best stories, drama, novels, etc. written or translated into English.
1.3.6 Impact of other Languages on English

English is universally renowned for its power of expression. It is the most effective medium for expressing even the most abstract and subtle thoughts and ideas. It enjoys this uniqueness because of its capacity to absorb words and expressions of other languages of the world.

Of all the languages it came in contact with, the influence of Latin, The language of Homer, seems to be rather strong. Latin came into contact with, or one may like to say the other way around, English came in contact with Latin roughly between 15th to 17th centuries. This was the peak of the Latin influence on world literature.

1. **Latin was a mark of aristocracy and power.** English absorbed a lot of Latin words. Some of the words are *vindicate*; 'sedate', 'semblance', 'incomparable', 'garrulous', 'intone', 'crescendo', 'dulcet', 'resolve', 'modulate', etc., are all words borrowed from the Latin language and spoken as English by all its speakers.

2. **Open A French Window** —Another foreign language that has influenced the language of English a 'outrance' (to the utmost) is the **French** —the language of the 'beau monde' (fashionable world) of France. It has lent a classical and ethereal vocabulary to English because of its soft and dulcet pronunciation. Though, unlike the words of the Latin language, the French words do not occur often in everyday use of English yet they have to be used deliberately as the occasion may demand.

3. **The Greek Avalanche** —Whereas foreign languages like Latin and French have given whole new words to the dictionary of English language, the Greek has lent valuable roots that have resulted in an abundance of rich and meaningful words that are part of pure English. Due to these roots, the influence of Greek on the language of English is proof enough to the major impression of Greek in modern English.

4. **American Onslaught**—Besides the Latin, Greek and French languages (also termed as the 'classical languages' of the world), there has been a distinct influence of the American English on the English language. In fact, English is becoming increasingly Americanised as the present day fashion is to speak colloquial or slang language that is so common among the Americans.
American English is here to stay and due to its immense popularity, pure English is slowly fading out—its use being restricted only to the elite and sophisticated classes of the world and also to political gatherings where it is part of the protocol.

5. **The Indian Influence**—Having ruled India for almost two centuries, the impact of the English language on India and its people has been so strong and permanent, that even today after about five decades of political, social and economical freedom, we are still in awe of the British tongue. But it has also been noticed that if English has left an indelible impression on our mother-tongue, it in turn has picked up various purely Hindi (and often Sanskrit) words that are part of the language.

Many words of the Hindi language adopted by modern English speakers. Although, many of these words have Persian or Arabic origins (shawl, fakir, etc.) and most of them are of the Urdu language, still they can be said to be the Indian influence on the English language as at the time when the British ruled India a combination of Persian, Arabic and Urdu was spoken by the Indians especially by the kings of that era who were Persians or Moghuls. In fact, Urdu, was then the mother-tongue of Hindustan that the Britishers had to learn it in order to enable communication with the natives. Urdu was the Court language. Thus, we find traces of our ancient heritage on the modern English language.

6. **Russian Defence**—RUSSIA'S PARLIAMENT has drafted a law aimed at stopping the latest foreign invasion of the homeland: the rapidly-growing number of English words and slang expressions infesting the Russian language.

"We must have a way to punish the mass media, educators and politicians for corrupting the Russian language," says Mikhail Fyodorov, an adviser to the Culture Commission of the State Duma, which is preparing the law.

Besides being affected by various foreign tongues, modern English has developed many trends that have been brought about by modern English speakers.
1.3.7 **English as an International Language**

English is rapidly becoming a world language. It is the first language of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada and Australia. In addition, it is spoken and read by many millions of Europeans, Africans, Chinese, Indians, Japanese and South Americans as a second language. It is widely known in India, Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka, almost every country of the world. In short, one person out of every ten in the world is a native speaker of English. One out of every four on earth can be reached with it.

Everything of importance which happens day by day is printed in English in newspapers or spoken in English over the radio all over the world. 50% of world's newspapers, over 50% of the world's scientific and technical periodicals and more than 60% of the world's radio stations use English as a medium.

The above facts point out that English is an international language. No language, ancient or modern, can be compared with English in respect of its international status. It is interesting to note that about one-half of mankind have chosen English to communicate with those who do not speak their own language. It is in this way that English helps in establishing international relations. It is a source of better understanding among different nations of the world.

**F.G. French** in his book "Teaching English as an International Language" says that because, of the rapid spread of industrial development, science and technology, international trade and the closer inter-dependence of nations, English has become a world language. It is the means of international communication; there is no other. English is international in the sense that it helps in interlinking the people living in different countries of the world.

**Check Your Progress**

Notes: a) Fill in your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. English is a ________________ language.

2. Derived from Latin word ___________ means tongue.
1.4 THE STATUS AND NATURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA

According to the constitution of India, English is a second language. But what is it in fact?

Activity A

Think about how English is used in your state. Does it have the status of a second language or a foreign language?

Educators define a 'foreign' language as one which is studied for the insight it affords into the life of another nation, and a 'second' language, as one which is studied for more utilitarian purposes, because of its direct value to the speaker or writer as a citizen of his own country.

To answer the above question you should think about the purposes for which you and the people you know use English.

1. What language is most commonly used in offices?

2. What percentage of people (approximately) read newspapers (a) in English and (b) in the regional language/MT (Mother tongue)?

3. Which language do people generally use in restaurants, at railway booking counters, when shopping, etc.?

4. When people meet people from other states do they use English/Hindi/some other language?

5. What is the language you find used most often in advertisements and hoardings in (a) towns and (b) in cities?

6. What are some of the most popular TV. programmes? Which language(s) are they in? Has the Cable TV. become popular among people? If yes, what are the most popular channels? If people watch programmes in English, do they have any difficulty in understanding the language?

7. To what extent does the man in the street use and understand English? For example, if you asked an autorickshaw driver or a shopkeeper in your town a question in English
would he be able to understand it easily/with difficulty/not at all? Would he be able to answer in English? Generally/occasionally/not at all?

Answers to these questions will help you to build up a picture of what the status of English is in your state, its importance, and normally, then the extent to which its development is possible.

The question of the status of English in India is important if you want to think about your teaching situations 'effectively' because your language teaching situation cannot be separated from the language learning environment outside the classroom. We need to consider the language environment if we are desirous of making a change in the classroom.

**Discussion**

Be realistic about the general English learning environment faced by your learners, and then you will find your teaching of English will be much more effective. You should think of using all your resources, and supplementing these resources, if necessary.

For example, you may make effective use of newspaper clippings, magazine advertisements official forms (rail reservation form, money order form, telegram form), billboard messages to motivate the learners to use English in authentic/real life situations.

Though English does not have a uniform status in various parts of our country the following are some of the common 'roles' or functional capacities in which 'English' is present in India:

English is the associate official language in our country. It is taught as a part of school curriculum for 6 to 12 years, either as a subject or both as a subject and a medium of instruction.

In context of a global society and especially since the opening of the Indian markets to foreign investment, competence in the use of English has become the passport not only to higher educational opportunities but also to better economic gains. As a library language it wields considerable presence in the arena of higher education. It is thus that in school the emphasis has shifted from learning the content of the English lessons to trying to acquire the language skills which will enable the learners to 'use' the language.
1.4.1 The Status of English within the Formal Instruction System

In Activity A, you examined the status of English in your state; now let us examine the status of English language which is set within a formal instruction system. However, before examining a formal language learning situation, let us attempt to look at an informal language learning situation. An informal language learning situation is one when language is not taught or learnt for grammar but for communication. For example, a young child learns to use language functionally, i.e., to get things done or to express himself/herself. This expression could be transactional or self-expressive in nature. Through play and chat, which constitute easy, spontaneous use of language, the child develops language skills. Thus by using language, the child develops language skills, i.e., he/she learns to speak, read, listen, write effectively and independently.

The formal instructional system is, however, very different. Here we are referring to organized learning on a large scale, with the instructional system providing certification at the end of a learning programme.

We must examine carefully the differences in the teaching and learning of languages in formal and informal situations. Early language learning involves learning of the MT (mother tongue) or LI (first language). Learning English for most Indians is learning a second language (L2)

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<th>Informal Language Learning</th>
<th>Formal Language Learning</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Language taught</td>
<td>MT, LI</td>
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<td></td>
<td>L2, L3, etc. from class I (English medium)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Age</td>
<td>From birth onwards, in informal situations of language learning</td>
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<td>From class III, IV, V, VI (vernacular language medium)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Use of Language</td>
<td>Functional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>More formal language descriptions, formal grammar learnt</td>
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<td>4. Treatment of errors</td>
<td>Parents repeat, encourage and correct</td>
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<td>Teacher may comment, focus on errors or sometimes reprimand-</td>
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<td>5. Exposure</td>
<td>Oral</td>
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<td>Predominantly in the written form</td>
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However, these 'characteristics' of formal and informal language learning situations should not be seen as exclusive to each other. Modern language learning pedagogy, in fact, attempts to organise second language learning situations as closely as possible to its language acquisition so that the second language is learnt as 'naturally' as possible and enables the learner to become an independent user of it.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Does the language teacher need to assess the need(s) of the language learners to learn the language? Give reasons for your answer.

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1.4.2 Nature of Language

A language consists of words, idioms and syntax. It is through language that we think, feel, judge and express. Hence language is one of the most important and characteristic forms of human behaviour we use words and idioms as tools to perform and share experience among a people possible.

1. **Language is speech** - Language is speech and is distinct from the signs, gestures and sounds produced by animals or pets to convey a particular feeling or emotion. It is distinct from the sign language even amongst the humans at any point of social and
biological evolution. It restricts itself to recognised expression and communication to or from human beings by means of speech and hearing. This communication, therefore, has to be from man to man, from a person to another person by means of speech, and hearing. Speech, therefore, is language.

2. **Living Language** - As seen earlier, a language undergoes a continuous and unnoticed change for its refinement and depth. It responds to the demands and requirements of the group that it represents. As the human utterances became complex and varied, a language to be living must move with the group, must grow with the group, should be alive to their needs and aspirations. In this process of change and growth, language acquires new shape, new approach, new significance and new application.

3. **Language and Society** - "Language is one of the most important and characteristic forms of human behaviour". With widening range and horizon of human thought and action, the language has to keep in step with its social calling. As "language is activity, a purposeful activity", it must help man to express himself in a variety of new and different kinds of situations. It is the society, that in its turn, bestows meaning towards and idioms by conventionalising them to mean what they mean today to a group or a community, in a variety of complex contexts.

4. **Operation of Language** - As language has relevance only in social context, it is necessary for its operation, that a social necessity or scenario exists. There should be a corresponding situation for the language to operate upon. It is a conventional arrangement between the speaker and the listener.

5. **Sounds and Signals** - Sounds produced by human beings differ from the 'signal-like' sounds and actions of the animals. A lot of research is going on to establish if the animals also have similar conventionalised arrangement in their expression. **According to Bloomfield**, "In human speech, different sounds have different meanings. To study this coordination of certain sounds with certain meanings is to study language". In other words, a study of a language consists in giving meaning to a meaning. The meaning already exists, we have to give it a meaning to be intelligible to us as a language.
1.5 CHARACTERISTICS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE IN HUMAN LIFE

Language is a learned arbitrary system of vocal symbols by means of which human beings interact and communicate in terms of their common cultural experience.

1.5.1 Characteristics of Language

1. Language is learned — The learning process may be natural or structured.

2. Language is a system — The complexity of the various facets of it are organically inter-related, such as, sounds, words and structures in integrated with one another and constitute the complex and organic whole which is called language.

3. Language is a system of symbols — Its effectiveness consists in its usage when the symbols are commonly shared and known to all those who are sharing a common experience.

4. The system is arbitrary — There is no logical relation between the words and the objects they stand for except for the Chinese and the other pictorial languages. Here again, the characters, though pictorial, do have any resemblance with the reality that they stand for. However, in sound languages, it is necessary that the sounds have a specific meaning.

5. Language symbols are vocal — Language is primarily speech-Oriented. Its graphical representation comes later. In many languages there is no graphical expression at all. They are only spoken and are considered adequate as they perform the basic function of communication.

6. Language is relevant in a social setting and has meaning in as far as it expresses common cultural experiences. Languages, therefore, differ because cultures differ.
7. Language changes - "We live in a changing world. We can't possibly think in terms of static state of affairs in language or any thing else."

- Jawaharlal Nehru

Every language, may be English is a living language. With the needs and requirements of speakers it changes constantly and developing. Words are practically being borrowed and absorbed in the language from time to time.

1.5.2 Significance of Language in Human life

Language covers the entire expanse of life. It preserves the best human thoughts and achievements which enriches life. The scope of language widens with the enlargement of human activities: the larger the field of human functioning, the wider the extent of a language.

1. Social Function - It has been said time and again that language is social it operates in a social setting; it acquires meaning and significance in a social interaction. It is a means of communication between members of a community, or between a community and community. It is "capable of handling all references and meanings" (Sapir) of a given culture. It is a means of expression.
2. **Cultural Function** - As a "language is a part of the culture of a people and the chief means by which the members of a society communicate", it is wedded to culture, is inseparable from it and, hence performs a cultural function. The content of every culture is expressable in its language.

3. **Language and the Individual** - As a symbolic system, language either reports to, refers to or substitutes for, direct experience. Whatever the case may be, language cannot "stand apart from or run parallel to direct experience, but completely inter-penetrates with it."

4. **The Expressive Function** - Language is a great force of socialisation. "language is primarily a vocal actualisation of the tendency to see realities symbolically". There cannot be any meaningful social interaction without language. The language binds the people into one large group called nation. The national language socialises the behaviour of the whole nation, whereas, the regional languages help integrate regional groups. Language is the greatest and most potent force of integration.

5. **Aesthetic Aspect** - Language helps store culture experiences in the form of literature and other written records for the posterity. These cultural experiences form the nexus of individual realisation. It breathes life into our poets and dramatists. Short of a language, such fine arts were not possible. Aesthetic experiences are the treasure for the posterity to feel proud of it as a national treasure-house.

1.5.3 **Misconceptions about Language**

After discussing the characteristics of a language we might as well dispose of the following misconceptions about a language.

1. **Languages are logical**

We have already discussed that the symbols of a language are arbitrary and there is no logic in their representation. The sounds and spellings arrangements a fleet each other according to usage and NOT logic. The famous quote that b-u-t is *but*, p-u-t is *put*. Now there is no logic. Similarly, the sound of T changes according to its usage as may be seen in the words lieutenant, enough, far, philosophy, etc. The sounds of ch again differs. Whereas, it
remains ch in chair, it becomes sh in champagne, etc. Now, where is the logic? Various sounds acquire different character depending on its origin, usage and words arrangement.

2. **Some languages are unlearnable**

The existence of vocal organs group help a language to evolve. As all human beings are gifted with similar vocal organs, any language produced by these vocal organs can be learned if one has adequate will and perseverance. Even Chinese, which is considered to be a difficult language generally because of its sound patterns, can be learned with proficiency. The dependence of the world order on its various constituents necessitated learning of languages of even the remotest of lands and peoples.

3. **Some languages are better than others**

As all languages perform the function of communicating a common cultural experience, there is no distinction of grading amongst languages. However, languages may differ as to their refinement, growth and application. Larger the application, larger the extent of its communication. Besides that, languages should not be graded and compared. Each language is the best manifestation of the culture of the peoples that it represents.

4. **There are exact equivalents in languages**

As languages are the expression of a variety of cultural experiences, they express their respective socio-cultural pattern the best. Hence, there are no exact equivalents. Yes, it may be translated to its nearest approximation.

5. **There are exact equivalents within a language**

This is also a misconception. It will pose a language in a poor situation if it has sets of equivalents. Language should be rich in that one word symbolises one exact experience. There will be shades of difference in their meanings and, in that lies the richness of language. I in easy comprehensions we might have words having similar meaning, but not exact equivalents, such as, sick-ill.
6. **Language must have graphical expression**

As seen earlier, speech is primary and that there are many languages which have no script. These are oral languages and are only spoken.

1.5.4 **Modern English Usage**

Man's greatest achievement and major distinguishing factor from the great ape has been language, having built a world of words he has learnt to feel, to judge through the use of words, idioms and syntax of language. Language makes possible the communication of meanings and sharing of experiences among people, enabling them to form an enduring society and to create and transmit a distinctive culture.

The origin of the word 'language' can be traced down to the Latin word 'Lingua' which implies 'tongue.' French terms 'langage', 'langue' and 'parole' also bear impressions on 'Language'. These terms imply 'a specific form of speech'. Edward Sapir defines Language as "a purely human non-instinctive method of communicating our, ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produce auditory symbols and the symbols are originally arbitrary". Hence language is stated as documentary and non-instinctive. We acquire it by living in the society and our family. Every language has a system established through convention and is said to "live on the lips and ears of the people". Language has its own words, system sounds etc. It is symbolic, a physical and mental manifestation of a non-physical (emotional, intellectual, spiritual) and internal state. An articulated system of signs, primarily realised in the medium of speech.

There are innumerable languages prevailing all over the world. In India itself, there are as many as 845 spoken language. Hence, in the world over the problem of a common language, is being felt, as it integrates the different strands of human thought into a whole. Such a language will be above the barriers of nationality, political interference and other dividing barriers.

1.5.5 **Future of English as a Window on the World**

It is rightly said that English is our major window on the world. It informs us about the advancement taking place throughout the world. In fact, English is the only window through which we can see the day-to-day progress being made in the scientific, technological,
agricultural, cultural, literary, political, social and economic fields. Knowledge of English helps us keep in touch with the world's ever-increasing explosion of knowledge and technological advancement, which are so important to a developing young nation like India. The study of English will continue in the country, for we aim at the progress of our country.

1.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define language
2. What are the misconceptions about a language?
3. Write an essay on the status of English-language in present day India?
5. Write a brief note in modern English usage.
6. Discuss the impact of French on English language?
7. Briefly state the future of English in India?

1.7 LET US SUM UP

- English holds important place in education system.
- Advancement in information technology, scientific knowledge and applications have transformed earth into a global village.
- In India, English becomes official language of the administration, medium of instruction, and subject of study.
- A knowledge of English is considered as necessary for activity, thought and employment.
- English has attained the status of link language in different countries of the world.
- English establishes social, economic, cultural and political relation with other countries of the world.
- Knowledge of English promotes international understanding and co-operation among the nations of the world.
• It develops scientific, technical and cultural relations with other countries.
• It offers opportunities for many and varied vocations like diplomatic and foreign services.
• English is a good source of recreation and useful employment of leisure.
• It is through language we think, feel, judge and express.
• Language as one of the most important characteristic forms of human behaviour.
• It restricts itself to expression and communication to or from human beings by means of speech and hearing.
• It helps man to express himself in a variety of new and different kinds of situations.
• It is a conventional arrangement between the speaker and the listener.
• Language acquire new shape, new approach, new significance and new application in the process of growth.
• It preserves the best human thoughts and achievements which enriches life.
• The language

1.8 ANSWER/CLUES TO ANSWERS OF CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

I. 1. English is a progressive language.
   2. Derived from Latin word lingua means tongue.

II. The language teacher not only needs to assess the need of the language learners to learn the language but also needs to evaluate their existing competence in the target language in order to be able to organize the language learning activities and materials to fulfill these needs. If these needs are catered to, the learners will be extremely motivated to learn the language.
1.9 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/CLARIFICATION

After going through this Unit you might like to have further discussion on some points and clarification on others.

1.9.1 Points for discussion

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1.9 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING


5. Spratt, Mary English for the Teacher: A language Development course OUP 1994


