

Aims and Objectives of Teaching English

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Abstract

The teaching of any subject becomes much useful and more systematic only when the teacher is fully aware of the aims and values of instruction of that subject since the core principle of any teaching is “know what you do and only do what you know.” Hence it is essential to understand the aims and values of the teaching of English.

Key words: Aims, Objectives, Principles, Values, Comprehend

Aims of Teaching English in India

In India English now exists as a second language and it should be taught as a language and not as literature. The aim of teaching English in India is to help students to acquire a practical command of English i.e. students should be able to understand spoken English, speak English, read English and write English. Thus these are the four primary aims of teaching English.

According to Thompson and Wyatt (1952) the four specific aims of teaching English are:

- (i) To understand spoken English.
- (ii) To speak English.
- (iii) To understand written English.
- (iv) To write English.

(i) To Understand Spoken English

The student should be able to understand spoken English requisite in ordinary conversation, exchange of greetings, receiving orders and directions, listening to lectures, talks, etc.

Competence can be achieved if we give opportunities to our students to listen to English News, Conversation, the narration of the short story, TED talks, etc.

(ii) To Speak English

To speak English, a student is required to produce sounds with proper stress and intonation. Speech occupies a distinctive position in bearing a language and is the base for all language learning. We expect our students to talk fluently in English. This ability to speak English is required in colleges to communicate with the persons.

(iii) To Understand Written English

We expect our students to be able to understand the written English in books, magazines, newspapers, etc. It is also expected that he or she will be able to take on English as the medium of instruction and examinations in his or her studies. At present our students are not able to comprehend materials published in English. Recognition vocabulary of students should be increased to enable them to read English with comprehension.

iv) To Write English

Writing English is in no way less than speaking English. In teaching English, we aim at enabling our students to write in English simple letters, application, description and accounts of events. Such ability is required in offices. It is also needed in schools and colleges for taking notes of lectures delivered in English.

All the four aims are equally important.

Objectives of Teaching English at College Level

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Aims and Objectives of Teaching English

- (i) To be able to speak English fluently and accurately.
- (ii) To think in English and then speak.
- (iii) To be able to talk in English.
- (iv) To be able to compose freely and independently in speech and writing.
- (v) To be able to read books with understanding.
- (vi) To acquire a vocabulary of 2500 words.
- (vii) Ability to use reference material such as encyclopedia, dictionary, etc.

Objectives of Teaching English

Dr. B.S. Bloom (1956) has defined educational goals as, "the desired goal or outcome at which instruction is aimed." The objectives of a topic in English help in realizing some general objectives of teaching English.

Characteristics of Good Objectives

The features of real goals are:

- (i) It should be specific and accurate.
- (ii) It should be achievable.
- (iii) It should be based on psychological principles.
- (iv) It should be for the development of the students.
- (v) It should be for changing or modifying student's behavior.
- (vi) It should be real in ordinary circumstances.
- (vii) It should be regarding change expected in the pupil and not as duties of the teacher.

Thompson and Wyatt (1952) rightly remarked that "It is necessary that the Indian pupil should not only understand English when it is spoken or written, but also he should himself be able to speak and write it."

Four Fold Objectives of Language Teaching

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Aims and Objectives of Teaching English

These four-fold Objectives of language teaching can be drawn from aspects of language. The four aspects of language are:

- (i) Semantic—related to understanding,
- (ii) Phonetic—deals with sound, spelling, pronunciation,
- (iii) Graphic—related to writing, and
- (iv) Phonetic-cum-Graphic—dealing with reading.

Thus we find the four objectives of teaching English are:

To Teach Pupils

- (i) To hear and understand spoken English,
- (ii) To understand what they read in English,
- (iii) To speak in English,
- (iv) To write in English.

Of these, the (i) and (ii) objectives concern to passive command over the language, and the objectives (iii) and (iv) relate to active command over the language.

“Reading will render later progress in speech and writing, the ultimate use of language becomes more accurate.” (Thompson and Wyatt, 1952)

Abilities to be Developed by Four-fold Objectives

The following four skills are developed:

- (i) Listening,
- (ii) Reading,
- (iii) Speaking, and
- (iv) Writing.

(i) Ability to Understand English

It includes the following:

- (a) Ability to draw meaning from what is heard.

(b) Ability to respond in action as a reaction to hearing.

(ii) Ability to Read English

(a) Ability to read simple prose, poetry, story, articles with comprehension.

(b) Ability to read a simple sentence with understanding.

(c) Ability to read aloud without losing the sequence of thoughts.

(iii) Ability to Speak English

(a) Ability to pronounce with right intonation and stress.

(b) Ability to respond to speech as a reaction to hearing.

(iv) Ability to Write English

(a) Ability to spell words correctly.

(b) Ability to use appropriate vocabulary in the right place.

(c) Ability to build sentences without grammatical error and

(d) Ability to write down passages clearly in an exact language with pertinent to the topic.

English is very rich in scientific and technical knowledge, and so the knowledge of English is the only means of preventing our seclusion from the world. We cannot think of taking India into the 21st century without capitalizing on English. Thus the aims and objectives of teaching English are essential for the function of teaching English to enable our students to understand English when read or spoken and to express their thoughts and opinions in writing or speech.

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