Александр Чумаков



Your English Course: Your Journey to the Next Level

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Многие считают, что английский — это сложно, а свободная речь — недостижимая мечта. Я с этим не согласен.«Your English Course: Your Journey to the Next Level» — это аудиокурс. Никаких учебников грамматики и скучных упражнений. Вы учите язык ушами, а не глазами. Наш мозг обожает истории: мы растём с ними и учимся через них.Слушайте весёлые и странные истории — и английский станет частью вашей жизни. Я создал этот курс, чтобы доказать: английский доступен каждому. Присоединяйтесь!

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Your English Course:
Your Journey to the Next Level

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Your English Course: Your Journey to the Next Level

Let me introduce myself. My name is Alexander Chumakov. Nice to meet you! I am the author of this course. I'd like to start with a question.

What does a traveler expect on the morning when a new journey begins? Some hope for a sunny day. Others need to catch an early flight. For many, a good breakfast is essential. But what about you?

If you ask me what I expect, my answer is simple. I want to be surprised. I want the day to be full of pleasant surprises and to learn things that are interesting, useful, and meaningful.

In my view, this is why every traveler begins their journey: the desire to learn. To see, hear, and feel something new. You go to experience life itself.

Yes, it's risky. It's always a little scary. The destination is unknown. But if you prepare well, and if you trust that this journey will bring you growth, I promise you: you will enjoy every step.

And you know what? When you return home, you may feel tired, disappointed, excited, or thrilled. But you will always bring back a story to tell — a story that lets others see, hear, and feel what you have lived.

Your story becomes an invitation for their own adventure.

This is your journey. Your English Journey to the Next Level. Let's begin.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS ENGLISH COURSE

Let me tell you what you are going to do in **Your English Course: Your Journey to the Next Level** to succeed faster and better. This Course has 7 units and 2 months of audio lessons.

Each unit includes:

1st A short story. Each story is a pleasant, enjoyable, instructive and mysterious journey which you are going to undertake and, most importantly, you are going to learn a good deal of good, new and useful ideas that can bring out the best in you.

2nd The vocabulary lesson – this is where I explain the meaning of the words you might not know. Here I am going to walk you through some words and some idioms in English, you can hear people use, when they talk about things in everyday life situations and not only. In this lesson I am

going to broaden your horizons in terms of using the words and I am going to make some comments of my own as well. I hope you will find them useful.

And, of course, **3rd** you will have your favorite **Mini-Story lessons** where I am asking the story and answering the questions. The mini-story lessons will help you to understand English grammar better and remember the ideas given faster and longer. I am sure you will have a lot of fun while taking this fantastic, sometimes difficult, but absolutely amazing journey. At the end of the journey, you will certainly become a better English speaker and a better human being.

4th – Alex Says Show. In these audiopodcasts, I am going to introduce great, fantastic, and gorgeous ideas on the very topic you hear from the stories in this English course called "Your Journey to the Next Level. I am going to talk about the best minds of this planet and share with you what they had to say. I am sure that their ideas will certainly help you change the way you think about English — and will help you start speaking better than you are doing now.

All this, I am sure, will help you get the message of the story and, of course, you will listen to English more, you will learn more and you will enjoy it more.

Good luck to you!

With love and respect,
your English teacher,
Alex.

WHY DO WE LEARN STORIES HERE?

Why do we learn stories here?

That is a great question. You know, how much I love "The Why-questions". Let me tell you why all my books, why all my language courses have stories and why the method I use when I teach English is called a story-telling method.

The reason to tell the story is more important usually than the story itself.

Story-telling is one of the best methods for learning foreign languages. We, human beings, are storytelling creatures. Our brains love stories and we all learn from stories. Stories are vital. We convey our feelings, our mood, our energy and the truth with stories. We convey the mystery of the language. And most importantly, we learn English grammar intuitively like children do. That's why stories. I don't mean, don't learn grammar. No. Grammar is important. I am saying that grammar is difficult. Grammar is very difficult. Grammar is boring. It is hard to say anything interesting and comprehensible to people when teaching them languages and you have to focus on grammar rules a lot.

When you learn a foreign language, for example, you learn English. You learn grammar rules, right? You learn all about the sentences and how words work together. And when you want to say something in English, you make the sentence in your own language first, and then you drag out of your memory the words you need and put them into the sentence. That is painful. That is difficult. That is boring and it takes time. When you acquire the language, you understand what you hear. You understand the message. The message has to be compelling and comprehensible. Simply to say, the message has to be interesting and understandable. Only when you are totally involved in the story, the world disappears around you. You forget that it is in another language. You acquire the language. It means you get the language. You understand the language. Language acquisition happens.

I don't mean, don't learn grammar. I don't mean, if you study grammar, go to jail. No, grammar is important. I am saying again that grammar is difficult. Grammar is very difficult. Grammar is boring. What I have to do as a teacher is say things that are interesting, understandable and then grammar will take care of itself. And this is hard enough. All I need, as a teacher, is to make sure that you are paying attention and you are interested in what I am saying. It's a good story. That is why I sit down and create these compelling and funny, comprehensible and interesting stories for you.

When you tell a story, something remarkable happens: imagination flies and magic begins. What's why stories.

WHY ARE MINI-STORIES SO POWERFUL?

Mini-stories are powerful because I deliberately use the most common verbs like: go, come, take, give, wish, run and there is so much repetition in these stories. And the questions come and again they should be very, very easy and very much comprehensible. So you answer the questions without thinking.

And you no longer deal with the story; you focus on the most common verbs we use in daily conversations.

What do you get from this? The same words, the same questions and you get the basic structures of the sentences with so much repetition.

Even if you start as a beginner, it is first noisy and then with time it gets clearer and clearer to you and you feel more and more confident in what you are learning.

Some of the stories are easy, some of them are difficult. Why? It is because of our brain again.

The brain requires two things: repetition and novelty. Novelty is not necessarily to be something new. It means when you learn something using a lot of repletion, you eventually get tired and bored and you need to give your brain a kind of break. It can help you develop the flexibility of your brain.

If you stay with simple stories and never push yourself to harder stories, it is easier for you to get that boredom. But if you push yourself and make yourself learn something a little bit more difficult than you did before, your brain becomes more alert and more alive and you remember much better and faster, so you learn better and speak better. That's why mini-stories are so powerful.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

My dear friend! My congratulations! Welcome to **Your English Course: Your Journey to the Next Level.**

Hello! This is Alex, your English teacher. You are now ready to speak true, real and excellent English. Here I am going to tell you what you should do to start speaking English the way you never did before.

How to use the story

Each story, each set has several lesson files. All lessons, in a story, in a set, have the same name. These lessons go together. Every day, you will listen to all the lessons in ONE story, in ONE lesson set (all the lessons go with the same name). You will listen to only one set for 7 days or more, but not less than 7 days or not less than one week.

This is very important. As you remember, the motto of the course is “Repetition is the mother of skill”.

You will only improve your English quickly if you follow this method – one story, one lesson set everyday – the same lessons set every day for 7 days (or more). Slower is better.

How to use texts

1. First, try to only listen

Don’t use these text transcripts first. Try to listen to a story, a vocabulary lesson and a Mini-story, and my comments without the text. If you understand them, you don’t need the text - just continue to listen.

2. Use these text transcripts only when you do not understand something

If you don’t understand part of a story, a vocabulary or a Mini-Story, or my comments read the text. You absolutely must go back and read what you do not understand. This is vitally important. This will help you identify vocabulary you might not understand from just listening. Use a dictionary, if necessary, to find unknown words. You will certainly begin to understand better and remember much better of what you listen to. Of course, you understand that you can only remember things when you understand them!

3. Read and Listen at the same time, a few times

Once you know all of the words and phrases in a story, a vocabulary lesson and a Mini-Story, and the Alex Says Show now you can listen and read at the same time. Do this a few times only. Every day focus more on answering the questions. Use your voice. I mean, answer the questions in a loud voice. You absolutely must hear your voice!

4. Just listen again

Now you just listen to the Mini-story. Don’t read. You know the questions and the answers very well. Do not focus on reading – focus on listening!

Put the text aside and only listen to the Mini-Stories. Only answer the questions. These text transcripts can help you, but don’t use them too much.

And, of course, you have to listen to my little English show – Alex Says Shows and enjoy them.

Do it as many days as you can, but not less than 7 days, not less than one week.
If you follow the system, you will certainly succeed faster.
Remember: listening is the key to speaking.

I wish you good luck and every success!
With love and respect,
your English teacher,
Alex.

Hello, my superstar English student. This is Alex, your English teacher. Hope you are having a nice day today. Welcome to our English journey where I tell you interesting, strange, and funny stories, ask questions, and answer them. I want you to listen and enjoy real, true, and excellent English and practice speaking English a lot. Our first story is called “The English Brew” Let’s get started.

David is a young man. He wants to speak English. In fact, he has to speak true, real, and excellent English. David needs English to get a better life. But David has a problem. His problem

is that he doesn't want to learn English like children do in schools. He doesn't want to have boring lessons. He doesn't want to do homework. He wants to do it differently.

That's why David really wants to know if there is a technology, an app (application), or a pill for learning English faster, better, and cheaper.

So he asks this question to everyone he knows: his relatives, his friends and his co-workers. He even goes online and does a lot of research there.

But unfortunately, he cannot find the answer. He feels angry, frustrated and upset.

What does David do next?

Next, he says, "Okay, I will go to the library. If people don't know the answer, and the Internet doesn't know it, maybe books can give what I need." So he goes to the library. Every day he reads many books hoping to find the answer to his question. One day he meets an old man at the library. The old man tells David that in the Amazon jungles there are shamans who make the English brew. And if he drinks the English brew, he will certainly start speaking true, real, and excellent English."

David goes to the Amazon jungles, and he finds the Shamans. The Shamans give him the English brew. David drinks the English brew and falls asleep. When he wakes up, he immediately starts speaking true, real, and excellent English. David is extremely happy. He returns home. Now David can understand, speak, and even write in English perfectly well.

But after three weeks something goes wrong. David starts to forget words. He confuses English words. His English is getting worse and worse. And after two months, to his great disappointment, he stops speaking English at all.

David realizes that the English brew doesn't work very well. He realizes that there is no hack for learning English faster, better, and cheaper. David decides to go back to a simple, time-tested, and natural way to learn English.

What does David do finally?

Finally, he calls Alex and he says, "Alex, I want to speak true, real and excellent English. Please, teach me."

Alex says, "Okay."

This is the end of the story "The English Brew". Listen and enjoy the story. But if you're dead serious about English and want to succeed faster, then repeat each sentence after me. Do this every day, and I promise: you will *start speaking true, real, and excellent English***.** *See you in the vocabulary lesson.*

Hello, this is Alex, and this is your vocabulary lesson for "The English Brew."

Before we begin, let me just say a few words about what I am going to do in this lesson. In the vocabulary lesson, I am going to give the definitions for the words you might not know from the story, and then I am going to paraphrase them based on the story, using simple words. Let's start immediately.

Our first expression for today is "**to get a better life**"

It comes from the following sentence: "David needs English to get a better life." "To get a better life" simply means to improve your living conditions, to have new opportunities. David thinks that speaking English will help him improve his life by getting a better job or having more opportunities. Currently, David lives in modest living conditions: his house is small, his job is not prestigious, and as a result, he gets little money. But he thinks if he improves his English, everything will change for the better.

Next, we see a very good word which is "**an application**," or "an app" for short.

It's difficult to imagine modern life without this word. The sentence says, "David really wants to know if there is a technology, an app (application) or a pill for learning English faster, better, and cheaper." This is a rather long sentence, but don't worry, I am going to help you understand it better

and faster. An "app" means a software program you can use on a computer or phone, designed for a specific purpose. In our case, David wants to know if there is a special program that can help him to learn English differently and quickly. He doesn't want to learn English like everybody does. He wants to learn it faster and better, and he doesn't want to spend much money on learning English. He also thinks that maybe there is a pill for learning English. A special medicine that if you take it, you will learn English faster and better than other people.

We move on, and we see another fantastic expression which is "**do some research**"

I love this expression a lot. "To do some research" actually means to study a subject or problem carefully and systematically in order to discover facts or test your ideas. From the story, we know that David asks everyone he knows if there is a method of learning English faster and better, but not having the answer from people, he goes online and tries finding the answer on the Internet. David reads many articles online. He watches a lot of related videos trying to find the answer. In other words, he spends a lot of time looking online to find the answer to his questions about the best way of learning English. David does a lot of research online. I think you get the idea.

Okay, our next two words are "**Amazon jungles**"

The sentence says, "The old man tells David that in Amazon jungles there are shamans who make the English brew." As to the expression "to make the English brew," I will talk about that in a minute, but now let me explain to you what "Amazon jungles" mean simply because you may have not heard it in English yet. Amazon jungles are the dense, tropical rainforest located in the Amazon basin of South America. Did you know that 60 percent of Amazon jungles are located in Brazil? So the old man, whom he meets in the library, tells David to go to the thick forest in South America to find a special drink. The drink that is called the English Brew.

And as I promised a few minutes ago, now let's focus on the expression "**to make the English Brew**"

"To make the English Brew" means to prepare or create a special drink that supposedly helps someone learn English very quickly. The old man tells David that the shamans in the Amazon jungles are said to create a special drink, a magic drink that may make David speak English. And if he drinks that so-called English brew, he will certainly start speaking true, real, and excellent English.

Now let's have a look at the following sentence like "Now David can understand, speak and even write in English perfectly well." This is a nice, long, and elegant sentence, isn't it? But I want you to focus on the word combination – "**perfectly well**." We use this word combination when we want to say that what you do, you do it very well. When you do something, you do it without mistakes or without any problem. So in our case, after drinking the English Brew, David begins to understand, speak and even write in English very well, without mistakes, and he has no problem with it. David understands English perfectly well. David speaks English perfectly well. David even writes in English perfectly well.

Next, we see the expression "**to go wrong"**

I say "But after three weeks something goes wrong, David starts to forget words." What it means is that a problem or difficulty occurs, happens. So after a few weeks, David starts having problems with his English. He forgets words.

Okay, next is "**to confuse"**

We see it the following sentence, "David confuses English words." It means to mix up or use the wrong English words. So David mixes up English words. David uses the wrong English words. David confuses English words. I think you get the point.

Our next phrase for today is "**to his disappointment**"

You can see in the following sentence “And after two months, to his disappointment, he stops speaking English at all.” "**To his huge, great disappointment**" simply means David begins to feel sad or unhappy because something didn’t happen the way he wanted to. David is sad when he stops being able to speak English.

"**To realize that**" is our next expression in this useful vocabulary lesson.

It comes from the following sentence “David realizes that the English brew doesn’t work very well.” And again here we have another fantastic phrase "to work very well," which I am going to talk about a little bit later, but now let me focus on the expression "to realize that." "To realize that" means to understand that or to begin to see something that you haven’t seen or understood before. So David understands that the English Brew is not a good solution. He begins to see that the English Brew cannot solve his problem. David realizes that the English Brew doesn’t work very well. The English Brew doesn’t work very well actually means that the special drink is not effective or successful. It works, but it is not effective. It is not successful. It is not helpful. David finds out that the drink didn't help him learn English permanently.

Next, we see the word "**a hack**" A hack is a trick or solution to achieve something more easily.

In the story, I say, “David realizes that there is no hack for learning English faster, better, and cheaper.” As you understand, David begins to see that there isn’t any trick for learning English quickly. He understands that there is no hack for learning English quickly.

And our final phrase for today is "**to go back to**"

You can find it in the sentence like “David decides to go back to a good time-tested and natural way to learn English.” Well, "to go back to" simply means to return, right? What I am trying to say here is that David chooses to return to a proven, traditional method for learning English. In other words, David decided to learn English in a normal and proven way instead of looking for quick fixes. He stops trying to solve the problem with English quickly using apps; he goes back to proven, which means time-tested, methods for learning English. When I say that, I am supposed to say that he goes to the true, real method of learning which is a teacher-student method, eye contact, emotions, and so on. He stops trying to quickly fix his problem with English. David understands that if he wants to achieve good results, he absolutely must invest time, money, and energy, and it is not easy.

Okay, this is the end of the vocabulary lesson. See you for the mini-story lesson. Bye-bye.

*Hello, this is Alex. I am super excited that you continue learning English with me. Welcome to our mini- story for “**The English Brew**” In this lesson, I am going to ask a lot of questions, and I am going to answer them. Your job is to listen to the questions and answer them. You should be in the process. If you don’t understand the question immediately, the answer will help you to get the idea. You should practice your English by answering simple questions. This is one of the best ways to improve your grammar, to better your pronunciation, and to perfect your speaking skills. Let’s get started!*

Ten years ago, David was a young man. He wanted to speak English. In fact, he had to speak true, real, and excellent English. David needed English to get a better life.

What did David want to do ten years ago?

David wanted to speak English.

Did he want to or did he have to speak English ten years ago?

He had to. David had to speak English ten years ago.

What kind of English did David have to speak?

He had to speak true, real, and excellent English.

David needed English to change his living conditions?

Yes, exactly. He needed English to change his living conditions. He needed English to get a better life.

Why did David have to speak English?

To get a better job. To have a better house. David needed English to get a better life.

But David had a problem. His problem was that he didn't want to learn English like children did in schools. He didn't want to have boring English lessons. He didn't want to do homework. He wanted to learn English differently.

Ten years ago, what was David's problem?

David's problem was that he didn't want to learn English like children did in school.

Did David want to have boring English lessons?

No, he did not. David didn't want to have boring English lessons. He wanted to have interesting and exciting lessons.

Did David want to do homework?

No, not David. He did not want to do homework.

David wanted to learn English in a new way, right?

Yes, that's right. He wanted to learn English in a new way. He wanted to do it differently.

How did David want to learn English?

In a new way. Differently. David wanted to learn English differently not like he did it before when he went to school.

David really wanted to know if there was a technology, an app (application) or a pill for learning English faster, better, and cheaper. So he asked this question of everyone he knew: his relatives, his friends and his co-workers. He even went online and did a lot of research there, but unfortunately, he couldn't find the answer. He felt angry. He felt frustrated. He felt upset.

Did David want to pay big money for learning English?

No, he didn't.

Did David want to spend time on learning English?

No, not David. He didn't want to do that. David wanted to have an app for learning English faster, better and cheaper.

What did David want to know?

He wanted to know if there was a technology, an app, or a pill for learning English faster, better, and cheaper.

What did David do about it?

David asked this question of everyone he knew, but he couldn't get the answer.

Did David ask his relatives and friends about a magic pill for learning English?

Yes, he did.

Did David ask his co-workers about a secret application for learning English?

Yes, of course. He asked his co-workers.

What else did David do?

He even went online and did a lot of research.

David studied the question carefully?

Yes, he did. He studied the question carefully online. He did a lot of research.

Did David discover the truth about a new technology for learning English?

Unfortunately, he did not. After doing some research online, he didn't find the answer.

How did David feel?

Don't ask. He felt angry. He felt frustrated. He felt upset.

Why did he feel like that?

He felt angry, frustrated, and upset because he didn't find the answer to his question.

What was the question?

If there was an application that could help to learn English faster, better, and cheaper.

Ah, he wanted to find the magic pill, right?

Yes, correct. He wanted to find the easy way to learning English.

What did David do then?

Then he said, "Okay, I will go to the library. If people don't know the answer, and the Internet doesn't know it, maybe books can give what I need." So he went to the library. Every day he read many books hoping to find the answer to his question. One day he met an old man at the library. The old man told David that in Amazon jungles there were shamans who made the English brew. The old man said, "If you drink the English brew, you will certainly start speaking true, real and excellent English."

Where did David go? To the restaurant?

No, not to the restaurant. He went to the library.

Why did David go to the library? Why?

Because he didn't get the answer from people, and he didn't find the answer on the Internet.

Did David think that the books would help him find the answer?

Yes, he did. David thought that the books would give him the answer.

What was his question? Remember?

His question was: "Is there an application that could help him learn English faster, better, and cheaper?"

What did David do in the library?

In the library, he read many books hoping to find the answer to his question.

Did he find the answer to his question?

No, he did not. But he met an old man who told David where he could go to find the answer.

Oh, really? It's interesting. Where did the old man tell him to go?

To Amazon jungles. The old man told David that there were shamans there who made the English brew.

The English brew. Wow! This is what David was looking for, right?

Yes, that's right. The magic drink that could help David start speaking English immediately.

Did David listen to the old man?

Yes, he did. David went to Amazon jungles and he found the Shamans. The Shamans gave him the English brew. David drank the English brew and fell asleep. When he woke up, he immediately began to speak true, real, and excellent English. David was extremely happy.

Who did David find in Amazon jungles?

The Shamans. David found the Shamans in Amazon jungles.

The Shamans said to him, "If you want to have the English Brew, you must have money."

David asked, "Excuse me? Money? "

They said, "Yes, money. We can't just give the English Brew to you for free. It's our business. We want to improve our living conditions. That's why we make the English Brew, and we sell the English Brew. This is our business."

Of course, David didn't want to pay, but he had to. David was not stupid. He knew that if you want to have something, you must have money. So he paid for the English Brew how much the Shamans told him to pay.

What happened then?

Then David drank the English Brew and he fell down to the ground.

Did he die?

No, he didn't die. He fell asleep. After drinking the English Brew David fell asleep.

When David woke up, did he start speaking excellent English?

Yes, he did. When David woke up, he immediately began to speaking true, real and excellent English.

Was David happy or sad?

Of course, he was happy. He was extremely happy.

He returned home. David could understand, speak, and even write in English perfectly well. But after three weeks something went wrong, David started to forget words. He confused English words. His English was getting worse and worse. And after two months, to his huge disappointment, he stopped speaking English at all. David realized that the English brew didn't work very well.

When David returned he could understand, speak, even write in perfect English, right?

Yes, correct. When David returned home, he could understand, speak and even write in English perfectly well.

Did David understand, speak, and write in English terribly?

No, not terribly. Perfectly well. When David returned home, he could understand, speak, and even write in English perfectly well.

But what went wrong?

He started to forget words. He confused words.

Was his English getting worse and worse?

Yes, it was. To his big disappointment, his English was getting worse and worse and after two months David stopped speaking English at all.

After how many months did David stop speaking English?

After two months. After two months David stopped speaking English at all.

Could David say a word in English?

No, he could not. To his disappointment, he couldn't say a word in English. He stopped speaking English at all.

Oh, my God. The English Brew didn't work out for David, right?

Yes, that's right. It didn't work out for him very well.

David realized that there was no hack for learning English faster, better and cheaper. He decided to go back to a good time-tested and natural way to learn English.

What did David realize?

He realized that there was no hack for learning English faster, better, and cheaper.

Who realized that?

David did. David realized that there was no easy trick for learning English faster, better, and cheaper.

Did David give up? Did he stop learning English?

No, not David. David decided to go back to a good time-tested and natural way to learn English.

Why did he go back to a natural way to learn English?

He did it because he realized that there was no easy trick for learning English faster, better and cheaper.

Well done, David. What did David do finally?

Finally, he called Alex and he said, "Alex, I want to speak true, real, and excellent English. Please, teach me."

What did Alex say to David?

Alex said, "Okay."

This is the end of the mini-story for "The English Brew" See you in Alex Says show. Have a great day!

Hi there! This is Alex, and you are listening to my little English show called Alex Says. In these audiopodcasts, I am going to introduce great, fantastic, and gorgeous ideas on the very topic you hear from the stories in this English course called "Your Journey to the Next Level. I am going to talk about the best minds of this planet and share with you what they had to say. I am sure that their ideas will certainly help you change the way you think about English — and will help you start speaking better than you are doing now. Let's get started.

In today's show, I am focusing on how to learn English and why many English learners today cannot really get what they want. They want to start speaking English confidently and powerfully. In other words, they want to use English *without thinking*. This is great! But why — after so many years of learning English —they still cannot speak English easily, confidently, and powerfully? Let's find out.

Imagine yourself speaking true, real, and excellent English. Everybody understands what you say. Everybody smiles and respects you. You make good contracts and you have fun with the process. You enjoy every minute of speaking excellent English. This is great, isn't it? This is what you have to create in your head every time you decide to speak English.

I want you to view your English learning as a **journey**. If you view learning as an interesting, exciting, and fantastic journey, everything will change. It is like traveling somewhere you have always wanted to go. It is exciting. It is a little bit scary. It is tiresome — but it is *always* rewarding.

I have been learning and teaching languages for many years. And you know, every time I decide on a new language journey — for example, I am going to take an Italian language journey — I feel a little bit uncomfortable, nervous, and anxious. Why? Because it is always scary to learn new things. It is always risky. But because I have done it before — I mean I have learned Spanish, French, and English — I know *how* to do it. As you know better, you do better, as Maya Angelou used to say. Yes, I always go to people who have already been *there* — where I am just going to go. I go to the best. I know: if you want to learn new things, and if you want to learn them quickly and better, I absolutely must seek the best. This is my mantra, my religion in learning new things.

The first name that comes to my mind is Maya Angelou. She was a great woman. I have learned a great deal from her. She has always been a great library for me. Maya Angelou was a professor, a writer, and a phenomenal woman. Moreover, Maya was a polyglot — she could speak seven languages fluently. For me, she has always been a great example of a true, real, and curious learner. Let me share with you some of her ideas on learning language and education in general.

Here we go.

"A great enemy of speaking isn't your lack of time or lack of talent — it is being interrupted by other people. Not the ability to learn. No, not at all. The worst enemy of learning is constant interruptions of the imagination — the constant interruption of that process."

"Art is the way we communicate with each other. We can't run before we can walk. Why do we think we can just press the magic button to get or to start speaking English or Italian like a native? That's just like trying to run before we can walk."

As you understand, that is not the way we start speaking a language. We have to go through the learning process in order to perfect it — in order to make it perfect.

Once Maya Angelou was asked: *"It is great to be fluent in 7 languages, to be a university professor, to be the most widely read Black female writer in the world. The question is: how did you do it?"*

Maya said: *"I hadn't stopped to read."*

Of course, you may say: *"Lots of people keep reading."*

Maya would say: *"Now wait — you are not listening. When one reads — if you do — you can truly begin the process of educating yourself. Not just about who's and where's and what time and the sights, but really to understand who one is. That is the value."*

I love it. Let me just sum it up and help you understand the ideas given in this short passage better.

Maya Angelou is focusing here on **three things**. Let me walk you through them again and make it easier for you to understand.

First — Interruptions Are the Enemy

Many language learners cannot succeed at speaking languages because they are interrupted by different forces. I mean they are interrupted by people around them, by their telephones, by mass media. When a learner decides to gain a new language, he absolutely must **be in the process**.

To learn faster and better, you should find a quiet and comfortable place. It can be a room or even a library. Put devices away — things like your phone. Create a good, positive atmosphere for learning. An atmosphere where you feel good and nobody is going to interrupt you while you learn. **Learning is only possible when you concentrate on what you are doing right now.**

Second — There Is No Magic Button

There is no magic button that you can press to start speaking English, French, or Italian like a native — easily, confidently, and powerfully. No. No one can make it. Simply because **the magic button doesn't exist**. You always have to go through the process of learning to make it better. And it is always challenging, scary, new, and risky. It takes time, money, and energy. But it is **always rewarding.**

Third — Reading Is the Key

It is no secret that a good reader is a good speaker — but a **great** reader is a **great** speaker. Reading has to become your best friend. You have to read every book your eyes can see and your hands can grab. You have to become first a good reader, and then a great reader. Only reading helps your imagination work perfectly well. Reading makes you think. It makes you create new images and generate new ideas. And it changes the way you think, speak, and act. Become a fantastic reader, and you will become a brilliant speaker. When you read, you educate yourself in order to educate others — as Maya Angelou liked to say.

This is, by the way, what I always do. I go to my room. I create a very comfortable and quiet atmosphere. I put always aside my telephone because I don't want anyone to interrupt me while learning, writing, or wanting something. And I do one more thing: **I always put a bottle of pure water on my table.** Yes, water.

When you learn things, you think, right? You use your brain. Your brain consists mostly of water. Your brain loves water. Your brain cannot operate very well without water. And if I feel that something goes wrong — for example, "I cannot concentrate anymore" — I drink water. Immediately, my brain begins to operate better and I learn more quickly and better.

But what if you are **not** a reader, but you are a **listener**? This is what I am, to tell you the truth. I don't read books. No — but I **listen** to them. I am a big listener. I buy audiobooks and I listen to them. And when I listen to them, I don't just sit down and listen. No. I walk. Yes, literally go out. I put in my earphones and I listen to books. I use my **ears**, not my **years**, learning new things about the world. Isn't that great?

But if you learn things better and feel good and comfortable when you **read** about them, do what you do. Stay with reading. It is okay.

By the way, you can learn more about Maya Angelou from my English course called **Super English Course: Speak Like a Native**.

Okay, this is the end of today's English show *Alex Says*. I hope you found it useful, and this will certainly help you learn English quicker and better — and not only English. You can learn **anything** you want quicker and better when you know **why, how** and **what** to do it.

I wish you good luck. Take care of yourself — and of each other.

See you soon.

Hello, my superstar English learner! This is Alex again. I hope you are doing well today. Welcome to our second lesson called "A Heavy Accent". Let's begin!

Jimmy is a boy of 16 years of age. His family moves from America to China. He has a serious problem. What is his problem? When Jimmy speaks Chinese nobody understands him. Why? Because Jimmy has a heavy accent. He speaks Chinese with a heavy, strong accent. Jimmy wants to fix his accent. He desperately needs to fix it. Why? Because of his heavy accent Jimmy cannot find a good job to help his family.

One day, Jimmy is speaking to an old Chinese lady and she says, "To get a good job, you have to get rid of your heavy accent. You should find Mr. Pronunciation. He is a wizard who can fix his heavy, strong and foreign accent."

The next morning Jimmy undertakes a journey in the quest of a great master Pronunciation. After a few weeks he finally finds the master Pronunciation.

Jimmy says, "Master, can you please help me get rid of my heavy accent?"

The master listens to Jimmy and says, "Your case is very serious. I can't help you alone. Go and bring my two elder sisters Curiosity and Diligence and my younger brother Focus. Then I can help you."

Jimmy immediately goes looking for the wizard's family. In the mountains Jimmy finds two sisters Curiosity and Diligence locked in a tall tower (which is) guarded by a huge dragon by the name of Procrastination. The dragon Procrastination says to Jimmy, "My dear new friend, I will release the sisters Curiosity and Diligence, but not today. I will do it tomorrow or after tomorrow or in a week." Jimmy fights the dragon. He defeats the dragon. From the sisters Curiosity and Diligence, he learns that their younger Brother Focus is in captivity of a witch called Laziness. When they find the witch, she tries to tempt Jimmy. She says, "Lay down your sword and shield and study war no more. Relax and eat the bread of idleness." But Jimmy resists the temptation and rescues Brother Focus.

When they return to the wizard Pronunciation, he says "Jimmy, now it is time to fix your heavy accent."

They begin to work. Each of them contributes to Jimmy a very important element. Sister Curiosity gives Jimmy the interest to learn new things. Sister Diligence gives Jimmy care and attention. Brother Focus gives Jimmy concentration. Now with all these three elements: interest, care and concentration Jimmy practices a lot under the watchful eye of the master Pronunciation. After six months Jimmy gets rid of his heavy accent. Now he speaks Chinese with no accent at all. He finds a job easily. Jimmy is happy. He understands that together is always better. He understands that no one can make it alone.

Okay, this is the end of the story for "A Heavy Accent". Now you know how to improve your English accent. You need to be curious, diligent and focused every time when you listen, read and speak English. And you have to fight procrastination and laziness. That's it. See you next time. And have a good day!

Hello, my superstar English learner! This is Alex your English teacher. I hope that you are having a nice day today. Welcome to the vocabulary lesson for "A Heavy Accent".

Let me start with the name of the story which is **A Heavy Accent**. I am sure you have a picture in your head what these two words mean, but let me explain it to you again so that you could have a

better picture. From the story you know that Jimmy has a serious problem. His problem is his heavy accent of Chinese. As to the word heavy everything is clear, right? Here heavy means strong and bad or not easy to understand. Now let's focus on the word accent. What is accent? Accent is the way in which people pronounce words in a particular area, country or social group. In our case, Jimmy has a strong English accent when he speaks Chinese. Jimmy doesn't pronounce words the way people in China do. He speaks Chinese with his English accent. That's why nobody understands him. Jimmy has a heavy accent.

Next we have the expression **to fix one's accent**

If someone has an accent it can bring some difficulties in understanding people. And who needs problems? So a very logical thing to do is to fix the accent. So to fix one's accent simply means to repair your accent. So Jim has to repair his accent so that other people can understand him better.

Our next word for this vocabulary lesson is **desperately**

It comes from the sentences He desperately needs that. Here desperately means extremely or very much. So Jim extremely needs to fix his accent. He needs to repair his accent very much. Jim desperately needs that.

We move on the story and we see another very useful expression which is **to get rid of something or someone**

The sentence says, "To get a job, you have to get rid of your heavy accent." So to get rid of something or someone means to free yourself of something bad or annoying. When you stop having something that makes your life more difficult or other people's life. Simply to say you become free from something that stops you from getting what you want to. Jimmy has to free himself from his heavy, strong accent so that he can get a job to help his family. He has to get rid of his heavy accent to get a job.

Our next word for today is **a wizard**

The woman says to Jimmy to find Mr. Pronunciation. He is a wizard who can fix his heavy, strong, foreign accent.

Here a wizard is someone who is an expert at fixing people's pronunciation. So Jimmy has to find Mr. Procuration who is an expert at fixing other people's pronunciation. Only he can help Jimmy repair his heavy accent so that people can understand his better. Mr. Pronunciation knows who to repair his problem with accent because he is an expert on pronunciation.

Next we have the sentences like The next morning Jimmy undertakes a journey in the quest of a great master.

To undertake a journey means to start a journey or to have a journey.

In the quest of someone means trying to find someone. So the sentence says that Jimmy decides to start a journey to find a great master. He undertakes a journey in the quest of a great master. And of course, a great master is Mr. Pronunciation who is an expert at fixing other people's pronunciation.

Moving forward, we have two fantastic words like "curiosity" and "diligence". In the story these are the names of two sisters. But their names mean more than just the names. They are not just names they are two extremely important qualities that everybody absolutely must have and or develop in order to live a better life.

The master listens to Jimmy and says, "Your case is very serious. I can't help you alone/on my own. Go and bring my two elder sisters **Curiosity** and **Diligence** and my younger brother Focus. Then I can help you."

Next we have the expression to be guarded by a huge dragon named Procrastination. It means that the dragon watches the two sisters and he makes certain they do not escape from that tall tower. So the dragon is very watchful and he never sleeps. The two sisters Curiosity and Diligence cannot escape from the tall tower. They are locked in the tower and are guarded by a huge dragon. I am sure you get the idea.

From the story you know that Jim defeats the dragon. **To defeat** simply means to win against someone in a fight, war, or competition. In our case, Jim wins against the dragon in a fight. He defeats the dragon. Jim kills the dragon. The dragon is dead.

Okay, we move on and we see the word to tempt.

The sentence says that the witch tries to tempt Jim. Here **to tempt** means to make someone want to have or do something, especially something that is unnecessary or wrong. Simply to say, the witch is trying to make Jim not fight against evil things. She wants Jim to give up. She wants Jim to stop fighting. That is why she says, "Lay down your sward and shield and study war no more". What the witch is saying is that don't fight, put your weapon down. Don't fight and never practice fighting against evil.

And then she says, "**Eat the bread of idleness**" which actually means relax and don't worry about your future. Just don't think about it. Just do what other people do. Eat, drink, dance and sleep. In other words, don't fight against evil simply because it is powerful and you cannot win. Just accept it as a truth and keep on living. Of course, you understand that it is not what Jim wants and needs to do in order to get what he wants. Jim doesn't want to give up and he doesn't listen to the witch. He doesn't put his sword down and shield. No, not Jim. He resists the temptation and rescues the Brother Focus.

So next we have the verb to rescue. Here **rescue** means he helps the Brother Focus get out of dangerous, harmful and unpleasant situation. Jim takes the Brother Focus away from the witch. Now the Brother Focus is free again, because Jim rescues him.

Are you still with me? Are you still here? I hope you are still listening to me. I am saying that because our next word is the final one. And what is that word? Right! **Contribute to**. This is, by the way, one of my favourite words in English and I deliberately use this word in my course so that you remember it better. Repetition is the mother of skill. So the sentence says, "Each of them contributes to Jim a very important element". As you may already guess, **to contribute** simply means to give or to help. The sisters and the brother gives Jim something very important. Each of them gives Jim something that Jim cannot become successful. Each of them contributes to Jim a very important element. Without them Jim cannot fix his pronunciation. I am talking about: care, attention and concentration. All of these three elements help Jim success faster and finally under the watchful eyes of the master start speaking English with fantastic pronunciation.

Okay, my superstar English learners this is the end of the vocabulary lesson for the story "A Heavy Accent". I would like to leave you today with the message which is? Right! No one can succeed alone. We all need people to succeed. See you in the mini-story lesson. Have a wonderful day!

Hello, this is Alex. I am super excited that you continue learning English with me. Welcome to our mini- story for "A Heavy Accent" In this lesson, I am going to ask a lot of questions, and I am going to answer them. Your job is to listen to the questions and answer them with me or after me. You should be in the process. If you don't understand the question immediately, the answer will help you to get the idea. You should practice your English by answering simple questions. This is one of the best ways to improve your grammar, to better your pronunciation, and to perfect your speaking skills. Let's get started!

Jimmy was a boy of 16 years of age. His family moved from America to China. He had a serious problem. When Jimmy spoke Chinese nobody understood him, because Jimmy had a heavy accent.

How old was Jimmy when his family moved to China?

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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