

Level : 3rd year LMD.

Teacher : Miss BAHACHE

Lecture One : an introduction to English as a Foreign Language

- What is a language ?

Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, where thoughts are transmitted in order to communicate with others.

- English as a Foreign language

In today's world, multilingualism is becoming more and more important. In addition to opening up employment opportunities, being able to speak a foreign language helps to make a real connection with people and to know more about diverse cultures, places and lifestyles. The more proficient you are, the better you can express yourself.

English is not the most spoken language in the world , But that's not all, it is also the most common second language in the world. Therefore, it is highly likely that if you meet someone from another country, you will both be able to speak English. It gives you an open door to the world and helps you communicate with global citizens.

- The Importance of learning English :

1. English is a global language

English is the most commonly spoken language in the world. One out of five people can speak or at least understand English!

2. Studying English can help you get a job

English is the language of science, computers, diplomacy, and tourism. Knowing English increases your chances of getting a good job in a multinational company within your home country or of finding work abroad.

3. English is the language of the Internet. learning this language gives access to over half the content of the internet, which might not be available otherwise. Whether it is for fun or for work, if you understand English, you will be able to exchange information with more people online and use many more materials.

4. Travelling is easier with a good knowledge of English

Imagine you're a Spanish person on holiday in Thailand, while your hotel receptionist might not be able to answer your question in Spanish, it's likely they will be able to answer your question in English.

5. English is one of the most important languages for business

Whether you're a business owner, student or employee, English is incredibly important in the business world. English is considered to be one of the most important business languages due to being the de facto language of the United States and the official language of the UK, Canada, India and South Africa.

6. English gives you access to multiple cultures and new people

Good knowledge of English will allow you to access films, music and literature from hundreds of countries around the globe. Not to mention the fact that numerous books from across the world are translated into

English. Few experiences will make you grow as a person more than learning the values, habits and way of life in a culture that is different from yours.

- Ways to learn English :

1. Study phrases not words

When you study English, or any language for that matter, you shouldn't learn individual words because memorising them makes no sense without context. Instead, you should study whole phrases. Memorising the meaning of words is much easier if you know what they mean and how they are used in a sentence.

2. Learn by listening

While reading textbooks can help you learn the English language, you mustn't rely solely on them. Textbooks are great for teaching you about grammar and vocabulary, but they may not be too much of a help when it comes to carrying out a conversation. If you want to learn how to speak English, learn by listening and not by reading. By listening more, you'll be able to learn useful vocabulary and grammar without even realising or memorising them.

3. Get a placement test

Finding out your current English proficiency level is crucial before you embark on any learning plan as it will determine the type of program you should follow. For e.g. A comprehensive English program if your level is around Intermediate level or lower and a customised learning plan for Upper-Intermediate level and above.

4. Prioritise quality over quantity

When it comes to learning any language, it's all about quality over quantity. Instead of learning dozens of new words in a short time, you should focus on learning one word and repeating it dozens of time. This prevents you from suffering from information overload. In addition, this strategy allows you to place the meaning of words and phrases deeper into your brain. As a result, you won't forget them easily.

5. Learn grammar with “point of view” stories

One of the best ways to learn grammar is to listen to short stories told in various tenses. This will help you improve your English grammar automatically and more naturally. For example, if a story starts with “I don't like banana but I want to eat one,” the other story should be “I didn't like bananas but I wanted to eat one.”

6. Listen and answer, not listen and repeat

If you want to improve your English, don't use the strategy used by English textbooks, which is to “repeat after the speaker.” Instead of mindlessly parroting the words or phrases spoken by the speaker, you should answer questions asked. For example, if you're listening to a podcast or video, pause it every 20 to 30 seconds and create a brief summary of what has been said.

7. Take an online lesson

There are many online courses available on the internet. A quick search in google will show you a list of training providers. However, it can get quite costly if you are fully dependent on the 1:1 Skype lessons to improve. One way to cut cost is to supplement your lessons with an online self learning English program.