

## SOME THOUGHTS ON LEARNING ENGLISH (I)

Many students ask me the “secrets” to successful English learning, and I always tell them that there are no “secrets”, but there are several factors that may affect their learning outcome.

In this short article, I’ll talk about what I consider to be the most important factor: *motivation*.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you excited about learning English?
- Are you driven by a true inner desire to improve your English?
- Do you enjoy the learning process?

If you answered “yes” to all of the above questions, then I think you have already taken a big step in the right direction. In other words, if you are intrinsically motivated to learn English, then you are more likely to be successful. Conversely, if you are “forced” to learn English, or if you just learn it because you have nothing else to do, then chances are, you will not be motivated enough to learn the language effectively and successfully.

Motivation plays a huge part in the success of any learning outcome. How can you get yourself motivated in English learning? Here is some of my advice:

### Develop a genuine interest towards learning English

Learning a language is interesting and educational – you learn not only how to use the language, but also about the people who speak the language including their cultures, history, foods, etc. It opens up a whole new world for you! Aren’t you excited?

### Don’t say “it’s difficult”; instead, say “it’s challenging!”

Many students say “English is so difficult!” Don’t say that! It doesn’t help you at all. It will only slow you down and get you dejected. Instead, say “Hey, learning English is challenging! I love challenges!” Can you see the change in tone – from negative (difficult) to positive (challenging)? Having a positive attitude is very important when you are learning.

### Reward yourself

Be nice to yourself. After studying English for an hour, for example, get yourself something nice to eat! Or pat yourself on the shoulder and say, “Well done!” Feel good about the effort that you put into the learning process. Be proud of yourself.

### Be realistic and persistent

Learning a language involves a lot of effort and time. Don’t think that you can speak good English after only a few months or even a year, especially when you have limited opportunities to practice what you have learned. So don’t be disappointed – keep going! Never quit!

### Think of all the things you can do if you can speak English

Imagine yourself being able to speak good English – think of all the things you can do! You can travel more freely, you can listen to and understand English songs, you can watch movies without subtitles, you can read original novels in English, you can take courses from English universities, you can get a job in an international company, you can make friends with English speaking people...

### Find a good teacher who makes the learning process interesting and enjoyable

A good teacher makes a big difference in your motivation to learn. Learning a language should be enjoyable and interesting, and the lessons should reflect that. I will talk more about finding a good teacher in my next article.