

معهد باجل الأمريكي للتأهيل والتنمية البشرية

Bajil American Institute for Qualification & Human Development

How

to

Improve

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الحديده - باجل

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Spoken English

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## How to improve your Spoken English

The way you speak will give away a lot about you. With Spoken English gaining acceptance as the global language there is a great demand to master the nuances of the language.

Written English is very different from Spoken English. You may know all the grammar rules and the correct sentence structures when you write a letter, but if you cannot converse well it is of little use.

So how do you improve your Spoken English? Here are a few tips that you must keep in mind when you work at improving your speech.

### Tip No. 1

#### Think in English

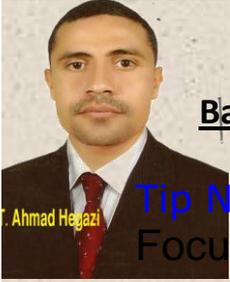
You will never be able to truly get the feel of any language till you begin thinking in it. If you wish the words to flow well when you speak you need to constantly think about what you will say.

Spoken English depends greatly on your vocabulary. So when you are constantly juggling words in your head you will find it easier to speak your thoughts out aloud. As you would have probably already spoken the words and found the missing ones in your head before you spoke them out aloud.

### Tip No.2

#### Observe the Rhythm of Spoken English

Every language has its own rhythm and English is no exception. If you can use the ideal speed and tone variation of a language you will sound like a native speaker. It is going too slow or going too fast which gives you away as a novice in a language. With Spoken English you can observe the BBC Newscasters to the feel of the rhythm in the language. Watching popular soap operas will also help enhance conversational skills.



Tip No.3 Correct that Accent

Focus on Spoken English is seldom needed by native speakers of the language. It is usually those learning it as a second language who have trouble with it. Since you learn English after learning your mother tongue the accent of the mother tongue carries forward to your Spoken English. Remember Steve Martin in the Pink Panther trying to say "Hamburger"? Each word that you speak needs to be accent free. For this it is ideal to record yourself speaking and see where you are going wrong.

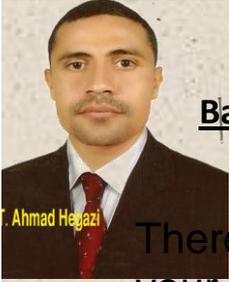
Tip No.4 Verbs and Tenses

Most of Spoken English consists of describing what one is doing or what one plans to do. This involves the use of verbs and tenses. The grammar needs to be correct before you can speak fluently in English. There are a number of workbooks that you can pick up at a library or a book store which can help you practice this aspect of language mastery. In fact there are a number of very specific worksheets available for free online and you should make use of these to improve your Spoken English

Tip No.5 Talk Non-stop

The only way to improve your Spoken English is to keep speaking it. However just speaking it is not enough. You need to speak in the presence of a person who is able to spot your mistakes and point them out to you. Otherwise you will keep on repeating them and not really improve. This is possible with anyone who has good Spoken English skills. They do not have to be a native speaker of the language as long as they speak well enough and have the expertise to help you.

A Spoken English Teacher is ideal to help you improve your language skills. Thanks to the internet and applications such as Skype or G-Talk you don't have to be located in the same city either. All you need to do is have access to the internet to avail their services.



## Some More Tips

There are many resources from which you can improve your Spoken English. Here are a few tips that are inexpensive and easy to do. Always remember the skills involved in any language are Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Any single one can't be developed in isolation.

### Tip No # 1

Get comfortable with the language. Read for 20 minutes in English. It can be a newspaper, a short story, a poem, or even a novel.

### Tip No # 2

Develop your written language. If you don't have the requisite vocabulary you won't be able to communicate.

### Tip No # 3

Start Speaking. Try out your spoken English on anyone who will be able to respond to you. Don't be afraid of making mistakes.

### Tip No # 4

Keep your ears open for the accent. Watch the English news on Television. Watch BBC for the British Accent, CNN for the American Accent and NDTV 24/7 for the urban Indian Accent.

### Tip No # 5

Record yourself. Listen to your voice and catch your pronunciation mistakes. Make a deliberate effort to avoid them.

### Tip No # 6

Grammar is important. The parts of speech, tenses, form of verb, articles and modals all contribute to fluency. Make an effort to learn them.

### Tip No # 7

Make the Dictionary your best friend. To date I head for it when confronted with a new word. Familiarize yourself with its meaning and use it in a sentence that very day.

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### Tip No # 8

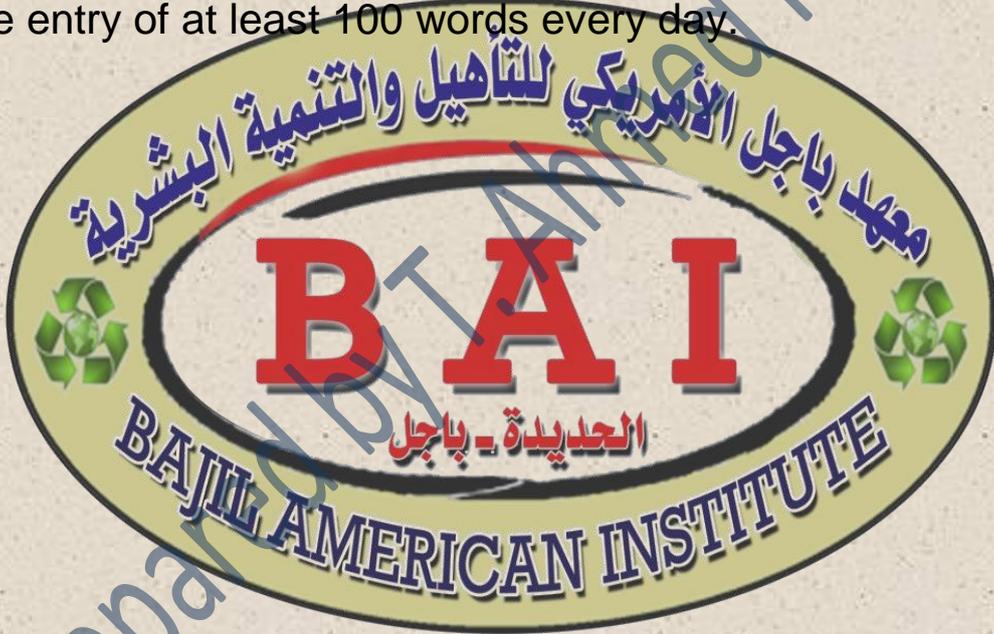
Have someone proficient read aloud to you. A storybook or a newspaper article will do. Watch how they move their lips while pronouncing certain words.

### Tip No # 9

Learn one new word a day. To increase your active vocabulary start memorizing the meaning of a word you had heard but were not sure of. Use it regularly to absorb it into your vocabulary.

### Tip No # 10

Start writing a Diary. It will allow you to practice the language in a totally non-threatening environment. Write one entry of at least 100 words every day.



Prepared by Ahmad Hegazi

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### Conversations for a Non-Native English Speaker

Some time back I had written an article on teaching first generation speakers of the English Language basic conversation skills. I had focused on areas that they will need to be comfortable speaking in. These are listed below again. What you need to do is find a conversation partner and practice these mock situations till you know what words you will need to communicate effectively.

In the primary block are:

1. Bank
2. Supermarket
3. Restaurant
4. Hospital

Next in order of importance:

1. Police
2. Railway Reservations
3. Air Tickets
4. Hotel Bookings

Not so important but can also be covered:

1. Post Office
2. Library
3. Office
4. Social Gathering

The questions related to Banks were related to:

1. Opening an Account
2. Accessing an existing Account
3. Making or receiving Money Transfers
4. Problems with ATM Cards
5. Cheque Book requests, etc

I decided to go some more in detail and frame possible situations and questions that they might face while in conversation with people in the remaining places.

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So possible conversation topics, in each of the remaining eleven places will be expanded in this post. Without much ado let's drive to the Supermarket.

#### Questions at the Supermarket may include:

1. Finding the Food Aisle
2. Asking for the latest discounts on offer
3. Paying the Bill by cash or credit card
4. Finding the parking space
5. Help carrying the bags or asking for use of the trolley till the parking area

#### Questions at a Restaurant:

1. Asking for the Menu
2. Clarifying what a dish contains and how it is cooked
3. Ordering a meal
4. Ordering for accompanying drinks
5. Asking for the bill and paying it
6. Calling for the Chef and complimenting him

#### Questions at the Hospital:

1. Finding the relevant department by getting directions to it
2. Making an appointment with the doctor concerned on the phone
3. Describing symptoms accurately
4. Understanding the diagnosis and prognosis
5. Following the instructions for the medication
6. Requesting for follow up checks This finishes our primary block. The next block consists of dealing with the various services first of which is the Police.

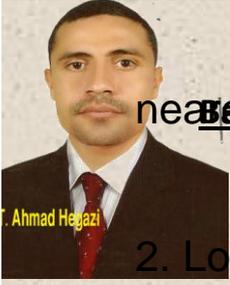
Questions will depend on the situation. The policeman might be seeking you for some reason such as a traffic violation or you might be seeking his help to ask directions to your destination. Define the situation clearly first. For our example we are tackling reporting a missing wallet.

#### Questions to be asked and answered:

1. Asking the nearest policeman for directions to the

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2. Lodging a First Information Report.
  3. Describing the wallet and its contents.
  4. Giving residence and identity details.
  5. Following up on the matter till resolved.
- Now we come to

### Railway Reservations, Air Tickets and Hotel Bookings.

Since most of the questions here are common I give a combined list of questions.

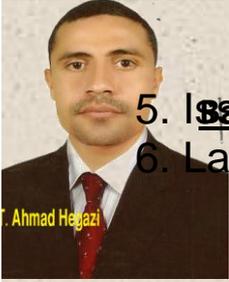
1. Getting the phone number or address of party concerned.
  2. Making enquires about mode of transport to desired destination.
  3. Making an informed choice and booking the tickets.
  4. Asking for ticket confirmation.
  5. Booking a room with specific requirements such as extra bed for child below eight years traveling with parents. That finishes the second block of essential services and now we come to some more in the third block. Starting with the Post Office which is a place most visitors to a different country are likely to visit.
1. Asking for postage costs.
  2. Weighing a letter.
  3. Calculating postage and buying stamps.
  4. Sending a parcel.
  5. Savings options.

Traditionally there is to be little or no talking at the Library. Yet here we have situations where you will need to make some conversation with the librarian. Most students will use libraries extensively to counter the high costs of study books. Here is a list of questions to practice with.

1. Finding the library. Get directions.
2. Becoming a member.
3. Understanding library lending policies.
4. Finding a particular section in the library.

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5. Issuing a book Bajil American Institute for Qualification & Human Development

6. Late fine on returning a book late.

7. Damage to the book due to usage.

Office and Social Gatherings are the last of the situations that are mentioned here. These are very general topics and the situations that arise can be myriad. So it's not possible to give a highly comprehensive list of questions. Here are a few basic ones that you will surely need.

1. Introducing yourself to others present.
2. Gathering information of the basic work required of you.
3. Dealing with clients.
4. Understanding Standard Operating Procedures.
5. Making Small Talk with others.

If you can get comfortable making these basic conversations your **Spoken English Skills** will get a major boost. So let us get Speaking.



Preparation

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## Improving your Written Communication

Write better and communicate with ease using these tips to improve your written expression. Most of us would go to great lengths in school to research material for essays and find suitable quotations to begin them with. (I personally remember Photostatting an entire book, which had great quotes given topic wise, so that I would never have to hunt for one again.) When was the last time we read anything that we did not need to?

In the course of our work we read letters, emails, reports, proposals, notices, meeting minutes and memos. Who says we don't read anything. We do. We read a whole lot of rubbish that we must know, but we don't read anything that we could relax with. We don't pick up a book of Robert Frost and decide to read a poem a day to rejuvenate ourselves. We just about have time to manage the cartoons in the newspaper!

So when there is no time to read what we would enjoy, where is the time to write anything? Again I suggest you leave aside the business communication that you are obliged to write and think when was the last time you wrote a note to a loved one?

Remember those cards that we would fill out with personal wishes for a friend on his birthday in school? The poem we wrote for Ma on mother's day? You get my drift...don't you?!

So here's what you can do to connect with your creative side and improve your written communication.

### Tip No # 1 - Maintain A Diary

The minute you start recording your thoughts in a diary you feel like using different words. You make an effort for it to be an interesting read. Especially if you plan to share it with some close people or feel like converting it to your



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memoirs later in life. It will help you get started writing regularly.

### Tip No # 2 - Write A Paragraph

It can be on any earthly (or otherwise heavenly) topic that interests you. Be as eloquent as you can but restrict yourself to 300 words. Revise it as many times as you like till you are satisfied that it conveys what you want to. It will help you learn to be economical with your expression and put across just what you mean.

### Tip No # 3 - Dialogues for Stories

We hear jokes or anecdotes all the time. Try and pick one interesting one and write it out in dialogue form. Sort of like a script for a skit. You can imagine enacting it out on stage. This will help you use colloquial words that help you express yourself better orally.

### Tip No # 4 - Write to Your Friends and Family

Now be honest, when was the last time you wrote a good old fashioned letter and posted it by snail mail? Rediscover the magic of hand written letters and reconnect with your dear ones. It will also help you articulate emotions better.

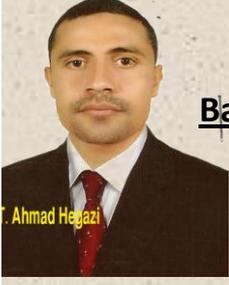
### Tip No # 5 - Write a Review

It can be for anything from a book you read, a restaurant you visited, a tourist place you went to with the family, anything at all. Grade the place in terms of how you enjoyed it and what all could help improve the experience. It will help you think up creative solutions besides improving your turn of phrase. You can also send it to a magazine to be published.

I guess that's all I have for now. Will keep giving new material soon enough. In the meanwhile get out those pens and start writing.

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## Conclusion

There is no instant success in Spoken English. Just like as a child you learn to speak your mother tongue with trial and error, you must learn to speak English. A lot of practice is needed and so you must not give up half way. Be diligent and keep at it, in the end you yourself will be able to feel the difference.

As you know a major part of the learning process involves practice and so if you have someone to practice with it makes improving the language skills so much easier. All the best.



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