MASTER ENGLISH Fast


Julian Northbrook

“I like Julian’s punk-philosophy and pragmatism” - Rafael González
What People Are Saying about Julian

My biggest concern before joining EES was: is this really going to work? What is the difference between EES and the millions of English courses out there? I want to literally see the results!

But EES has helped me twofold. One way is that I can start integrating heaps of phrases/sentences into my daily life which makes me much more confident. The second is that a lot of the ideas introduced can be applied to every aspect of life (mindset, setting goals). For example, I use the mindset introduced in the course to help me stay focused on my music practicing journey.

The weekly lessons are certainly the staple, but the community is really a catalyst. You have a lot of people from all walks of life with the same goal.
working together. I really learned a lot just from browsing the community posts.

There are many interviews in the course as well, which are really eye-opening.

Also, Julian is like a close friend who doesn't just teach you stuff – he also chats with you about his life, your life. (He listened to my mixtape the other day!).

I would recommend EES – but only to doers, not wannabes. In the end, whether this course works or not really depends on how hard you are willing to work on your English.

Songtao Lin

It is difficult to find the right words to express my gratitude for Julian, who inspired me in a profound way as I was struggling towards my ultimate goal of becoming a confident English speaker with high fluency.

Julian demonstrates a genuine interest in every learner and a sincere desire to share his knowledge
and expertise. He makes learning come alive, makes the content relevant, and even shares in some laughs and fun along the way. He shows us the path to becoming exceptional and instils in us the discipline, strength, and patience to navigate around the hurdles that littered the English learning path.

I never thought I'd meet someone in my twenties that was so similar to me in terms of mindset and value. In the EES community, I'm not only learning a language but also connecting with experts, doers and ordinary people from different disciplines, sharing great ideas and gaining valuable skills. I am so blessed to have this amazing group of people who assist me to accelerate my English journey and awareness into the professional arena.

Maggie Wang

When I first joined EES I had just got a new job. and I had to be able to speak English well right away, otherwise I could have lost my job. I had to be able to speak English during meetings and I had to talk with native English speakers to
complete my task as a credit analyst. A few months after I joined EES I was able to speak up during a meeting because EES changed my mindset.

Although my main purpose to join the EES programme was for my job, I was surprised because it changed my life positively living in English speaking country. I live in Los Angeles now and unlike Japan strangers talk to me a lot in the U.S. Because of my fear, even the cashier at the Starbucks did not understand what I ordered or I was to be scared to enter an elevator because it's a closed place that I could not run away from small talk. I was so scared to talk with people. Now I sometimes start a conversation in the elevator and can order at Starbucks without a problem.

Posting video in the community improved my public speaking skill and Julian’s feedback and critique helped me a lot. Currently the weekly lessons help me most because I can improve actual English speaking skill. I really think joining EES was the best choice in my life.

Hanako
I have problems with English. I feel a lack of vocabulary, sometimes I have problems with pronunciation, I have problems with grammar and how to use them and when to use them. I have problems with understanding. Sometimes I have problems explaining what I really want to say and to be understandable.

The EES programme is really different compared with traditional English courses. It is very embracing. You will practice everything, from noticing your language problems, to writing, to casual language and slang. You learn immediately how and when to use it. You will use them on your own, which is, I think, very good.

I find it much easier to learn new language like this than when I am studying from traditional materials. It is much easier for me to remember these things and to see them in real life. I can almost hear Julian’s voice when I want to use some of the things I have been learned in the EES programme.

Karollina
I discovered Julian and Doing English through a blog. I was looking for methods to improve my listening comprehension and on the blog of a Spanish teacher they recommended shadowing and had a link with Julian's YouTube video. I found it fantastic for its simplicity and I liked his way of explaining things.

Doing English has helped me not only with English but with living my life: setting goals, fostering discipline, working effectively and obtaining a very effective way to learn English. The thing I like best is Julian's way of presenting the work that needs to be done. There are no lies: there are no magic pills or shortcuts. You have to work daily, but do it in an effective and fun way too. I like Julian’s Punk philosophy and pragmatism: it is not a matter of obtaining a degree or passing tests, but of acquiring communicative skills. That you understand the language and you are able to speak without shame or fear.

I also like Julian’s passion for work and your company. Keeping a daily contact with his clients or students by e-mail always telling interesting and
personal things is fantastic. I also want to apply the way you work in my own company.

I have recommended Doing English to my Facebook contacts because I think it is important to share the good things and the job well done. This is a global and collaborative time. Thank you for Doing English!

Rafael Gonzalez García

In spite of having done a few short courses of Doing English and found them very useful I was reluctant to join the EES programme because Julian kept saying "mind you, it is hard work". Now I am part of it and even if it is hard work.

I really enjoy the way it is planned. My English was all rusted and EES is really helping me to brush it up to a native speaker level.

What I like most is that EES transforms hard work into fun, even for middle age people like me.
I also enjoy very much to be part of a beautiful universal and friendly family through the web, all willing to "get there" with English language.

I would recommend EES to anyone who loves the English language and feels that it's time to make the effort to get nearer and nearer to a native speaker's level.

I have visited loads of links seeking an English teacher and I found Julian was the one to offer all of what I was looking for: a teacher who is always there to offer his warm and friendly assistance and who is restless to push and remind me that I can and should reach the excellence.

Susana Sisman

Joining EES has been the most important and long-lasting online learning commitment I’ve ever made. I joined it in the month it was established, in 2015.

The EES programme really helped me to transform my random learning into organised, habitual activity. It became a part of my life. I’m
hooked on Weekly Lessons, which give me a regular dose of everyday language I can use straight away.

EES was the first online place I posted in English and took part in discussions on topics that interest me. This activity taught me to think in English without translating in my home language. EES encouraged me to try new learning methods and share the experience with others. It motivated me and helped to embrace setbacks.

In the community, I found reliable learning partners who make my learning journey more fun, memorable and worthwhile.

I’d recommend EES to intermediate and upper-intermediate learners who want to make English a part of their everyday life. EES is a perfect place to boost your confidence and move your English on a higher level.

Grazyna
Master English $FAST$

An Uncommon Guide to Speaking Extraordinary English

Julian Northbrook
In this Extraordinary Book

Preface..............................................................................................................1

Introduction ........................................................................................................4
The Day I Forgot Japanese Wasn't My First Language .............................................5
Welcome to the First Day of the Rest of Your Life ...................................................8
Who Am I and Why Should You Listen to Me?......................................................10

Chapter 1
Why Your English Sucks....................................................................................12
Reason 1: You Think You Can't Master English..................................................15
Reason 2: You Believe Only Children Can Get Good at Languages ....................16
Reason 3: You Believe That You Have to Go to an English-Speaking Country and Be Surrounded by Native Speakers ....................................................17
Reason 4: You Believe You Can Listen Your Way to Fluency .............................20
Reason 5: You Don't Have Native Speakers to Practise with and You Think That's a Problem .................................................................................................23
Reason 6: You Need to Be Perfect before You Start Doing Anything .................24
Reason 7: You Believe You Don't Have Time .....................................................26

Chapter 2
Start with Why ....................................................................................................28
It's Dog-Eat-Dog out There .................................................................................30
The YouTube Problem .........................................................................................33
Why Are You Here? ............................................................................................36
A Final Note on Goals .........................................................................................40

Chapter 3
Language and Language Learning 101 ............................................................43
What Even Is Language?......................................................................................43
“The Beast” .........................................................................................................47
What Is Language Learning? ..............................................................................50
Holistic Learning .................................................................................................53
The Three Things You Need to Speak English Well ...........................................57
Pronunciation and Accent 101 ............................................................................60
Chapter 4
How English Mastery Really Works
The 4 Stages of Competence
The Myth of Learning English

Chapter 5
Learning All the Language You Need
My Mate Vilfredo
80/20 English
The Three Types of Language
So How Many Words Should You Learn?

Chapter 6
Learning Language Focused on Fluency and Naturalness
Some Different Kinds of Chunks
Example-Based Learning
How Much Should You Memorise?
A Word on Chunking and Pronunciation

Chapter 7
How to Sound Good and Not Be Boring
Having Stories to Tell
Using English as a Tool for Self-Education

Chapter 8
The Big “C” of Speaking Well
Put on Your Culture Glasses
Common Knowledge Is Uncommon
The Problem of Humour
Learning Culture for Effective International English
A Final Note

Chapter 9
Choosing Learning Materials

Chapter 10
Fantastic Fluency
What Is Fluency, Exactly?
What’s Happening in Your Brain?
How Do We Build Fluency, FAST?
The Fear Factor ...........................................................................................................................................162
Exercises for Building Fluency ..................................................................................................................165

Chapter 11
Speaking Accurately and Naturally ..........................................................................................173
What Is Accuracy and Naturalness? ...........................................................................................................174
What Grammar Really Is ..........................................................................................................................176
The Big “N” of Naturalness .........................................................................................................................181
Exercises for Building Accuracy and Naturalness ...................................................................................182

Chapter 12
Effective Speaking Made Dead Simple ......................................................................................191
E – Empathy ..............................................................................................................................................194
A – Authenticity ........................................................................................................................................201
R – Relentless ..........................................................................................................................................208

Afterward ..............................................................................................................................................214

About Julian and His Work ......................................................................................................................217

How to Work with Julian .........................................................................................................................219

Resources ..............................................................................................................................................220
Books Mentioned ..................................................................................................................................220
Welcome to Master English FAST: An uncommon guide to speaking extraordinary English in international business.

Welcome to my extraordinary world.

I’m Julian Northbrook, and by making the effort to get this book in your hands you’ve taken the first step to mastering English.

More about me in a moment.

First, a warning: If you don’t really need English in your life, if you aren’t motivated, or if you’re lazy and you can’t take tough advice, this book is not for you. Stop reading right now and go watch TV instead. Don’t waste your time; I know I don’t want to waste mine.

The methods I teach are extremely effective. But they may seem unconventional. For example, do you believe that the most important thing is to memorise more vocabulary words? That you must practise with native speakers to get good at English? Or that just listening can get you fluent? All of these common beliefs are wrong.
To benefit from this book, you must be willing to let go of your assumptions. If you’re not willing to listen and you don’t want to change your own (probably false) opinions, stop reading right now.

The way I teach requires hard work. There is no free lunch, as the saying goes – meaning that nothing comes without a price. If you want to master the English language, you must be willing to do the work. If you are lazy, if you are satisfied with half-assed efforts and mediocre results, stop reading right now.

As you have probably noticed by now, I am frank, outspoken, and don’t care if I upset you by telling you the truth you need to hear. This book is for people who are tough, who can listen to criticism, who can get angry and then use that energy to work harder and harder.

You must be willing to look in the mirror and admit that you don’t like what you see; you have to be willing to change your bad habits and make difficult choices.

You have to sort out your priorities, recognise what’s most important to you, and be willing to make the necessary sacrifices. If you are sensitive, if
you get easily offended, if you tend to quit when the going gets tough, stop reading right now.

One more thing: I don’t swear as often as some people I know, but I’m not afraid to use words like shit, fuck and even on occasion when it suits me, cunt. These words exist in the English language for a reason – they convey emotions that normal words can’t. I have no intention of changing the way I speak for anybody – so if this offends you, just don’t read this book.

All this said, here’s my promise to you. If you are willing to let go of your assumptions, listen to my advice and do the bloody work, this book will get you speaking the extraordinary English you need in order to become the extraordinary person you know you can be.
Introduction

In the summer of 2007, I got on a plane bound for Tokyo, Japan.

I had a job interview lined up for a great position at an art gallery in Harajuku, a fashionable part of Tokyo. I felt sure life was going to be awesome.

Only it wasn't.

I got turned down for the job.

Why? Because, quite simply, my Japanese was crap. I was fully qualified and had everything the gallery needed – apart from the fact that I spoke Japanese like a two-year old with mental health problems.

From there I suffered three long, painful years feeling embarrassed about my poor language skills, feeling stupid every time I spoke, and frustrated as hell because I just didn't know what to do in order to improve.

Eventually I worked out what I was doing wrong and mastered the language (I'll share all of that, and more, with you in this book), but the journey there was a long, painful one.
The Day I Forgot Japanese Wasn't My First Language

I'll never forget the day I realised I'd done it. The day I realised I'd overcome my language problems and mastered Japanese.

At 10 am I stepped off the cool, air-conditioned coach into a hot and humid train station carpark. I was at a train station somewhere in Ibaraki, Japan – in the middle of nowhere.

The carpark was empty.

Looking towards the station I saw no trains – a very different sight to the station near my home in Tokyo, where trains go in and out every few seconds. I was doing research at a private secondary school in the area, and I'd gotten on a coach early that morning to get there. Someone was going to pick me up by car at 11 am, but by chance I'd caught an earlier bus and arrived almost an hour ahead of time.

Not too sure what to do, I looked around.

In the corner of the station carpark, there was a tiny wooden building. It looked like a garden shed, raised up on a platform. There were some steps
leading up to the wooden platform where a small plastic table and two plastic chairs were set. Right next to the chairs there is a sign: “Ice Coffee – 150 yen”.

There was no point in standing around in the heat for an hour, so I climbed little wooden steps to get a coffee.

Was anyone even there, I wondered.

"Konnichiwa!" I called out.

The door opened, and a lady probably in her 50s came out.

She froze, stunned. I'm quite used to this in Japan. A lot of people get nervous around English speakers – a result of failing to learn any kind of practical English at school. And this is especially true in the countryside where you rarely see foreigners.


“Just a little,” I replied. “I'm still studying and not very good yet.”

That was a lie – I’d already passed the highest level of the Japanese Proficiency exam, worked as a freelance translator and was currently the head
teacher at a Japanese company dealing in business-to-business English programmes.

(Why I said “I’m not very good yet” will become evident later in this book.)

She got me my ice coffee, and motioned for me to sit at the little plastic table next to the door.

For a few seconds, we were both silent.

Then she started to talk.

Sitting in her shed all day, she apparently didn’t have much to do. So she killed time reading books and magazines. And she had a lot of interesting things to talk about. She told me all about the history of the area. Apparently, nearby was a shrine that had been established in 600 BC, and the town was also the birthplace of Juri Takahashi, one of the members of the girl-band AKB48.

Have you ever been so engaged in something that you completely forget everything around you? It's like the rest of the world disappears, and time flows on without your noticing. It seemed like I'd only been there a few seconds when my phone rang.

"Hey, I'm here," said my friend with the car.

Actually, an entire hour had already passed!

Saying goodbye, I left the shed and ran over to my friend’s car. I got in and said hello (in English). I
said that I’d arrived early, but it was OK, because I had enjoyed having a coffee and a chat to the lady in the cafe.

This friend is someone I always speak English with, so it wasn't strange when he asked, "Oh? She could speak English?"

The realisation happened right then.

“Er… I’m not sure.” I said.

What language had we been speaking? I couldn’t remember. I’d been so absorbed in the conversation that I wasn’t aware of what language we were speaking. Logically, I knew it must have been Japanese, but I’d been totally unconscious of the fact.

That’s the moment I knew I’d made it.

I’d forgotten that Japanese wasn’t my first language.

And that is exactly the kind of moment I want to help you experience in English.

Welcome to the First Day of the Rest of Your Life

By opening this book you’ve made a life-changing decision. You’re here with this book in
your hands because your English skills hold you back and stop you being the person you want to be and living the life you want to live. I understand: I’ve been there.

This book is going to give you the quick ‘n dirty lowdown on improving your English as a high-intermediate to advanced speaker.

Whether you’re a freelancer, an artist, a translator or a writer, a business owner, a business man, an executive or you live in an English-speaking country, you feel frustrated by your English.

You know that improving your English skills will make your life better…but you don’t know how to do it. Well, it’s a mistake to think you can do the same things as you did when you were a beginner in English.

As soon as you hit the intermediate level, everything changed, including the things you need to do in order to improve.
Who Am I and Why Should You Listen to Me?

I’m Julian Northbrook, also known as the Posh Punk of language learning (more on where I got that nickname in a moment).

As for why you should listen to me, I could tell you all about my extensive experience teaching English, about my Master’s degree in Applied Linguistics or my PhD research in second-language acquisition and the publications I have in academic journals. I could tell you all about those things, but I won’t, because nobody gives a shit. What I will tell you about though, is this – the pain I experienced while learning my second language.

You see, there are far, far too many language teachers in the world who have either never learned a second language themselves, or have never taken it past the low-intermediate stage.

Should you trust these people?

I say no. I wouldn’t. Just like I wouldn’t trust a music teacher who couldn’t play music, a hairdresser with dirty hair or a dentist with bad teeth.
In my opinion, the best way to measure a teacher’s ability to help you is not by the qualifications they can list, but rather by the number of hours they’ve spent struggling in a second language themselves. Well, I’ve spent many hours struggling.

Oh, why do people call me “the Posh Punk”? One day, my friend and salon marketing genius Kat Smith offhandedly said, “Julian you’re such a posh punk!” and the name stuck.
Chapter 1

Why Your English Sucks

When I left my full-time teaching job in 2014, I went from standing up all day long teaching classes to sitting in front of the computer all day. But I didn’t change my diet at all… on the contrary, because I was at home I started snacking all day, and drinking more in the evenings.

You can guess what happened next, right?

Yes, I got fat.

So I got a personal trainer – Phil (also known as ‘Phil the cunt’, for reasons that would be very clear if you ever worked with him). Well, when I started working with Phil, the last thing I wanted to do was diet and work out. I just wanted the results… fast.

Most people don’t do anything until it’s too painful not to – me included. When I started working with Phil, I did so because I’d gotten unhealthy and overweight. My stomach was hanging over my belt, and I had very little energy. I wanted results… yesterday!
We live in a world where everybody wants everything instantly, and without effort. A magic pill that makes them fluent in English. A button to push that magically makes them speak without making embarrassing mistakes.

I’ll tell you now: just like there is no magic fitness fix, there is no instant method for mastering English, either.

This said, it only took me two months of dieting and working out with Phil to get back into shape, which is pretty damn fast.

The reason I tell you this is because the thing that made the biggest difference to me was the way Phil corrected me on some false beliefs.

That’s what we’re going to start with in this book. There is no quick, instant method to master English. It’s always going to take dedication and hard work. But there is one thing you can do right now to begin improving faster – fix your mindset.

My friend Hitomi Horiguchi (a life-coach I know in Tokyo) very rightly says, “If you fix your mindset, then your actions will also change.”

Very true words.

Here’s a great example. Airi, one of my students said:
"Today I made a mistake speaking English. Although I wanted to say "I forgot to bring it", I said "I forgot bringing it." As soon as I said this, I noticed that I made a mistake. But the conversation flowed and I couldn't take it back.

I felt embarrassed after the conversation, but just remembered what Julian said in 'Speak English Confidently': "Embarrassment doesn't exist," and I learned something from this experience.

Speak English Confidently is another book that I wrote, but the point is still exactly the same for this one: the way you think defines the way you act.

When you make a mistake, it's easy to feel bad about it. But if you understand that mistakes are a part of the learning process – everything changes.

There are lots of reasons why your English might not improve…but in 90% of cases, it comes down to a few very common problems. Most of them are to do with your mindset – the way you think about improving your English.
Reason 1: You Think You Can’t Master English

Here’s a dirty little secret: I failed French when I was a student.

You probably studied English at school, but being British, I studied French. And I hated those classes. It was all boring grammar exercises, copying from the textbook and translating sentences. I couldn’t see any way that learning French was going to improve my life, and I didn’t care whether I got good grades. But then years later I had a chance to live in Switzerland for three months, all expenses paid. I turned it down because I wasn’t confident enough to go to a French-speaking country. Suddenly, I could see how French might improve my life, but there was still one big problem: I didn’t believe I could learn French!

Years after that I struggled with Japanese and believed it was because I wasn’t talented at languages. Again, I had “the Why” – I had a real reason to learn Japanese, but I believed I couldn't do it.
“Whether you think you can or you can’t, you’re right” famously said Henry Ford. Whether you find a solution to your problems and do what it takes is largely defined by your attitude.

If I asked you, “Can you fly?” you'd probably say "no". But that’s short-sighted and rather uncreative.

Imagine if the Wright brothers had done the same thing:

“Hey, Wright, can you fly?” I ask.
“Fly? No! Of course I can’t – people can’t fly!”
they respond.

Suddenly mankind never develops airplanes, and we’re still travelling in boats or horse-drawn carriages. You can fly. We all can.

**Reason 2: You Believe Only Children Can Get Good at Languages**

I once taught private lessons to a Japanese guy in his 90s. He learned *fast*. His mind was sharp as a razor, and he had energy that would put a 20-year-old to shame. He had a wicked sense of humour too – his jokes were dirty and made even me blush.
On the other hand, I know someone who is a great person, but severely limits herself with some rather bizarre beliefs about language learning.

She believes only kids can get good at languages and therefore it’s impossible for her to get good at Japanese (she’s from the UK, so English is her first language). She started, found it difficult, then blamed the fact she’s already an adult.

“It’s not my fault,” she said. “I’m just too old. If only I’d been exposed to Japanese as a kid!”

This kind of thinking is stupid…and dangerous.

I started learning Japanese when I was 24, and now, at the age of 33, I speak it damn well.

**Reason 3: You Believe That You Have to Go to an English-Speaking Country and Be Surrounded by Native Speakers**

“I’ve lived in the UK 11 years, but my English just won’t improve!” That’s what Penny said to me several years ago during our very first coaching session. She’d lived in the UK for 11 years, and her husband is British. She said she could understand her family
in English fine, but at work things were really hard. She couldn’t join conversations with co-workers and didn’t understand the jokes they made. To make it worse, people wouldn’t understand what she was saying. People kept asking: “Could you say that again?” and she felt her face going bright red every time.

Penny said her pronunciation was bad, that she made mistakes in English and that what she did say never sounded natural. She ended up feeling embarrassed every time she opened her mouth. In a nutshell, her work life had become torture for her.

When she told me this, I asked her what she was doing to improve her English. The answer was shocking, but surprisingly very, very common.

Nothing.

Like many people, Penny believed that just being in an English-speaking environment would be enough to get good at the language. Indeed, that is why she went to the UK – to just “pick up” English in a "natural" environment without having to study.

Big, big mistake.

I've surveyed, interviewed and worked with thousands of people, and something which comes up again and again is that people hold themselves
back with false beliefs about what’s called "natural" learning.

There has been a ton of research done on natural learning methods that claim you can learn through lots of listening and just being in an English environment. *The results are not great.*

In his book, “A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning,” Peter Skehan talks about what’s called “immersion” schooling, and how students generally become very good at listening to English…but not very good at speaking.

The belief that being in an English-speaking environment, or that you can learn just by listening, persists because people *want* to believe it – not because it’s actually true. Many people like Penny go to live in an English-speaking country and expect that to be enough. They believe they can improve by doing nothing. So they get nothing.

One of my EES members was telling us how he lived in the UK for five years, but didn't improve at all. He didn’t start to improve until he started thinking about what he really wanted, and consciously and actively started to apply what he'd learned from me.
Hanako, another *EES* member, now a coaching client, lives in the US and said basically the same thing. It’s a very, very common experience.

**Reason 4: You Believe You Can Listen Your Way to Fluency**

The human brain is fucking lazy.
Really, really, *really* fucking lazy.
This is for a very good reason. Energy and computational power are both limited resources… and so the more the brain can save, the better.

For the most part, this is a very, very good thing. Scientists estimate the brain processes around 11 million bits of information per second – but the conscious mind can only process around 200. Working memory—like your brain’s RAM—can only hold between 4 and 7 items at a time.

If your idea of learning is just passively watching crap on YouTube, watching TV or listening to the radio without paying much attention to the language…well, your brain is going assume it’s not important.
The more you can do to make your brain work, the better. So for example, watching a film in English without subtitles is much better than watching a film with subtitles in your native language (which is a total waste of time for learning). In the same way, watching a film while using exercises and techniques that force you to focus and be *active* will be much, much better than just watching.

I’ll give you these kinds of exercises later in this book. But for now, let me give you another example just to really drive home the point.

Have you ever done any kind of muscle training?

Building muscle and improving fluency in a language is very, very similar. You do an exercise that’s designed to stimulate your muscle and make it grow. Now, I’m not that strong, and I’m a total beginner. So for something like a bench press I only need about 25 kg. My friend and mentor Jon, on the other hand, has been doing it for years and needs 100 kg.

You build muscle by forcing it to work beyond its current ability. You’re literally tearing the muscle so that it will grow back bigger and stronger.
Now imagine Jon doing bench presses with my 25 kg. How much do you think that is going to help him build muscle?

Nothing.

My weights are far, far too light for Jon.
I’m a beginner – he is advanced.

This is exactly the same for your English – as a beginner you probably improved quite fast, because *everything* was difficult and intense. Just trying to understand a film in English was a very hard, active process. But the better you get, the more intensity you need to keep improving.

For you, at your level, passively watching videos on YouTube or listening to English is like Jon lifting my 25 kg weights.

When you study and practise English, you should feel like someone who has just lifted 100 kg – absolutely exhausted.
Reason 5: You Don’t Have Native Speakers to Practise with and You Think That’s a Problem

In 2009, the English learning industry in Japan was estimated to generate 670 billion yen – about six billion dollars.

English education is one of Japan’s most profitable industries. But how many people in Japan speak English at a level that matches their investment?

Almost none.

Sure, there are people who are good at English. A few are really good. But they are exceptional people – and there certainly aren’t as many of them as there are people spending money on English.

Right away this suggests that if you want to become an extraordinary speaker, it’s not enough to study English in the same way as everybody else.

The way most English schools teach English really isn’t that good. You see, the schools are far more interested in making a profit than they are in good teaching. And you can’t really blame them – they are businesses first and foremost.
They tell you things like: “You learned grammar in school...now to get fluent, all you need to do is practise with a native speaker!” It sounds great, and people buy into it. But if you think about it, why do these schools advocate this method? It’s not because it’s effective; it’s because it allows them to hire unqualified teachers who just chat to people for low pay.

Yes, chatting with native speakers will help with your fluency – it is a form of practise, after all. But it’s not very effective, and what helps you improve is nothing to do with the fact you’re speaking to a native speaker.

We’ll talk about what really is important for building fluency later, in Chapter 10.

**Reason 6: You Need to Be Perfect before You Start Doing Anything**

This is a question I got in my email a few years ago: “Will I ever manage to be fluent enough to move from France to a new job in the United Kingdom?”

Sadly, the answer to this question is probably no.
Not because it’s not possible, but because we human beings are never perfectly prepared for anything. Good enough is good enough. You’ve got to just do it, and worry about the details later.

A good—and very honest—analogy for this is having children.

My first son, Yuuli, is 9 this year. Even the mathematically challenged will quickly see that I must have been pretty damn young when he was born. I was 24 when he was born, 23 when my wife (then girlfriend) got pregnant. We were planning to get married anyway; we weren’t that careful, and before we knew it we had a choice to make: Have the baby or get an abortion.

I’m not against abortion, but I’m also not deluded into thinking the time has to be “right.” We both wanted kids anyway, so it was an easy choice for us to make.

If everybody waited until conditions were perfect before having kids, the human race would be long extinct. There is always some reason to wait until later.

Were there times when I felt jealous of my friends out drinking and partying while I was stuck at home changing dirty nappies? Sure. Does it matter? No.
It’s the same with English.

You can always learn a little more, get a little better. But what this means is there’s no point in waiting.

Perhaps you want to work in an international company, or you want to live and work overseas – now is the time to do it. No matter how crap you think your English is, it doesn’t matter. JFDI.

**Reason 7: You Believe You Don’t Have Time**

“I don’t have time to improve my English!”

Bullshit. Trust me, you have time. There is not one of us in this world who has less time than we need. Ultimately every one of us has 24 hours in a day, which is 1440 minutes, or 86400 seconds. And in that time most of us do very little, while a few people get incredible amounts of stuff done.

Time is never the problem. It’s always about how you use your time. One EES member said he didn't join for several months because he knew he wouldn't have time. He was too busy with his job. But here’s the thing – his job was all in English. He
was always busy because he was constantly fighting fires. Nothing got done ahead of time, and he was always panicking to finish things last minute.

Then one day he realised that he wasn't getting anything done because his bad English kept slowing him down. Reading, writing and replying emails took far, far too long. He'd misunderstand something in a meeting and waste time trying to fix it later. He'd struggle to communicate things to others – which would waste even more time.

Clearly then, the best for him was to stop everything he was doing, improve his English…then save a lot of time later.
To purchase the full Master English FAST, An Uncommon Guide to Speaking Extraordinary English, just go to:

http://MasterEnglishFAST.com