

HOW TO LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

4 LEARNING TECHNIQUES



How to Learn a Foreign Language? 4 Learning Techniques

In the course of time a wide range of language learning techniques has been developed and the variety of those methods seems astounding. Due to technical progress, these days one can have a lesson whenever and wherever they feel like and choose any mode of study. However, before making the choice one may face a serious problem, i.e. what method can really meet one's demands and satisfy one's needs. Today it happens to be pretty hard to figure out whether all the new tricks will turn out of any use. We will analyze and compare the main methods of learning foreign languages to make your choice easier.

1. One-to-one classes VS group classes. The main issue of concern for those who want to study a foreign language is what form of classes to choose: private tuition or group lessons. There is no direct answer as to which of the two language learning

forms is more efficient and gives better results. A number of factors, i.e. time, schedule and budget, should be considered while making a choice. It still rests with an individual to decide what is suitable for him and what his real goals are.

Private classes are good for those who:

- are reserved and shy by nature and feel uncomfortable and insecure communicating with other people;
- have specific needs and demands, limited amount of time and want to practice a certain aspect of the language (e.g. to pay more attention to grammar or certain vocabulary etc.);
- want to prepare for tests, international exams, interviews;
- want to get their teacher's undivided attention and control.

Although individual classes are suitable for students of any level, before taking one-to-one classes you

should carefully consider what goals you are eager to achieve and explain to your tutor what exactly you expect from your classes.

However, not every person is carved out for having classes face to face with a teacher. Some need to share their views and exchange opinions with others during the lesson. Individual classes may seem boring for those who are looking for more counteraction and want to make new friends.

Group lessons are better for those who are looking to improve and develop their communication skills, as group lessons presuppose having more oral practice in different forms, i.e. pair work, group work, discussion, scenario etc. Working in a group might also enable one to break the language barrier faster due to more cooperation between students.

2. English through movies

Can one actually watch a movie and practice a foreign language at the same time? Is it possible to improve one's level of a foreign language by only watching a movie? Not as easy as you think.

Some learners have a general delusion that they can get better at listening or understanding native speakers just by turning on the subtitles. But, unfortunately, it doesn't always work that way. The first thing you should be aware of is the more words you know the easier you understand the language. Second, if you actually want to study through films in the original you should treat this process as the actual language class not as entertainment.



Here are some tips on how to watch a film in the original and learn.

- Take a film you have already seen, so you are familiar with the plot, as you don't need to get distracted by it.
- Break the film into short parts and take a break after each one in order to analyze it.
- Watch a fragment of the film and put down all the words and expressions you don't understand, turn on subtitles if necessary. Try to understand the context in which these words were used.
- Try to discuss it with your friends in a foreign language

3. Learning through reading

Reading is an important part of language learning. When combined with other forms of language practice it can help you achieve great results and remarkably enhance your vocabulary. In this respect, any kind of reading can be useful. You can find interesting words and expressions almost in every source.

Here are some tips on learning through reading.

- Don't forget to make notes while reading, put down expressions that seem interesting or are not clear enough.
- Remember that any reading can do you good, just squeeze the maximum out of it.
- Read different types and genres of printed production to get familiar with different writing styles.
- Don't concentrate on classic literature only. You want to sound smart not obsolete.

- Resort to modern authors or entertainment magazines to pick up new hot and slang expressions.
- Read more articles on different subjects for more sophisticated vocabulary.
- 4. Classes with native speakers.

What can be better than having an opportunity to learn a foreign language with a native speaker? To tell the truth, classes with a native speaker can't always be the key to success in mastering a foreign language. Everything depends on what one expects from these classes. Sometimes classes with a non-native teacher can be of better use. A teacher who speaks the same mother tongue with a student can be a perfect guide through all the traps in a foreign language that a native speaker might not be aware of.

A non-native teacher is:

- better for beginner students;
- better at introducing grammar and vocabulary;
- better at analyzing and correcting mistakes.

A native teacher is:

- better for those who already have good command of a foreign lan-

- guage;
- better for developing and improving spontaneous communication skills;
- better for improving listening comprehension skills.

Learning a foreign language should always rest on a wise combination of all types of practice. At Star Talk School we know how to make all these methods work successfully for our students. We are perfectly aware of the fact that being a one trick pony will never lead to any progress and development. We try to make our classes exciting and entertaining including all types of activities. It is very important to mix and match on your way to mastering a language. One should never be afraid to experiment with different forms of studying.

Good luck learning foreign languages and stay tuned!



Yulia Shmigirilova,

Leading Methodologist
Star Talk Language School

