

Aims and Objectives of Teaching English

Aim is the ultimate end. It can be achieved ultimately after achieving several small steps. These steps are known as objectives.
Aims are long term ends. Objectives are short term ends. The aims of teaching English in India are the following.

To understand spoken English

The students should be able to comprehend English when spoken. They are to be enabled to understand English conversations, news, movies etc.

To speak English fluently and accurately

The students should be enabled to speak English fluently and accurately with proper accent and rhythm.

To read English properly

The students should be enabled to read English with characteristic English rhythm and to read silently with good comprehension.

To write English neatly and legibly

The students should be enabled to write English neatly and legibly. The ability to express one's thoughts and ideas in writing should be developed in them.

Objectives of teaching English

1. To enable the learner to understand English when spoken at a reasonable speed.
2. To enable the learner to speak English with accurate pronunciation.

3. To enable the learner to read English with good stress, rhythm and intonation.
4. To enable the learner to read English silently at a reasonable speed with good comprehension.
5. To enable the learner to write English neatly and legibly.
6. To enable the learner to draft simple letters, prepare reports, fill in forms and compose poems.
7. To nurture the creativity of the learners.
8. To develop pupils' imagination
9. To enable learners to interpret events and situations.
10. To help learners realise their identity.
11. To equip learners for free and effective expression.
12. To develop a taste for English literature.

Types of Objective

Objective is defined as the end towards which a school sponsored activity is directed. It is the desired outcome at which instruction is aimed. The desired outcome can be perceived at the end of a particular instruction or at every stage of it. Hence, objective is broadly classified into two, i.e. product objective and process objective.

Product Objective

Product objective is the desired final outcome. It is the end product. Here the final attainment is the matter worth noting. How the learner reaches that level is not considered important.

Example: The learner writes a poem.

Process Objective

Process means a series of actions performed in order to do, make, or achieve something. Process Objective is the desired activities

the learner has to do before reaching the final outcome. It is the procedure used to yield the required outcome. A process objective elucidates the experience a learner undergoes in a learning situation.

Learning takes place as result of successful completion of a number of activities ordered sequentially. This chain of activities plays vital roles in ensuring progressive changes in pupils' behaviour. If the learners attain the process objective one by one, he is almost sure to produce the desired final result. If we focus only on product objective, the learners may not reach that level timely and fruitfully. So the process objectives are given more prominence today.

The learners get more exposure to the target language when they actively involve in the process. They get more chance to develop their skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In second language learning, process objective is better to be stressed.

Example: If the product objective is "The pupil writes a letter" the process objectives can be the following.

Pupils become familiar with different letters.

Pupils identify the position of different aspects of the letter.

Pupils discuss the features of a good letter.

Pupils become aware of the forms of good letters.

Pupils receive topics for writing letters.

Each group discusses and shares ideas.

Teacher facilitates and monitors their performance.

Each group prepares letters.

All the letters are orally presented.

Pupils write letters independently.

Difference between Product Objectives and Process Objectives

Product Objective	Process Objective
It is the desired final outcome.	It is a set of activities to be done in order to yield the desired outcome.
It focuses on the end product.	It focuses on the process.
It doesn't develop language skills.	It facilitates the development of language skills.
It considers product alone.	It considers process and product.
It makes the class teacher-centred.	It makes the class learner centred.
It leads to monotony.	It makes the class activity oriented.
It causes mechanical learning	It facilitates productive learning.
It is learning to do.	It is learning by doing.
Minimum exposure to the target language.	Maximum exposure to the target language.
It is difficult to rectify errors.	It is easy to rectify pupils' errors.

Language Acquisition and Learning

Language Acquisition

Language Acquisition refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations. Acquisition is a natural process. Children acquire language through a subconscious process during which they are unaware of grammatical rules. This is similar to the way they acquire their first language. They get a feel for what is and what isn't correct. In order to acquire language, the learner needs a source of natural communication. The emphasis is on the text of communication and not on the form.

Language Learning

Language Learning refers to a conscious process of accumulating knowledge of vocabulary and grammar of a language. Learning is deliberate. Language learning is not communicative. It is the result of direct instruction in the rules of language. In language learning, students have conscious knowledge of the new language and can talk about that knowledge. They can fill in the blanks on a grammar page. Researches have shown that knowing grammar rules does not necessarily result in good speaking or writing. A student who has memorised the rules of a language may be able to succeed on a standardised test of that language but may not be able to speak or write correctly.

Those whose experience is primarily a learning one may not have the same proficiency of those who have had an acquiring experience. Even in an ideal acquisition situation, very few adults seem to reach native like proficiency in using a second language. It

may be due to the fact that the innate language faculty of human beings is in its full power and vigour in the early years.

Difference between Acquisition and Learning

Acquisition	Learning
It is a sub conscious process.	It is a conscious process.
It is natural. <i>process</i>	It is deliberate.
It is communicative.	It is not communicative.
Emphasis is on the message.	Message or form or both may be stressed.
Rapid process	Slow process
Fully successful	Success is not guaranteed.
No systematic procedure.	Systematic procedure
Not aware of the grammar.	Become aware of the grammar.
No instant rectification	Instant rectification of errors.
No help from teachers .	Good teacher support.

Factors Affecting Acquisition and Learning

Language acquisition is influenced by subjective and objective factors in several ways. Factors related to learner, environment, and infrastructure of the institution play vital roles in language learning.

Learner Factors

Need : Need is the greatest prompter and the most influential factor of any endeavour.

Aim : The aim set by the learner determines the extent he wishes to go in his study. It influences the nature and quality of learning.

Practice : The quality, intensity and extensiveness of practice influence the acquisition of a language.

Age : It is a view widely held that with increasing age there is a diminishing capacity for language learning. Children acquire language quickly and easily.

Temperament : The temperament of the students affects learning. He may be imaginative, unimaginative, energetic, nervous, reluctant, or diffident.

Previous study : The previous knowledge may facilitate or hamper the progress of learners in picking up a language.

Imitation : Ability to imitate is the basic major factor in promoting learning and acquisition.

Attitude : The attitude of learners towards second language can be positive, negative or neutral. Positive attitude facilitates quick and strain-free acquisition while negative attitudes hamper it.

Gender : It is said that girls are quicker in language acquisition when compared to boys.

Intelligence

Aptitude

Interest

Motivation
Readiness
Personality
Physical Condition
Emotional Development
Style of learning and acquisition

Environmental Factors

Socio – economic status of the family.
Regional dialect
Interaction
Exposure
Cultural impact of society
Attitude of society towards the target language
Class room atmosphere
Sufficiency of comprehensible input
Place of the target language

The place of a language in the historical classification may also determine how easily a learner acquires it. For instance, a north Indian whose mother tongue is Hindi may find it easier to learn Punjabi than a Dravidian language like Tamil, Malayalam etc.

Infrastructural Factors

Competency of teachers.
Library.
Language lab.
Computer lab
Seating arrangements
Classroom condition

Availability of required audio visual aids.

Problems in Learning

Lack of felt need

Pull of mother tongue.

Lack of adequate input

Lack of motivation

Lack of good speech models

Insufficient practice

Diminishing capacity for imitation

Other engagements

Basic Principles of Learning

The following list presents the basic principles that underlie effective learning.

Students' prior knowledge can help or hinder learning.

If students' prior knowledge is strong, accurate and activated at the appropriate time, it provides a strong foundation for building new knowledge. When knowledge is weak, insufficient or activated inappropriately, it may impede new learning.

Students' organisation of knowledge influences learning

Students naturally make connections between pieces of knowledge. When those connections form knowledge structures that are accurately and meaningfully organised, students are better able to retrieve and apply their knowledge effectively and efficiently.

Students' motivation directs and sustains their learning

As students enter college and gain greater autonomy over what, when, and how they study and learn, motivation plays a critical role in guiding the direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of the learning behaviors in which they engage.

Practice and feedback enhance quality of learning.

Learning and performance are best fostered when students engage in practice that focuses on a specific goal, targets an appropriate level of challenge, and is of sufficient quantity and frequency to meet the performance criteria. Practice must be coupled with immediate feedback.

Positive class environment enhances learning.

As we cannot control the developmental process of learners, we can shape the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects of classroom climate in appropriate ways. A negative environment may impede learning and performance, but a positive environment can energise students' learning.

Students may reflect on their approaches to learning.

To monitor and control learning, learners may engage in a variety of metacognitive processes such as assessing the task at hand, evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses, planning their approach, applying and monitoring various strategies, and reflecting on the degree to which their current approach is working.

Skill Vs Knowledge

A skill is an ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carryout complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills) and/or people (interpersonal skills).

A skill subject is one, proficiency in which is acquired mostly through practice, not by merely learning the rules of the subject or by acquiring a lot of knowledge in it. hearing language is like learning swimming or driving. Having learnt their rules and not having got any practice one cannot swim or drive safely.

Knowledge

Knowledge is understanding of or information about a subject that you get by experience or study, either known by one persons or by people generally.

We can broadly classify subjects as skill subjects and content subjects. Being a behavioural science, language is a skill subject. Physical sciences like physics or chemistry are content subjects.

Learning a language is not learning about the language. The 1st means learning to use it, the second means learning the system of it.

University Question = Why is language as a skill subject?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

a. English as a skill subject

Languages in general are skill subjects. English is more so being a foreign language elevated to the rank of our second language. It is also the international language, associate language, link language, medium of instruction in universities, language having wide literature and knowledge, of science and technology, of trade and commerce.

How language is acquired still remains partly unsure to linguists. The present theories hold divergent views regarding this enigma. But Behaviourism holds sway much over the other theories, and the methodologies of teaching English are largely dependent on Behaviourist theories.

Skills can be acquired mainly through practice leading to habit formation. One cannot simply get it for others. Knowledge of the systems of language will be of little help unless the language skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and their sub-skills are practised with a concerted effort.

Language being a behavioural science is evidently not to be acquired by mere intellectual activities of the learners as in learning Physics or Chemistry or History. Learning a language is to a great extent formation of habits. Acquiring the language skills means becoming proficient in communication.

The major skills to be acquired for the mastery of English are Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. These skills have specific sub-skills which render a strong base for acquiring the major skills.

Comparatively, Listening and Reading are considered as Passive skills while Speaking and Writing are Active skills. As, by Listening and Reading, we are receiving information they are termed as Receptive skills. In Speaking and Writing as we are passing on information they are termed as Productive skills.