

## CHAPTER 8

# FUTURE OF ENGLISH

The story of English cannot be concluded in the manner in which some of the greatest creations in the language can. When we come to the end of Milton's epics or '**The Tale of the Ancient Mariner**' or '**The Eve Of St. Agnes**' Keats or the tragedies and the comedies of Shakespeare we experience a fulfillment which a work of art can provide. But it would be safe and correct to say that the story of English is the story of the evolution of modern man. Each person gifted with the power of speech comes and performs his part on the world stage.

The main purpose of adopting this story-telling technique is to familiarise the language 2 and language 3 learners to understand, enjoy and equip themselves to master a language which will enable better human understanding, co-operation and work culture. All individuals can contribute to the story of English and it will lead from one to another very much in the manner of our very own story telling methods found in **The Mahabharat**, **Panchatantra** and the **Jataka Tales**.

Despite our deliberations on the growth of English, the question that remains nagging is: What is the future of English? Some people think that history will repeat itself, and English will go the same way as Latin.

About 800 years ago, Latin was a world language. It spread all over Europe as the Roman Empire grew and many new varieties came into being. With the fall of the Roman Empire, the varieties moved apart from Latin and from one another. The different varieties became new languages: Spanish, French, Italian, etc. Latin became a language no longer in popular use.

Some other people think that the different varieties will move closer together and form a Global Standard English which will be spoken by all. It will be one common language for use in –

- International travel and tourism
- Internal press coverage

- Means of communication between governments
- Multinational business organisations

So, will English fall apart and go out of use like Latin? Or, will it develop into a single global standard? We have to wait and see; only time will tell.

## MODERN USAGE OF ENGLISH

In the last few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the English language has seen rapid changes and many of the earlier concepts of standard grammar, spellings and pronunciation have been diluted. One major factor for this is the internet. In a little over ten years the internet has become a global phenomenon. Only about 45 million people used the internet in 1995 around the world. In 2006 the figure increased to more than double. The number of Cyber cafes and outlets in all big and small cities and towns of India is an indicator of not only of the popularity of computers and the internet but also its indispensability. The computer as of now is using the English language for a variety of purposes though many countries are trying to develop programmes in their own language.

And the story of English goes on. ....

## Exercises

### 1. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. Name the language which was a world language about 800 years ago.
2. Why is Latin no longer in popular use?
3. Name three areas of English language in which rapid changes have been noticed in the last few decades.

