

Institute of Sciences, Humanities & Liberal Studies

Department of Languages

Topic: Importance of learning English

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Learning English is **important** and people all over the world decide to study it as a second language. Many countries include English as a second language in their school syllabus and children start learning English at a young age.

However, **do you know why** learning English is so important? Here are ten good reasons to take an English language course.

1. English is the most commonly spoken language in the world. One out of five people can speak or at least understand English!
2. English is the language of science, of aviation, 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 official language of 53 countries. That is a lot of people to meet and speak to.
4. English is spoken as a first language by around 400 million people around the world.
5. English is the language of the media industry. If you speak English, you won't need to rely on translations and subtitles anymore to enjoy your favorite books, songs, films and TV shows.
6. English is also the language of the Internet. Many websites are written in English – you will be able to understand them and to take part in forums and discussions.
7. English is based on a simple alphabet and it is fairly quick and easy to learn compared to other languages.
8. English is not only useful – it gives you a lot of satisfaction. Making progress feels great. You will enjoy learning English, if you remember that every hour you spend gets you closer to perfection.

9. Since English is spoken in so many different countries there are thousands of schools around the world that offer programs in English. If you speak English, there're lots of opportunities for you to find an appropriate school and course to suit your academic needs.

10. Because it's fun! By learning English, you will also learn about other cultures. 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.

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Topic: Phonetics

Compiled by: Prof. Mamta Amin

Introduction:

Language has a very important social purpose, because it is mainly used for linguistic communication. A language can be used in two ways for the purpose of communication. It can be spoken or written. Linguistics is a systematic study of language. Phonetics is a branch of linguistics and it is the branch dealing with the medium of speech. It deals with the production, transmission and reception of the sounds of human speech.

Speech sounds are very broadly divided into two categories, namely, Vowels and Consonants. There are 20 Vowel sounds and 24 Consonant sounds.

Vowels are further divided into two categories that are Monophthongs (Pure Vowels) and Diphthongs (Vowel Glides).

A vowel is described taking into account the following criteria:

- (a.) The part of the tongue raised during its articulation. (Front, Central, Back)
- (b.) The height to which it is raised. (Close, Half-close, Half-open, Open)
- (c.) The position of the lips (Unrounded and Rounded)

Pure Vowels: 12

1. Front Vowels: /ɪ /, /i: /, /e /, /æ /
Eg:- lid, lead, said, sad
2. Central Vowels: /ə /, /ʌ /, /ɜ: /
Eg:- alert, shut, shirt
3. Back Vowels: /u /, /u: /, /ʊ /, /ɔ: /, /ɑ: /
Eg:- full, fool, cot, caught, calm

Diphthongs: 8

During the articulation of a diphthong, the tongue starts in the position required for the articulation of a particular vowel and moves in the direction of the position required for the articulation of a different vowel. Hence it is also called a vowel glide.

- Glide towards /ɪ / : /eɪ /, /aɪ /, /ɔɪ /
Eg:- late, site, toil

- Glide towards / ə / : /uə/, /ɪə/, /eə/

Eg:- **poor, fear, air**

- Glide towards /u/: /au/, /əu/

Eg:- **shout, open**

There are 24 consonant sounds in English. They are described in terms of their articulation.

- **Plosives:** Sounds with Complete Closure and Sudden Release.

/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/

E.g.: **pin, bin, tin, din, kin, gun**

- **Affricates:** Sounds with Complete Closure and Slow Release.

/tʃ/, /dʒ/

E.g.: **chin, jam**

- **Nasal:** Sounds with Complete Oral closure.

/m/, /n/, /ŋ/

E.g.: **sum, sun, sung**

- **Trill/Roll/Flap:** Sounds with Intermittent closure.

/r/

E.g.: **red, very**

- **Fricative:** Sounds with Close approximation

/f/, /v/, /θ /, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/

E.g.: **five, vine, thin, then, sip, zip, sheep, measure, hat**

- **Lateral:** Sounds with Partial closure

/l/

E.g.: **love**

- **Semivowel/Frictionless continuant:** Sounds with Open approximation.

/w/, /j/

E.g.: **watch, yes**