

SEMINAR PAPER

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- LEARNING ENGLISH OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM -

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Introduction

English language is playing an important part in our lives. Approximately 375 million people speak English as their first language. English today is probably the third largest language by number of native speakers, after Mandarin Chinese and Spanish. However, when combining native and non-native speakers it is probably the most commonly spoken language in the world, though possibly second to a combination of the Chinese languages. Estimates that include second language speakers vary greatly from 470 million to over a billion depending on how literacy or mastery is defined and measured.

Because English is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a "world language". While English is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language around the world. Some linguists (such as David Graddol) believe that it is no longer the exclusive cultural property of "native English speakers", but is rather a language that is absorbing aspects of cultures worldwide as it continues to grow. It is, by international treaty, the official language for aerial and maritime communications. English is an official language of the United Nations and many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee.

In Slovenia where English language is not the primary language, it is important to learn English for a number of reasons. First of all, many English-speaking individuals tour other countries and they may not speak the native language of that country, so it is necessary for them to speak to others who can speak English. Then again, many wish to learn English because they are hoping to visit or even live in an English-speaking country someday.

Learning how to speak English in a non-English country can be quite challenging. Where those learning how to speak English in English-speaking countries have a lot of resources to their disposal such as television, radio, and libraries that are packed full of books written in English, the resident of a non-English country does not have that luxury. That is why it is important to explore other options. That's why it's good to use extracurricular activities to learn English language outside classroom. There are many ways, options, strategies to learn English language and in my seminar paper I will try to show and explain them.

Usually the English language we learn in school isn't enough so we need to find other ways, options to improve our knowledge of English language. We can learn English while listen to the radio, songs, while we watch English movies, when we read English books, magazines, when we use internet, DVD s, and while visiting English learning camps or playing games. There are many options to improve English language so we must choose the one option which suits us best and then our knowledge of English language can always improve.

Learning English while listening to radio / LISTEN TO THE RADIO

People can learn and understand English language when listening to English radio stations. We can learn new words and expressions by hearing them frequently Find an English radio station that you like and listen regularly. There is a broad range to choose from such as Radio One, BBC with DJs from all over the British Isles with their various accents, to LBC which stands for London's Biggest Conversation, this station has discussions and phone-ins, it never plays music. When people make call to the radio they discuss about different things and with different English accents, that's why listening to that discussion radio is a good thing because listeners can learn different accents, words and get familiar with English language.

Advantages of learning English when listening to the radio

For people who learn English language, radio can bring lots of advantages. When listening to the radio conversations you can hear and learn the native speakers and their different accents, and when hearing them on a daily bases the listening can improve our speaking considerably.

Disadvantages of learning English when listening to the radio

Listening to the radio can bring some disadvantages to the people who learn English language. Problem in Slovenia is that we cant reach the radios from United Kingdom by radio waves, so if we want to learn English language from English radio we must find it on internet and many people cant use internet or they don't have access it. Even when people start to listen to English radio it can bring them problems, because native speakers talk to fast, they have different accents which are hard to understand. Learning English from radio can be boring to, because other things are happening around us and we cannot focus on the radio 100%.

Some interesting English radio stations

<http://www.zozanga.com/internetstuff/englishradiostations.htm>

Learning English while watching TV, movies

Best way to learn English or different language is by watching foreign movies, cartoons, reality shows, soap operas, documentaries, etc. When you watch movie, show, and documentary on the TV or on your personal computer you can hear a foreign language and on the bottom you can read translations or subtitles in your native language. While watching movie u hear English words, but u can read translation of those words on the bottom of the screen so with time u can easily learn language by connecting the English words with your native translated words.

There are many TV programs worth watching to learn English language like Cartoon Network, TNT, SKY 1,2 and so there are our Slovenian programs like POP TV, TV 3, Kanal A which show movies in English language and on bottom with Slovenian subtitles. It is good for beginners who learn English that subtitles are turned on, but when you get to know English better I suggest to turn subtitles off.

Advantages of learning English when watching the movies

Everyone loves watching cartoons, movies, television, because we watch them in our free time and because the motion pictures are interesting and we can spend our time faster and even so we can learn English language while watching.

Children like to watch cartoons and in time while watching they can connect the content with the speech and that's how they can start to learn English language. The cartoons can get children occupied for some time without them getting bored, so while watching cartoons they can combine fun and the learning of English language.

While watching movies or documentaries children can learn other things like history, what is going on in the world at exact time so movies and shows are good learning English language and for other things the child would need in his future.

Disadvantages of learning English when watching the movies

When watching movies with subtitles it can happen that translation in the subtitles is wrong or inappropriate so that can be misleading.

It is very irresponsible to let the child watch movie without their parents, because they can get influenced by inappropriate words and use of violence in the movies.

The movies or cartoons can be very addictive to children, because they are always in front of television and they cannot do other things like going out and play with their friends.

Learning English language while listening to English music, songs

You can Increase English Proficiency when you learn English songs. Whether you have a little child who is trying to learn a foreign language, or you are trying to learn one yourself, you should not underestimate the power of song. The use of music and rhythm is an ancient way to teach new languages and surprisingly enough, it is a good technique that can be integrated into lessons. You'll find that when you start singing songs in a language that is foreign to you that your ability to pronounce the words and put sentences and grammar together becomes much improved. Learning English and other languages through song can make the entire process significantly easier for all.

You can listen to the songs with reading the texts and learn about the word meanings, making this a excellent lessons for language beginners of all ages. You can also use the format used at this site to listen to specific lines over again until you and your child are sure you know what you are hearing. When you are looking for a way to introduce a child to a language, why not do it through song? The rhythms and rhyme scheme all contribute towards getting your child to a place where he or she can feel and understand the language as much as listen to it. There are many different things you can, but this could be instrumental in getting your child up to early fluency.

Advantages of learning English when listening to the music, songs

While listening to the music, songs we can get familiar with the pronunciation and can also learn rhymes and tempo of the songs.

Music can motivate us, get us in good mood and relax us.

Listening to the music can be a lot of fun. If you want to, you can record yourself doing this and really have a lot of fun

Disadvantages of learning English when listening to the music, songs

Some songs have a very violent text and lyrics and are not very appropriate for children to listen to them. Many songs don't make sense either.

While listening to the music children can get bored easily if songs aren't interesting to them.

Learning English language while reading English literature

Whatever level your English is, reading will help to consolidate what you have learnt in the classroom or from a grammar book and is a great way to learn new vocabulary. Reading should be an enjoyable activity so it often helps if you choose a subject that you have an interest in. Its good to read the book in its origin.

We can choose between different kinds of literature like novels, short-stories, poems from books for beginners to books for advance speakers. When learning English while reading books it's a good to compare Slovenian and English versions of books.

Advantages of learning English while reading English literature

While ample foreign language stories and periodicals are available online, nothing compares with the experience of holding the item in your hands. Print editions have many features that online versions typically don't or can't have.

Reading English books is good for vocabulary and u can learn new words in different meaning like in poems.

When you are reading it sometimes a good idea to focus on one thing, for example, you just read one column of a text and you focus on one aspect of language such as prepositions or phrasal verbs. You can then see which preposition is used with which noun, adjective or verb.

Disadvantages of learning English while reading English literature

Usually reading books is very boring way to learn English and some people don't like to read either.

When reading a book or poem you can get easily distracted by other things that are happening around us, so then we forget or don't understand the content of the book we are reading.

Even though you understand everything, the pronunciation might be wrong.

Learning English language while reading magazines or newspapers

You can read most English newspapers online nowadays. Good way to learn English language is to compare a news story that has been written about in two different newspapers, you can see how the language and style varies in each newspaper, for example comparing an article in The Sun to the same article in The Guardian can be very interesting and shows how an article in the tabloid press (The Sun) can often be harder to read than an article in a broadsheet because The Sun uses far more phrasal verbs and colloquial language than The Guardian.

With newspapers and magazines is good that you can find and choose any paper you are interested in. For example if u like sport you will read articles about sport, if u like economy you will choose economy based articles, etc. Newspapers and magazines are great variety for all level readers, from beginners to advanced.

Advantages of learning English while reading magazines or newspapers

Topics in newspaper articles are very interesting, you can choose articles you want to read and which you like.

Articles in newspapers aren't so long than reading books that's why it isn't boring and stressful for us while reading newspaper articles.

You can find many newspapers inline in electronic version so u don't need to look for original printed versions in stores.

Disadvantages of learning English while reading magazines or newspapers

Many newspapers will start to charge money for their website access and if we would want to read their articles online we will have to pay for the reading.

The language used in newspapers isn't so sophisticated as in books, novels.

Learning English language while using internet

Internet has become the best source for information's, fun, socializing, etc. On internet u can basically find everything, everyone, you can earn money, reconnect with your aunt from far far away and most important thing you can learn English language. On the internet you can find interesting websites where you can play different games and you can use internet in school to show children different animations, pictures, videos, etc.

Learn English on internet would be wise and useful since English is the main language on the internet. The rapid pace of language changes in today's society can only be kept up with by online English internet learning forums. The constant change of the internet provides an excellent medium on which to base your English studies. The internet is instant and the study courses are always available. English learners and those looking to improve their language set can go online anytime and hear, speak, and read English any time of the day or night. The more you listing to English on the internet, the more you learn. The listening skills improve confidence and accuracy. After listening has been mastered then learning to speak simple words then phrases will improve the vocabulary. Finally, once the language can be spoken confidently, adding in slow paced grammar and spelling lessons can help you gain mastery in your new language.

Advantages of learning English while using internet

On internet you can find every information you need. It's a never-ending source of fun, news games, information's, that's why it always benefits us.

On YouTube you can watch videos, listen to music and children can learn from those videos and they can never get bored because its interesting to watch and listen while learning English language.

To use internet you need only internet connection, when you connect to internet everything is free so that's a good thing.

Disadvantages of learning English while using internet

Because on internet you can find almost everything, you can easily forget about time on internet and become addicted to it, then children forget about their outside friend and always stay in front of computer which isn't that good for eyes, they do go outside on fresh air.

On internet there is a lot or criminal, and many people make websites which you access and they contain viruses or Trojan horses what makes our personal computers vulnerable.

Internet contains a lot of inappropriate websites for children, so children must be supervised while being on it.

Learning English language visiting English learning camps or summer schools

Children have opportunity to visit language learning camp in Slovenia or they can go abroad, in different countries it all depends which language they want to learn. This opportunity is for children very useful because they meet new friends and learn language or improve the knowledge they had before. If they go abroad they meet native speakers and children from that country and they can become pen friends. That kind of learning is very interesting to children because they meet new people, can stay in touch with friends they have met and maybe someday use the connection and go to study in that country or just visit them during summer vacation. Only disadvantage for me is that, this is a very expensive way to learn a foreign language.

Children when visiting other country can spend some time on their own, away from their family so they can get new experiences, meet new people, make new friendships so that's a good thing for future to be not so dependable on their parents. The most important thing is that children can learn language directly from conversations with native speakers.

Advantages of learning English when visiting English learning camps

Studying English in an English or UK-based school is probably the best option for anyone who wants to become better or to be proficient in English. The environment as well as the instructors for English classes are considered top rate. Being in the UK is also an added factor because those

who study English as a second language will also have a complete English environment.

Language learning camps offer the variety of activities in combination with language course. This can be a good idea for interesting, active and also educational vacations.

Disadvantages of learning English when visiting English learning camps

Usually summer schools or English learning camps are very expensive and not many parents can get that much money to pay for child's vacation and education abroad.

When child goes to a summer camp for some time, he can often start to miss his family.

Lots of children think that they are going to vacation and while staying there they don't want to learn English language and they only want to have fun.

Learning English language while using DVD

Learn English DVD once you have decided that you would like to learn how to speak, read and write the English language, there are many ways for you to go about your learning. One of the best methods is by DVD which time and time again proves to be an absolute gift for language learners. DVDs help you learn how to write, how to talk (pronounce words). They usually also contain games that help us to expand the vocabulary.

You are also afforded the luxury of being able to have subtitles in your own language at the bottom of the screen to help you if you need them or maybe you would change for English subtitles to read as you are watching and listening to the DVD. You can take notes as you are going along and write down in your own way what things mean, before moving on to the next section of the DVD. You can double check from your notes that you have understood something by going back over it once more.

Advantages of learning English while using DVDs

There are so many advantages to using a DVD to learn English. First of all, you are allowed to work at your own place, and can study whenever you wish. The option to rewind and fast forward the film is very beneficial when

you are practicing your pronunciation and making every effort to get it right.

By using DVD you can learn language step by step, because the program is leading u through the course.

Children when using DVD can even learn how to use computer.

You can buy DVDs at stores and can choose the DVDs for beginners to DVDs for advanced English skills.

Disadvantages of learning English while using DVDs

While using DVDs children can get addicted to computer.

Children can get bored fast if they watch same DVD a lot of times.

If children make a mistake in spelling or pronunciation, the DVD cannot correct them.

You need to be self-disciplined.

Learning English language while playing games

Learning a second language is no easy task, but games can be the open doorway to a greater understanding of the English language. English as a second language in the classroom is an essential part of learning. Most people, while having fun, do not consider it learning even they are learning something. You may not know all of the answers but you are now hearing them so you are learning them. The potential student will not be able to use books to find out the answers so being creative allows them to creatively find the answers.

Games bring to children relaxation and fun, that's how they learn and keep new words and expressions more easily. Games usually involve friendly competition and they keep children interested. Vocabulary games bring real world context into the class and they improve children use of English in a communicative way.

Advantages of learning English while playing games

Fun makes students enjoy a subject. When a student is relaxed they are more likely to learn and maintain more information.

Games offer children a sense of accomplishment. Other children will work harder to win and in the end will be learning English as they practice communicating through the game.

Games are highly motivating because they are amusing and interesting, and are welcome break from usual routine of the language class.

Very little effort to create the games and they can be used to maintain and control the overall atmosphere in the classroom.

Disadvantages of learning English while playing games

When u introduce games to children in school they can easily get used to games and always want them more. So when finish with games they dislike normal teaching.

Sometimes games are to hard for children and they don't understand them.

Some children don't want to take part in games because they find them boring and silly.

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Synonyms

INTERNET: cyberspace, WWW (world-wide-web);

SONG: melody, jingle, track, poem, carol, tune, chorus.

MOVIE: video, motion picture, film.

BOOK: textbook, note, record, daybook.

MAGAZINE: periodical, journal, paper;

GAMES : amusement, entertainment, play