

# **BASIC ENGLISH TEACHING TOOLS**

**Curs de limba engleză pentru vorbitori non-nativi**



**Conf. univ. dr. SILVIA OSMAN**

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## Obiectivele Cursului

### 1. Obiective generale:

**Basic English Teaching Tools** este un curs de limba engleză pentru vorbitori non-nativi și se adresează oricăror categorii profesionale care își doresc să studieze și să folosească limba engleză ca vehicul de expresie și informare, din dorința de a se putea documenta, interacționa și comunica cu terți, organizații sau persoane fizice, din comunități internaționale apropiate sferei proprii de interes profesional (și nu numai).

Într-un ambient global alert, din ce în ce mai extins și variat din punct de vedere instituțional și organizațional, pentru care *lingua franca* este cel mai adesea limba engleză.

Cursul își propune să aducă elemente interesante de sprijin și o mai bună înțelegere a limbii cu cea mai rapidă evoluție până acum cunoscută – **limba engleză** – în beneficiul categoriilor profesionale pentru care folosirea eficientă și corectă a limbii engleze reprezintă un instrument de lucru care poate aduce un important plus al varietății în abordarea noului și (în egală măsură) al deschiderii spre comunicare și comunitatea internațională.

**Basic English Teaching Tools, cursul de limba engleză pentru vorbitori non-nativi**, își propune și urmărește, de asemenea, cultivarea aptitudinilor multiple, legate de achiziția lingvistică *per se*, pe toate palierele de cunoaștere și studiu ale unei limbi străine, promovează dezvoltarea unui model de studiu individual, precum și stimularea procesului de învățare continuă.

### 2. Obiective specifice:

- Dezvoltarea unui instrument de studiu util în aprofundarea cunoștințelor de vocabular, pe mai multe paliere de cunoaștere, care încurajează dezvoltarea, învățarea și aplicarea principiilor de bază ale comunicării orale și scrise în limba engleză.

- Încurajarea principiilor exprimării eficiente, precum claritatea, coerența, corectitudinea limbajului și creativitatea.

- Menținerea și perfecționarea abilităților de comunicare acumulate de-a lungul timpului, pentru diversificarea și înnoirea permanentă a bagajului de cunoștințe sedimentate anterior.

- Perfecționarea proficienței lingvistice, cât și îmbogățirea bagajului de cultură generală, din domenii precum economia, sociologia, psihologia, politica, relațiile internaționale, jurnalismul, cultura etc

- Dezvoltarea unor aptitudini și tehnici specifice în abordarea exprimării în scris și/sau orale a unei varietăți de topici.

### **Competențe profesionale specifice urmărite de curs:**

#### **1. Cunoaștere și înțelegere**

- Familiarizarea cursanților cu noțiuni elementare de limba engleză
- Însușirea de cunoștințe lexicale specifice, esențiale pentru parcursul profesional al cursanților;
- Dobândirea de abilități de comunicare orală și scrisă în limba engleză, cu aplicații pe domeniul de specialitate și de interes profesional direct.

#### **2. Utilizarea cunoștințelor**

- Creșterea capacității de analiză și înțelegere a textelor de specialitate din limba engleză și situarea acestora în contextul economic / social / administrativ / cultural contemporan;
- Înțelegerea, traducerea, adaptarea și interpretarea textelor de diferite categorii de dificultate lingvistică, adecvate grupului țintă;
- Identificarea erorilor comune în interpretarea termenilor și însușirea corectă a noțiunilor de limbaj;
- Folosirea vocabularului de limba engleză acumulat în elaborarea de texte creative proprii.

#### **3. Dezvoltarea de abilități precum:**

- Utilizarea adecvată de termeni, criterii și metode standard de evaluare ale exprimării scrise și orale în limba engleză, pentru a aprecia calitatea, meritele și limitele unor procese, programe, proiecte, concepte, metode și teorii întâlnite în procesul de selecție, informare sau prelucrare de date în limba engleză.
- Conștientizarea nevoii de formare profesională continuă.

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## Unit 1

### *The Nuclear Family*

#### 1.1. Text as a Pretext for Learning

The **nuclear family**, consisting of a mother, father and their children, may be more an American ideal than an American reality. Of course, the so-called traditional American family was always more varied than we had been led to believe, reflecting the very different racial, ethnic, class and religious customs among different American groups.

The most recent government statistics reveal that only about one third of all current American families fit the traditional mould and another third consists of married couples that either have no children or have none still living at home. Of the final one third, about twenty percent of the total number of American households are single people, usually women over sixty-five years of age. A small percentage, about three percent of the total, consists of unmarried people who choose to live together; and the rest, about seven percent, are single, usually divorced parents, with at least one child. Today, these varied family types are typical, and therefore, normal. Apparently, many Americans are achieving supportive relationships in family forms other than the traditional one.

#### 1.2. Reading Comprehension Skills

**After reading the text carefully, please answer the following questions:**

1. With what is the passage mainly concerned?
  - a) the traditional American family,
  - b) the nuclear family
  - c) the current American family
  - d) the ideal family
2. How many single people were identified in the survey:
  - a) one third
  - b) one fourth
  - c) one fifth
  - d) less than one tenth of the total surveyed?

3. Who generally constitutes a one-person household?
  - a) a single man in his twenties,
  - b) an elderly man,
  - c) a single woman in her late sixties,
  - d) a divorced woman.
4. The author implies that
  - a) there have always been a wide variety of family arrangements in the United States,
  - b) racial, ethnic, and religious groups have preserved the traditional family structure,
  - c) the ideal American family is the best structure,
  - d) fewer married couples are having children.

### 1.3. Vocabulary Practice

#### Synonyms

1. If a client insists upon being stubborn, lawyers have to take claims to court.
  - a. Obstinate
  - b. Indignant
  - c. Abject
  - d. Gauche
2. Psychologists encourage their patients not to get upset about trivial matters.
  - a. Unexpected
  - b. Unusual
  - c. Unimportant
  - d. Uncertain
3. A thrifty buyer purchases fruits and vegetables in season.
  - a. Healthy
  - b. Disinterested
  - c. Careful
  - d. Professional
4. Frontier settlements had to depend on the cavalry.
  - a. Visit
  - b. Trust

- c. Meet
  - d. Help
5. In some state drivers are fined \$100 for careless driving.
- a. Routine
  - b. Reckless
  - c. Adept
  - d. Aggressive
6. Feeling irritable may be a side effect of too much medication.
- a. Drowsy
  - b. Grouchy
  - c. Dizzy
  - d. Silly
7. That a driver swerves in order to avoid an accident can be proven by examining the marks on the pavement.
- a. Turns sharply
  - b. Stops quickly
  - c. Hits something else
  - d. Goes backwards
8. Mark Anthony's eulogy of Caesar at his funeral is memorably recorded in a play by Shakespeare.
- a. Prayer
  - b. Biography
  - c. Praise
  - d. Denunciation
9. Drink only tepid water.
- a. Slightly warm
  - b. Very hot
  - c. Slightly cool
  - d. Very cold
10. The other members of the Cabinet made fun of the Secretary of Interior when he purchased Alaska because, at the time, it was not considered valuable.
- a. Admired
  - b. Derided
  - c. Envied
  - d. Endorsed

## 1.4. Grammar Skills – Acquiring Structures / Grammar Practice and Exercises

### Focusing on Structures

Choosing the right grammatical structure can make your sentences stronger and more concise. Although it is important to have variety in sentence structure, think about the best structure to use. Here are some guidelines for choosing the best structures:

- a) The subject and the verb of a sentence should reflect what is most important in a sentence. Example:
  - **Inconcise:** The situation that resulted in my grandfather's not being able to study engineering was that his father needed help around the farm.
  - **Concise:** My grandfather couldn't study engineering because his father needed help around the farm.
  
- b) Postponing the subject with structures like there is and it is can be effective to emphasize a point. But frequently they are just extra words that weaken your sentences. Example:
  - **Inconcise:** There were 25 cows on the farm that my grandfather had to milk every day. It was hard work for my grandfather.
  - **Concise:** My grandfather worked hard. He had to milk 25 cows on the farm every day.
  - **More concise:** My grandfather worked hard milking 25 cows daily.
  
- c) Complex sentences can often be made more concise by reducing clauses to phrases and phrases to single words. Example:
  - **Inconcise:** Dairy cows were raised on the farm, which was located 100 kilometers from the nearest university and was in an area that was remote.
  - **Concise:** The dairy farm was located in a remote area, 100 kilometers from the nearest university.
  
- d) Use the passive voice only when the object, not the subject, is the focus. The passive voice is indirect, and in this structure the actor (the subject) loses its importance. The passive voice also requires a helping verb and the prepositional phrase that names the actor.

- **Inconcise:** In the fall, not only did the cows have to be milked, but also the hay was mowed and stacked by my grandmother's family.
  - **Concise:** In the fall, my grandmother's family not only milked the cows, but also mowed and stacked the hay.
- e) Some verbs need extra words to convey meaning. One verb that carries the complete meaning by itself can often replace a verb like this.  
Example:
- **Inconcise:** My father didn't have time to stand around doing nothing with his school friends.
  - **Concise:** My father had no time to loiter with his school friends.
- f) Information in two or more sentences can often be combined into one sentence. Example:
- **Inconcise:** profits from the farm were not large. Sometimes they were too small to meet the expenses of running a farm. They were not sufficient to pay for a university degree.
  - **Concise:** Profits from the farm were sometimes too small to meet operational expenses, let alone pay for a university degree.

## Unit 2

### *The Beginnings of a Great City: New York*

#### 2.1. Reading Skills

In 1626, **Peter Minuit**, governor of the Dutch settlements in North America known as New Amsterdam, negotiated with Indian chiefs for the purchase of Manhattan Island for merchandise valued at sixty guilders or about \$24.12. He purchased the island for the Dutch West India Company.

The next year, Fort Amsterdam was built by the company at the extreme southern tip of the island. Because attempts to encourage Dutch immigration were not immediately successful, offers, generous by the standards of the era, were extended throughout Europe. Consequently, the settlement became the most heterogeneous of the North American colonies. By 1637, the fort had expanded into the village of New Amsterdam, and other small communities had grown up around it, including New Haarlem and Stuyvesant's Bouwery. By 1643, it was reported that eighteen different languages were spoken and heard in New Amsterdam alone.

When the English acquired the island in 1664, the village of New Amsterdam was renamed New York, in the honour of the Duke of York. By the onset of the Revolution, New York City was already a bustling commercial centre. After the war, it was selected as the first capital of the United States.

Although the government eventually moved, first to Philadelphia and then to Washington DC, **New York City** remained the unofficial commercial capital.

Three centuries after his initial trade with the Indians, Minuit's tiny investment was worth more than seven billion dollars.

#### 2.2. Reading Comprehension Skills

**After reading the text carefully, please answer the following questions:**

1. Which of the following titles would be the best title for the passage?
  - a) A History of New York City,
  - b) An Account of the Dutch Colonies,
  - c) A Biography of Peter Minuit,

d) The First Capital of the United States

1. What did the Indians receive in exchange for their island?
2. Where was New Amsterdam located?
3. Why were so many languages spoken in New Amsterdam?
4. Which city was the first capital of the new United States?
  - a) New Amsterdam,
  - b) New York,
  - c) Philadelphia,
  - d) Washington
5. On what date was Manhattan valued at \$7 billion?
  - a) 1626,
  - b) 1726,
  - c) 1656,
  - d) 1926

## 2.3. Vocabulary Practice

### Vocabulary Practice Study Tips:

- Research shows that it is very useful to organize a set of vocabulary items being studied into groups. It does not matter how you group those words or whether your groupings would make any sense to anyone else or not. It is thinking about the words enough to create groups that improves how we learn those words.

- As another revision technique, try organizing the words you have worked on in a Unit into three or four (or more) groups in any way you find appropriate.

## Synonyms

1. Veterinarians usually give dogs an anesthetic so that they don't cry out in pain.
  - a. Gulp
  - b. Flip
  - c. Yelp
  - d. Purr
  
2. A balanced diet should include fish and fowl as well as red meat.
  - a. Fruit
  - b. Birds
  - c. Vegetables
  - d. Cheese and milk
  
3. The Congress respected Jefferson because although he was stern, he was fair.
  - a. Emulated
  - b. Counted on
  - c. Looked up to
  - d. Obeyed
  
4. When students do not have time to read a novel before class, they read an outline of the plot instead.
  - a. An article
  - b. A synopsis
  - c. A critique
  - d. An essay
  
5. Dali's paintings can inspire a pensive mood.
  - a. Cheerful
  - b. Thoughtful
  - c. Depressed
  - d. Confused
  
6. Dictionary funds are included in most budgets to cover expenses that the contractor might run into during the work.
  - a. Forget to do
  - b. Pay for

- c. Meet unexpectedly
- d. Add on

7. News commentator Eric Severeid had to yell to be heard above the hubbub.

- a. Noise and confusion
- b. Loud music
- c. Argument
- d. Sports activity

8. John Dewey loathed the idea that children should not participate in activities as part of their educational experience.

- a. Encouraged
- b. Noticed
- c. Hated
- d. Began

9. The copperhead, a snake that strikes without warning, is considered much more dangerous than the rattlesnake.

- a. Exquisite
- b. Sporadic
- c. Treacherous
- d. Obstinate

10. The Miami port authorities have seized over a million dollars worth of illegal drugs.

- a. Confiscated
- b. Discarded
- c. Concealed
- d. Destroyed

## 2.4. Grammar Skills – Acquiring Structures

### Affixation: Prefixes and Suffixes

Through affixation, new meanings are created.

**Preposition-based prefixes** have different meanings:

**Over-** may indicate (a) an excess of something, or (b) something that covers or dominates something, or (c) the crossing of some kind of barrier.

**(a) Excess:**

- That film was overrated in my view, [people said it was better than it really was]
- It was a bad restaurant, with an overpriced menu.

**(b) Cover:**

- In this program, you can choose to overwrite the existing file or to save it as a new file, [cover/replace the old text with the new text]
- Our garden is overshadowed by the block of flats next door, [the flats cast a shadow over our garden]
- She always felt overshadowed by her older, more successful, sister. [metaphorical use, felt less important than]

**(c) Cross:**

- He overstepped the mark when he said that, [crossed a barrier into offensive/unacceptable behaviour]
- Will you be staying overnight? [from one day to the next]

**Under-** may indicate (a) less than the desired amount, or (b) something below another thing, or (c) some kind of negative behaviour.

**(a) LESS**

- Don't underestimate the time it will take, [think it will be less than it really is]
- The company is seriously understaffed, [lacking staff]

**(b) BELOW**

- It's quite wet underfoot. Did it rain last night? [on the ground, beneath your feet]
- The underlying question is a very difficult one. [the deeper question]

### (c) NEGATIVE

- I wish you would not undermine everything I do. [attack, weaken]
- He did it in a very underhand way. [secretly and possibly dishonestly]

**Up** - can suggest a change of some kind, often positive:

- The airline upgraded me to business class, [changed my ticket to a better class]
- There has been an upturn in the economy, [sudden change for the better]

**Cross** - (from *across*) usually indicates a link between two separated things:

- Cross-border cooperation has led to a number of arrests of drug smugglers.  
[across the frontiers of two or more countries]
- Cross-cultural misunderstandings often happen, [between people of different cultures]

### Less frequent prefixes

#### **Con-/com-**

- Often suggests mixing things together.
- It often occurs in verbs of communication.

#### **Ex: converse commiserate condolences congeal contaminate**

**E** - can give the idea of something coming out of something:

- They were ejected from the restaurant for bad behavior, [formal: thrown out]
- The machine emitted a loud noise and then stopped working, [formal: gave out]

**A(d)** ~ often means adding something to something or that things are connected.

Sometimes, the 'd' is replaced by doubling the following consonant.

- The building is adjacent to / adjoins the hotel, [formal: is next to]
- She gave me an annotated edition of Shakespeare's works, [with notes added]

**Pro-** can often suggest pushing something forward or increasing it:  
**promote proliferate; procrastinate; procreate**

## Suffixation

### Productive suffixes

Some suffixes are productive<sup>1</sup>. You therefore need to understand their **meaning** if you are reading contemporary English. You might also feel adventurous enough to try coining<sup>2</sup> some words of your own!

The meaning or the example words below is clear from the meanings of the root and the suffix. (In the word washable, wash is the root and able is the suffix.)

**-able** can be used productively, whereas **-ible** never is. It combines with verbs to form adjectives. Note that -able means ‘can be’: a washable jacket is one that can be washed, disposable nappies, predictable results, avoidable problems, a manageable situation

**-conscious** combines with nouns to form adjectives that describe people who consider one aspect of their lives especially important: health-conscious person, class-conscious society, safety-conscious company, time-conscious workforce

**-esque** combines with the names of famous people to form adjectives that describe something or someone similar in style: Picassoesque paintings; picturesque scenes

**-free** combines with nouns describing something undesirable to form adjectives to describe nouns without that undesirable aspect: stress-free life, tax-free shop, additive-free food

**-rich** combines with nouns (often chemical or organic substances) to form adjectives to describe nouns with a lot of that substance: fiber-rich diet, calcium-rich foods

**-led** combines with nouns and nationality adjectives to form adjectives describing things that are controlled or influenced by the original noun or nationality: community-led initiative, student-led protest, worker-led uprising

**-minded** combines with adjectives or nouns to form new adjectives describing people with particular characters, opinions or attitudes: like-minded friends [with similar interests], career-minded young women, money-minded managers

**-proof** combines with nouns to form adjectives describing things that can resist the damage or difficulty caused by that noun: ovenproof dish, waterproof jacket, soundproof room, idiot-proof instructions

---

<sup>1</sup> used to create new words

<sup>2</sup> creating