



THIS ISSUE

Tips to make the most of your language course

Upcoming Classes

UPCOMING CLASSES

May 5

SPANISH GROUP - BEGINNERS

Wednesdays

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

12 weeks

May 12

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12 weeks

TIPS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR LANGUAGE COURSE

At Be Bilingual, our language courses are taught with a conversational approach, this means that you will learn new content by talking with your instructor (and your classmates if studying in a group) in a real conversation and not just by learning vocabulary. We provide written and audio materials to work independently at home to practice what you learned in class.

Coming to class (or joining a virtual classroom) is the first step in the process of learning. Being ready to participate in conversation as much as possible, making mistakes as well as paying attention to other students' mistakes will help you learn faster and therefore, you should never be silent.

It is not enough to answer "yes" or "no" to a question. Even though you may understand what you are being asked, you need to practice how to express your thoughts in your target language.

The next step is to reproduce a conversation, changing roles to ask and answer, to explain and to repeat as many times as needed to master the content. This is done in the classroom but continues at home with our listening materials. You can record yourself asking and answering questions, you can write your answers and read them out loud, and modify the same questions by applying them to other people and to groups of people and making them relevant to you.

Come to the next class ready to ask those questions.

If you are lucky enough to have someone to practice with, do not shy away and talk to him/her. Do not expect that person to explain the grammar or linguistics behind an expression though, but take advantage of the opportunity and don't be afraid of making mistakes. Don't get discouraged when receiving a blank stare or when asked to repeat what you just said. Try to avoid second guessing every word, focus on repeating them more slowly and help to deliver the message by using your hands and physical expression. Your partner will understand and you will have fun while practicing. Information learned this way is never forgotten.

For many people, making flashcards for new words, verbs or expressions is helpful. It helps to organize your thoughts and it is a tangible proof of your progress. This can be done with actual written cards (for the visual and tactile learner) or online (Quizlet for example), where you can compile new words with pronunciation (visual and auditory learner) and even pictures.

You can, as well, organize your notes to have a list of questions for practical situations that will grow as you advance. This will become a "database" to refer to at any time. The same can be done with verbs and adjectives. If you are a visual learner, you can pair them with pictures or graphics to help your memory.

A relevant picture with the right annotations and associations is a very effective tool to avoid translating. In class, your instructor will use many printed materials as visual aids, so you can reach out and have him/her help you to access those materials.

As already mentioned, try not to translate. At the beginning this is very difficult to do as you need a reference and your brain will automatically connect the new language input with your own language. However, as you move on, do not make a habit of translating every question or statement to English before answering.

Finally, if you are learning online, you can request to record the session and access it as many times as needed to study and practice.

By following these strategies, you will be prepared to participate very actively in each class session and will be able to connect what you previously learned with new information presented, engaging in active learning and making the most of your language course.