

5 Steps To Becoming A Confident English Speaker

A free ebook by Vanessa



**SPEAK
ENGLISH
WITH VANESSA**

I have a question for you:

What would your life be like if you spoke better English?

Think about it for a moment.

Would you have a better career? Get paid more? Would you be able to travel easily? Would you be able to communicate without stress? Would you be able to watch your favorite TV shows and movies without subtitles?

Speaking English well can definitely change your life, but how can you become a confident English speaker? Do you need to be born with a special talent? Or have a lot of money?

I have a theory that anyone can become a confident English speaker if they follow these five simple steps. *The steps are simple, but you can't sit back and do nothing.* Learning a language takes a lot of effort, and **these five steps will help you to not waste your time and actually enjoy learning English.**

Let's get started with the first step.

STEP NUMBER ONE

Open your mind to new ways of learning English

Think about your English learning history.

If you had your first English class when you were 10 years old and for the next 8 years you had one English class per week, you studied English for at least 300 hours. That's a long time!

You probably spend hours repeating, memorizing and trying to learn English.

That's a frustrating way to learn anything. This old method of learning English definitely didn't work if you are here today trying to improve your English... after 300 hours of English classes.

But don't blame yourself. The school-method of learning English is good for getting good test scores, but *what about when you travel to New York? Or when you need to talk with clients in English on the phone for your job?* Don't worry, almost all of us who studied a foreign language in school didn't feel comfortable speaking after we graduated.

So how can being open-minded help you become a confident English speaker? If your old methods of learning English didn't help you to become a fluent speaker, it's time to change the way you're learning. Close-minded people think that even though the old method of learning English didn't work, other methods won't work, too. *If going to English class with 20 other people isn't helping you become a confident speaker, stop going.*

In almost every country there are people who can confidently speak and express themselves in English. So, how did those people learn English? Are they super smart or have lots of money? No, not at all.

They learned this simple idea: Try New Methods.

That's it! Step away from memorizing. Step away from textbooks. Step away from school.

Now, maybe you're thinking: "What are some new methods that I can use to learn English?" What is a more efficient and enjoyable way to learn English than staring at a textbook and taking notes for hours.

Let's take a tip from Timothy Doner, an American teenager who taught himself 20 languages. Wow! He definitely knows what he's talking about. He said that **the best way to learn a language is to listen to anything**: music, radio, podcasts, conversations, TV shows, and movies. The good news is, this is fun stuff!

As children, we listened to our parents speak our native language every day, so our brain naturally learns language well by listening.

Where can you go to listen to natural English?

- *YouTube.com*: check out videos for English learners and videos for native English speakers
- *iTunes.com* or *Stitcher.com*: listen to English podcasts
- *Meetup.com*: find English speaking groups in your city

In the next few chapters I will give you some advice about what kinds of materials to search for on these websites.

Let's go to step number two.

STEP NUMBER TWO

Relax, don't stress

Do you feel stressed about *talking* on the phone in English? About having *conversations* with native speakers? About watching English TV and *not understanding* their quick conversations?

Let's talk a little bit about stress in general. **It's scientifically proven that when the brain is stressed, the creative center in the brain shuts down.** "*Shuts down*" means "*stops working*." That's not too good! If you want to retain English, your mind needs to be stress-free. "*Retains*" means that you remember some new expressions after the test and after three years. **You remember them forever.**

If you want to become a fluent English speaker, you might feel like it's a huge mountain to climb. It's a HUGE activity. It's so much work that you don't have time for. Well, today I want to tell you, yes, learning a new language *is* work, but **it doesn't have to be stressful.**

Maybe you're saying, "*It's a huge project that will probably last for years. How can I NOT feel stressed or anxious about it?*" Well, how do you make anything less stressful? **You break it down into bite-sized chunks.** This is a great expression that is perfect to describe learning English. "*Break it down*" means "*you follow simple step*." "*Bite-sized chunks*" means that you don't eat the whole piece of cake, you take one bite, then the next bite, then the next.

Don't say "*I'm going to improve my English.*" It's too big of a task to know where to start. Instead, you should say, "*First, I want to listen to English for 10 minutes every day.*" Great! That's very specific, and much easier than generally saying, "I want to improve my English." **I don't want you to feel frustrated about climbing the huge mountain of English in front of you.** I want you to focus on "bite-sized chunks" of English.

Okay, so now that you've decided to learn English in bite-sized chunks, how can you find time in your busy day to relax and learn English? For some of you, *simply thinking about finding free time is stressful.* So, I want to give you some examples of how I find time to study the foreign language that I learned, French.

My goal for studying French is to become familiar with a lot of natural vocabulary and expressions so that I can use them when I speak French or when I watch French movies.

My day is really busy, so *how do I find time to practice?* I have three favorite times for listening to French. Maybe these times could be good for you, too.

- 1. I like to listen to French music while I'm cooking breakfast.** If I'm tired and don't want to really listen to the lyrics, it's okay. *I'm simply getting the rhythm of a different language into my mind.* And music is a great pick-me-up in the morning. "*Pick-me-up*" means that it gives me energy!
- 2. The second time I like to study French is while I'm driving.** This is the perfect time to listen to a 15 minute podcast. I'm more awake than earlier in the morning, and what else am I going to do while I'm commuting?
- 3. The third time is in the afternoon.** I usually eat lunch alone, so it's a great time to watch a 5 minute French video.

Of course, I don't do all of these things every day. *But I usually do one of them.* You don't need to stop everything and study English. You can include English into your daily life.

What is one time during your day when you could study English?

STEP NUMBER THREE

Study interesting information

Focus on interesting information. It's that simple! Most of us experienced incredibly boring language classes in middle school and high school. When you're bored, it's hard to pay attention which means that it's hard to retain what you learned. *You only learn when you are completely engaged and interested in the material.*

My question for you is:

What do you like to do in your free time?

Do you like baking cookies? Or cooking a delicious meal? Do you like meeting up with friends? Do you like relaxing and watching TV?

Now I challenge you to mix your interests with English. Let me give you a personal example:

- I love learning about other cultures, so I watch a lot of **YouTube videos** of French people talking about their travels to other countries.
- I get so much energy from music, so I listen to French **music** when I get a chance.
- I love meeting new people, so every other week, I go to a French **meetup group** in my city. There are about 15 people who sit at a coffee shop and speak French together. It's great, and *best of all, I look forward to it!* It's not boring at all.

If you like animals, *watch animal documentaries or talk to your pet in English.* If you like watching soccer, *find a soccer broadcast in English.* But how do you find a variety of interesting information in English in your home country?

I want to give you three ideas for finding interesting information.

1. The internet

Of course, right? If you like yoga, do a yoga video on YouTube in English. If you have to commute to work, download a podcast to listen to. If you like to meet up with other people, look for English meetup groups in your city on meetup.com.

2. Your local library

If you like to read books, ask if the library has any English novels or non-fiction books. I love to read short action novels in French, like *Around the World in 80 Days*. Reading expands your vocabulary and makes you feel comfortable with natural grammar... in a fun way! If you like to watch movies, look in the movie section at the library to find movies in English.

3. Your electronic devices

This one is probably the easiest to do. Do you have a cell phone? *Change the language to English!* Do you have a computer? *Change the language to English!* Just remember to make sure you can change it back to your native language if you have a problem.

By doing activities that are interesting, you'll be learning English without feeling stressed.

Except for going to a meetup group, **most of these activities are *passive* learning.** You are listening or reading, but you're not *actively creating* language. In the next step we'll talk about how to actively become a confident English speaker.

STEP NUMBER FOUR

Start speaking English today

Maybe you feel like your English level is too low to start speaking today, but in this step, **I will give you several tips for speaking today, even if you are a beginner.** This is one of the most important steps.

Have you ever thought, *“I don’t know enough English to start speaking. If I spoke with a native speaker, it would be too difficult.”* After studying English for many years, you feel like you don’t know enough English to speak confidently.

Let me tell you a little story about my personal experience speaking other languages.

I remember in college during my Spanish class, my professor told us that we would have a conversation test the next day. I could read and understand some Spanish, but I didn’t know what to say during the speaking test. So, I prepared some sentences and memorized them. When it came time for the test, I said my few sentences, and I didn’t know what else to say. *I felt embarrassed and pretty frustrated because even though I had studied Spanish for several years, I still couldn’t have a conversation.*

So, what could I have done differently? I had gone to Spanish classes every week (sometimes two times a week) for several years. But, as you’ve learned in the last three lessons, I was making some major mistakes.

- **I wasn’t open-minded** about using other methods to learn Spanish.
- **I was pretty stressed** about my Spanish exams, and I was worried that the teacher might ask me a question that I didn’t understand.
- **I was studying a boring textbook** that my university required me to use.

I was learning the language completely wrong. And honestly, I felt pretty jealous of other students who could speak better than me.

So, what did I do?

I made a change. I mean, really big! After that exam, I decided to change languages. I joined a beginner French class. *I thought that maybe I wasn't good at Spanish.* Maybe it was a problem with the Spanish language and my brain.

The truth is: there's nothing wrong with Spanish and my brain. **But there was definitely something wrong with the way I was learning Spanish.**

After a few months in my French class, I realized that the other students didn't care about learning French. They never answered questions in class, and they had negative attitudes. *Even though the teacher was helpful, the other students made the class boring.*

I decided to quit the class, and I asked the teacher if I could meet with her in her office to study French together, just the two of us. *This was the best decision I could have made.*

Speaking one-on-one with the French teacher helped me feel confident and passionate about learning French. Even though my French level was low, the teacher helped me to make sentences. And most importantly, she encouraged me to speak.

She asked me, "*Qu'est-ce que tu vas faire ce week-end?*" (What are you going to do this weekend?) And I said in English, "How do you say 'go to a concert' in French?" She patiently helped me, and I repeated after her. Let me say that one more time:

Even though my level was low, I was trying to speak.

In my Spanish class, I never got a chance to speak. I was always watching videos or reading articles, but I hardly ever heard my own voice pronouncing Spanish words. **On the other hand, because I asked the French teacher if I could practice speaking with her, I improved much quicker than with Spanish.** It was also more fun!

After speaking with the French teacher for several months, I felt much more confident and ready when I moved to France after graduation.

So, how can you start speaking today? Here are two ideas:

1. Read a one-page story out loud

This is especially helpful for low level English learners. Your ears will become comfortable hearing your voice speak English, and your mouth muscles will become comfortable with the different shapes needed to speak English.

2. Speak English with a native speaker

If you have an intermediate level, don't wait to do this. All you need to do is go online and find a teacher who will be kind and helpful.

If you aren't sure where to start, I offer several courses that guide you so that you can find the best person to speak with today. [Start speaking English today.](#)

If you feel too nervous to speak with a native speaker now, don't worry. You can begin by reading a story out loud or just saying English words out loud in your house.

STEP NUMBER FIVE

Learn a little every day

I can imagine that you're a busy person, right? Everyone is busy these days. In this chapter, I'll share with you how to improve your English little-by-little every day.

Let's talk about WHY it's important to learn English every day. If you only listen to English materials once a month, or even once a week, *it will take you much longer to improve*. Also, if you use English every now and then, *it's hard to remember to study English*.

Imagine this situation:

- You wake up at 6am.*
- You get ready to go to work and you get your kids ready in the morning.*
- You go to work until 6pm at night.*
- When you come home, you make dinner, relax a bit, then go to bed.*
- In bed, you remember, **"Oh no! I didn't study English today!"**

Has that ever happened to you before?

This kind of busy lifestyle is quite stressful. **You're going to easily give up on your goal of becoming a confident, fluent English speaker.** Like we talked about in step number two, you need to fit English into your daily life. If you're a busy person, that means that *you need to fit little "bite-sized chunks" (remember that word?) of English into your daily life.*

Experts say that if you do something for 30 days, you will create a habit. A habit is something that you do without thinking. When you wake up in the morning, you brush your teeth (I hope!). You don't need to remember to brush your teeth because it's a habit.

**So, you need to make English a habit.
You need to consistently practice English.**

How can you make English a habit? I recommend these two things:

- 1. Take English in “bite-sized chunks” every day.** A few minutes is all that you need.
- 2. Choose the same time,** every day for 30 days, and by the end of the month, you will feel much more relaxed about learning English because it will be a habit.

I recommend choosing a specific time every day to learn English. Maybe it's while you're eating breakfast or during your lunch break or while your child is taking a nap in the afternoon.

And what kind of materials should you use? Like we talked about in chapter three, **make sure you use interesting materials.**

If you aren't sure where to start, *I recommend joining our wonderful community in “The Fearless Fluency Club.” This course will help you learn English step-by-step each month with me.* There are natural conversations, expressions and phrases, and speaking activities. To learn more about the course, [click here to speak English consistently and confidently every day.](#)

Conclusion

So, you want to be a confident English speaker? Follow these five steps, and you will find that learning English is interesting, enjoyable, and not stressful. Let's review the five steps:

- 1. Open your mind to new ways of learning English.**
- 2. Relax, don't stress.**
- 3. Study interesting information.**
- 4. Start speaking English today.**
- 5. Learn a little every day.**

Do you remember the question that I asked at the beginning of this e-book?

What would your life be like if you spoke better English?

Think about your answer and take action today using these five steps!

If these five steps were helpful to you, share this free e-book on Facebook and Twitter so that more people can become confident English speakers like you.

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Feel free to send me an email: contact@speakeenglishwithvanessa.com

Hot Resources

A list of helpful English learning resources

Free video lessons about speaking, pronunciation, expressions, and conversation:

<http://www.speakenglishwithvanessa.com/lessons/>

Speak English today with a native speaker:

<http://www.speakenglishwithvanessa.com/speakenglish>

Become a confident English speaker with “The Fearless Fluency Club”:

<http://www.speakenglishwithvanessa.com/fluency>

Watch videos in English:

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://www.vimeo.com>

<http://www.ted.com>

Listen to podcasts in English:

<http://www.itunes.com>

<http://www.stitcher.com>

Meetup with English speakers and English learners in your city:

<http://www.meetup.com>

Read the news in English

<http://www.npr.com>

<http://bbc.com>