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Internet-Age and Quick Learning Process (QLP) for Learning English Language

J. Rachel Bhuvaneshwari, M.A., M.Phil.

Abstract

In today's world of Internet, people from different walks of life want to learn English as quickly as possible in order to make the world turn towards them. As a result of this, most of them sign up for English classes thinking that they could speak English fluently within a short period of time. Unfortunately, these typical and traditional English classes are not an effective way to learn English since they are very slow in progress. After years of attending classes, most learners from rural background are not able to converse in English without making any mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Now-a-days, learning English becomes very easy, interactive and effective if there is some self-motivation. In addition to self-motivation, learners should take charge of the self-learning activities based on their own interest since the learning materials like Newspapers, magazines, Television, storybooks, novels, and movies are available in the Internet. In this Internet era, if anyone wants to learn English in a short period of time, one cannot wait for teachers to put knowledge into their head. Instead, learners always involve themselves in Quick Learning Process (QLP).

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This article explores how Internet sources and QLP help people learn English in a fast, fun and effective way.

Introduction: The problems beginners face when they begin to learn

A beginner will easily get disappointed whenever he/she tries to adopt the learning processes because of their inadequate control over and comprehension of vocabulary and English grammar. Reading books in English or watching movies is becomes difficult for them. They are unable to understand the concepts presented in English. While trying to understand the meaning of words and sentences they come across, they get frustrated and they lose interest in any activity related to learning English. Even if the content is extremely fun, the number of unknown words may make it impossible for them to enjoy it. In order to enjoy the fun, you need input which will teach you novel things, but not input in which everything is new.

Reading Simplified Books and Watching Kid's Channels regularly will help the beginners to learn more vocabulary and develop better comprehension of sentences and the content presented to them.

Self-Motivation for Beginners

Self-motivation and actions that follow play a vital role in Quick Learning Processes (QLP) when they start learning. In addition to self-motivation, the learner should always engage themselves in any one of the Quick Learning Processes (QLP) which include the activities related to LSRW (Listening Speaking Reading and Writing). The following Self-motivation tips will help the learners to take the QLP more interestingly.

Beginners should:

- ❖ Treat the time spent on QLP as time for pleasure and relaxation.
- ❖ Enjoy learning new words, terms, and feel proud of what they have learnt regularly.
- ❖ Always use or share the new words they learnt within a day while they speak or write.
- ❖ Learning does not mean that one need to sit in one place and learn new words or sentences. They can learn from everywhere. For example, names of grocery can be easily learned by reading the printed labels of the grocery item. Or we can find out the name from the cash receipt given to us. Advertisements in TV, printed posters, and newspaper advertisements, etc., usually show the object and give the name of the object.
- ❖ Learners should keep their minds and eyes open to receive new words/sentences from anywhere.

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- ❖ Start thinking of all actions in English when you do any action (such as typing, playing, watching movies, cooking, singing, taking bath, etc.).

Some Examples:

We collected the information yesterday.

I'm typing the text now.

QLP and Some Fun Modern Input Ideas

QLP helps acquiring LSRW skills through some interesting activities that involve our day-to-day life. English-language culture offers many enjoyable sources of input. If a learner gets bored with one activity, he or she can switch to other activities according to their moods and interests. But you should enjoy doing various activities. When you begin speaking and writing in English, you also learn how things are said and written in English. You do this by getting input— reading and listening to the correct English sentences through various sources and channels including native speakers.

Most English learners get their input from English classes. However I find that English classes simply do not give you enough input to speak English fluently and you need to get English input outside of the classroom if you want to be fluent. There are plenty of sources available through the Internet.

Most of the time, English classes will not teach you good and appropriate pronunciation (which is simply necessary for communication). Most teachers completely ignore pronunciation drills at the college level for various reasons. They themselves may have difficulty with pronouncing words and sentences appropriately. Some teachers will correct your mistakes when you speak. But very few teachers will tell you how you can avoid making the same mistakes again. Very few teachers will tell you about the sounds of English and how to use a dictionary to learn about the pronunciation of words. Many hold the view that these are matters that a college student is expected to have mastered in her or his high and higher secondary schools.

Because they have to complete the syllabus before examinations begin, most teachers may not find time to encourage you to read in English, to buy a good English to English dictionary, and to listen to English-language recordings on your own. They will just do their textbook lessons and the exercises in them. All teaching in the class is syllabus and mark oriented teaching.

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This is what most English classes look like. Think about your classes you may not get adequate and appropriate training to speak and write English fluently and correctly. You need to find ways to do interesting things which will really improve your English

Here are some examples of content that you might possibly enjoy while learning:

Reading (Input)

Instead of working only with your textbook, read something that interests you personally. There are so many interesting texts in English! Surf to English-language sites on the Web. Read a good book in English. Simply, read something that interests you. Here are some useful self-learning methods

- ❖ Grammar Rules and its Usages (Available in INTERNET)

Example: www.englishforeveryone.com, www.perfectenglish.com and so many other sites like these.

- ❖ Take one grammar topic every day. For this there are many books that deal with remedial lessons.
- ❖ Read Simplified books.
- ❖ When you read simplified books, try to analyse the grammar rule which you read on that day.
- ❖ Read model E-mail messages.
- ❖ Books: Harry Potter, The Da Vinci Code, Lord of the Rings, other current bestsellers ...
- ❖ Wikipedias: English Wikipedia, Simple English Wikipedia
- ❖ Newspaper, novels, story books, magazines; browse the Internet and read some article which you feel like reading (Supplements like Young World, Metro Plus, Education Plus, Cinema Plus, Health Plus etc.).
- ❖ Make use of online dictionary to refer to the meaning of new words. For example, make it a habit to check www.dictionary.com for new words that you come across.

Listening (Input)

Listening to incorrect English in the classroom leads you to learn incorrect English. To overcome this situation, turn on your TV and watch CNN International, BBC world, HBO or

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another English-language channel. Also, switch on the computer and internet and you will get a lot more similar activities in the YOU TUBE. You will get lots of perfect sentences in excellent English when you do the following modern fun input.

- ❖ All are available in the YOU TUBE and in a click of the internet
- ❖ Watch English movies, Animated serials, Episodes like (Hannah & Montana, Chotabheem, Thambelina and the Tulib bee) etc.,
- ❖ Listen to English songs and watch movies help them improve pronunciation
- ❖ Listen to Internet Radio station which is from different parts of world
- ❖ Listen to the live Broadcast of any programme from the INTERNET RADIO STATION
- ❖ News: Google News, BBC, CNN, The Independent ...
- ❖ Movies: The Matrix, Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, Shrek, current DVD bestsellers ...
- ❖ Movie reviews: Roger Ebert, IMDB ...
- ❖ Internet discussion: Reddit, Digg, Antimoon Forum ...
- ❖ Video games with a lot of dialogue: Grand Theft Auto, The Secret of Monkey Island...
- ❖ TV shows: talk shows (Leno, Letterman, Conan O'Brien), Top Gear, The Colbert Report ...
- ❖ TV series: Desperate Housewives, House MD, Dexter, Futurama, The Simpsons, Californication, ...
- ❖ Humor sites: The Onion, Dilbert, Something Awful ...

Writing (Output)

In addition to writing compositions about the subject that your teacher has given you, try to write about something that you care about. For example, write some e-mail in English. Don't write for your teacher — write it for yourself!

- ❖ Make use of blogs, forums, chat available in INTERNET
- ❖ Take up online test - Grammar exercise, Grammar Exercise Games, etc.

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- ❖ Send emails to your close friends explaining your experiences in any difficult situation you faced
- ❖ Send SMS to your friends but type these in complete sentences!
- ❖ Join in any social networking sites to chat with your friends
- ❖ Make use of blogs and forums to type your questions and get answers from any language experts or others.
- ❖ Write a diary journal explaining your day-to-day happenings in simple language
- ❖ Write to any of the newspaper columns like Letter to the Editor, Voice your views (The Hindu), Readers Mail (The Hindu)...

Speaking (Output)

In addition to your English classes, sign up for a conversation class. Or start speaking English with your best friend.

- ❖ Talk to your friends about a movie you have seen recently in English making use of the words you learnt newly
- ❖ Talk to a customer care executive explaining about your technical issues concerning the material you bought recently from their company.
- ❖ Talk to any one of your friends who is abroad using Skype or Tango.
- ❖ Before going to bed pray to God in English.
- ❖ Record your own speech in mobile or any other mode and listen to it

How to Read Simplified Books and Build Your Vocabulary

There are popular books re-written in simple English especially for English learners. Thousands of titles are available at various difficulty levels. A well-known series is the Penguin Readers, available in online-bookstores worldwide.

I believe these books will help beginners to quickly develop their vocabulary and grammar skills. For building vocabulary, whenever you come across a new difficult word, try to guess the meaning of the word in the context in which it is used and then find out the meaning from a dictionary and note it down in a notebook or *above the word using pencil*. The later will

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be helpful to refer the meaning without turning the pages of a dictionary whenever you read the text and the meaning will get registered in your mind easily.

A Few Easy Steps

First, you can choose something you love to read. If you choose an unknown topic, you may face some difficulty in understanding the topic and the vocabulary presented. If the topic is interesting to you, your motivation to complete reading the text will remain intact.

Second, you will not get frustrated, because the number of new words and phrases will be limited. If you read these books regularly using the “pause and think” method, the progress you can make will be amazing.

Thirdly, you learn simple sentence structure and its grammar. Whenever you frame sentences on your own, your mind will automatically think for the similar kind of simple sentences.

Refer to any online dictionary (www.thefreedictionary.com, www.dictionary.com) to know the meanings and usage conventions of difficult words which you come across while reading the above.

Think of situations where you can make use of those words and frame sentences of your own (in order not to forget the meaning of those new words).

Use those words within 24 hours or within a few days in a related situation while speaking or writing.

Always murmur words which are very difficult to pronounce.

Learn words which are used in some specific situations.

The Importance of Learning Grammar Rules

Usually, the rules of grammar were taught in the primary schools. Today, due to the mark-oriented education, most of the teachers instead of teaching grammar rules properly, they teach a few tips how to fill the answers and get more marks in the board exams. They do not teach grammar rules to use in the day-to-day life to communicate effectively. Because of mark-oriented teaching, the students are not aware of the importance of learning grammar rules. After the students finish their education and jump into the competitive world for job hunt they realize the importance of English and its grammar rules. Finally, they decide to learn English in a short period of time in order to get job. Now-a-days, education is not for pursuing knowledge, it is meant for job hunt.

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Setbacks due to poor grammar

- ❖ When receivers misinterpret the message, it leads to incorrect responses and actions.
- ❖ Receivers waste time trying to check the intended meaning.
- ❖ Errors give a negative impression of the sender, who appears poorly educated, careless and unprofessional.

(Richard Blundel, *Effective Organisational Communication*, 2004)

Benefits of using perfect Grammar

On a more positive note, there are benefits to be gained from learning more about grammar and the use of words:

- ❖ With a better understanding of its underlying laws, communicators can employ language in more focused, flexible and creative ways.
- ❖ Fluency in language is also associated with clear thinking, which benefits individuals, organizations and the wider public.

(Richard Blundel, *Effective Organisational Communication*, 2004)

How to learn English Grammar Rules

There are plenty of websites available in the internet especially for English Grammar rules. Now, learners may type the grammar topic in the search engines (Google, Yahoo, Babylon, Bing, etc.), they will get explanation of the topic with example and so many exercises. Also, at the end of the learning process, you can take up the online test related to the topic. There are Grammar Lessons available in You Tube in which they can watch the topic explained by a native speaker or any other language Specialist. Once you finish learning the grammar topic, for recap, you can make use of the PPT presentation of any topic available in the Internet.

To check on the current state of your grammatical knowledge, complete the following 'Pretest' exercise.

Pretest on grammar: helps you find out your level of learning whether the learner is beginner or not.

(a) Write down a brief definition and two examples of eight parts of speeches: Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Verb, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, and Interjection.

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(b) Find out the tense and transform of the following sentence into the passive form:

John broke the glass bowl while he was trying to push the chair yesterday.

(c) Identify the following 'parts of speech' in the sentence above:

- ❖ the subject
- ❖ the object
- ❖ the main (or 'independent') clause
- ❖ the subordinate (or 'dependent') clause

A Quick explanation on Grammar Terminology

Noun : 'naming word', of which there are four main varieties.

Concrete nouns e.g. book, alligator, sunglasses, bicycle

Abstract nouns e.g. Anger, beauty, love, etc

Proper nouns e.g. Madurai, Chennai, New York, etc

Collective nouns e.g. herd, flock, bouquet, etc

Pronoun: replaces a noun, often when referring to it a second time.

Personal pronouns e.g. he, she, us, them, it

Demonstrative pronouns e.g. this, that, these, those

Relative pronoun e.g. who, which, whom, whose

Possessive pronoun e.g. mine, yours, hers, theirs

Adjective: words that describe or explain a noun or a pronoun.

Descriptive adjective e.g. the panoramic view, the black board

Possessive adjective e.g. our college, her favorite movie, 'Titanic'

Quantitative adjective e.g. six hundred students, the second prize

Verb: is an 'Action word' that brings the sentence to life, and appear in various guises. Also called nuclear part of a sentence

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Adverb: words that describe or modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb in various ways, answering questions such as:

How? e.g. the Latha Mangesker sings mellifluously.

When? e.g. Our shop is kept opened on Government holidays

Where? e.g. They were going to meet the Chairman in his office.

Preposition: word that shows the relationship between its object and some other word in a sentence

The bag is inside the drawer.

The cat is jumping from the wall.

Conjunction: 'linking word' which links words, phrases and the clauses of a sentence, in two ways

Co-ordinate conjunction: For, and, nor, but, or, yet, so (FANBOYS)

A coordinating conjunction joins words that are equally important in a sentence.

Example: The pelican ate a fish and flew away.

In this example, the pelican did two things that are equally important, but not necessarily related. It ate a fish. It also flew away.

Sub-ordinate conjunction: because, when, while, before, unless, as, etc...

A subordinating conjunction joins words, but also shows a relationship between the words.

Example: The sky became dark because a storm was rolling in.

How to Build Simple Sentences

The easiest way to understand the various ways that sentences can be written is to construct one from scratch. The raw material of any sentence is a selection of words and prefabricated phrases. These can be assembled into a series of simple sentences, or alternatively into one compound or complex sentence.

Phrase s: In the morning

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Simple sentence: It is time for work

Simple sentence: George gets out of bed

Simple sentence: George gets dressed

Compound sentence: In the morning, George gets out of bed and gets dressed.

Complex sentence: In the morning, George gets out of bed and gets dressed because it is time for work.

Simple sentences are short, clear and easy to understand. However, to give the language greater interest and dramatic effect, it is important to use a variety of sentence constructions. Compound sentences are created by combining 'free-standing' clauses using conjunctions ('and' and 'because' in the examples above). Complex sentences are similar, but consist of one main (or 'independent') clause and one or more subordinate (or 'dependent') clauses. Hence, 'It is time for work' depends on the preceding clause for its meaning.

Active and Passive Forms

Sentences can be expressed in active or passive forms. In the active form, the subject does something to the object. In the passive form, this order is reversed. The subject of the sentence has something done to it by the object:

Active: Isabel (subject) threw (verb) the armchair (object) but it (subject) missed (verb) her timid husband (object) ...

Passive: The armchair (subject) was thrown (verb) by Isabel (object) but her timid husband (subject) was missed (verb) by it (object) ...

(Richard Blundel, *Effective Organisational Communication*, 2004)

Use of Better Sentence Structure

Once you have learnt to identify the various elements in a sentence, it is possible to write more varied and interesting prose. For example, you might want to introduce shorter sentences by replacing selected conjunctions with full stops. Other effects can be created by changing the order of main and subordinate clauses. You should also find it easier to edit other people's text, in order to make it more readable and appropriate to its target readership.

To Conclude

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To conclude, there are plenty of sources, related to grammar rules and pronunciation available in the Internet. A learner needs to self-motivate himself or herself to adopt QLP in a regular and dedicated manner to learn English as quick as possible.

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