NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 12th



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Class : 12th
Subject : English
Chapter : 1
Chapter Name : The Last Lesson

Q1 The people in this story suddenly realise how precious their language is to them. What shows you this? Why does this happen?

Answer. Language is a bridge that connects the community with its identity. Language is an integral part of our daily lives. Freedom to use one's language is the key to save you from the enslavement. In the story, Mr. Hamel points to the importance of one's own language and he is of the opinion that language frees you or captures you. Its when people of Alsace and Lorraine are captured they realize how their language gave them real freedom.

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Q2 Franz thinks, "Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?" What could this mean?

Answer. This statement is pure evidence of limitations faced by humans. Humans may have reached the moon but still, they have not conquered nature. This statement means that humans can force their rule upon other humans by force or threat, but nature has its laws. Nature is not controlled by humans. It is similar to an idea presented in the story that Prussians can control there school and language but they cannot end the love for the country.

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Q1 "When a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison."

Can you think of examples in history where a conquered people had their language taken away from them or had a language imposed on them?

Answer. The idea imposed here is of Linguistic Imperialism. Linguistic Imperialism means forcefully imposing the language on a group of people without their consent.

Some examples of linguistic imperialism are:

English was imposed in India during colonisation by Britain.

Chinese was imposed in Tibet

French was imposed in Britain (Francization)

Hindi was imposed in South India

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Q2 What happens to a linguistic minority in a state? How do you think they can keep their language alive? For example:

Punjabis in Bangalore
Tamilians in Mumbai
Kannadigas in Delhi
Gujaratis in Kolkata

Answer. A linguistic minority is the one who is present in small groups in a state. They are suppressed by dominating linguistic powers on the basis of their language and culture. Many a times they also face discriminations based on Castes, Creed and language.

They can keep their language intact by the following measures :
The populace starts writing more books in their language or publishing newspaper in it. Talking to each other in their language. Keep organising various programs to circulate it. By requesting shows on TV and radio. Education should be provided for their native language. They can organise social gatherings with the members of their communities do as to keep their own culture alive and they don't feel isolated.

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Q3 Is it possible to carry pride in one's language too far?

Do you know what 'linguistic chauvinism' means?

Answer. It is absolutely possible to carry pride in one's own language. In our country Tamilians and Malyalis people reject Hindi as their mother tongue. Instead carry pride in their own native language. German people too rejected English over their own language. Accepting someone's language is an indirect way of giving them power on ourselves i.e known as hegemony, a concept by Gramsci. East India Company established their power over Indians by showcasing English a language of rich and Hindi being a language of poor. Linguistic Chauvinism means giving importance to one language and crushing others. People should not consider only their language is important. They should treat each language with equal respect. As each language represents a community, and by disrespecting a language one insults the whole community.

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