

Twenty Sentences

The Fundamentals Of Language

*Learn something today,
and tomorrow
you look back on knowledge increased.*

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With thanks to narrators:
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Twenty Sentences – the fundamentals of language

Overview

This is a collection of twenty sentences, around 50 words each - making around one thousand words in all. They contain the fundamentals of human expression and interaction. This is a learning tool to learn these fundamentals. By themselves they won't make you fluent, nor will they give you all the vocabulary that you need for all circumstances. It takes many years to truly master a language. Pick up a dictionary of your home tongue and most likely you will still encounter words that you do not know. But the fundamentals are common to all circumstances of interaction. The fundamentals are more a factor of human interaction than language. If you know these wholly, you are well on your way to learning the language as a whole.

Also you do not need to be linguistically perfect to convey meaning. “Me want that”, pointing at an item on a food stall at the market, would be universally understandable.

How much of a language do you have to learn in order to say “I have learned it”? Greeting someone at the bus stop? A shopping transaction in the market? Writing your PhD thesis in that language? Different people will have different requirements and expectations. Also, different people will have different learning styles and backgrounds. This is a language learning method that will suit some, but not necessarily all.

Background

The intention here is to learn the fundamentals of language. Consider:

- The first 25 most commonly used words in English make up about one-third of all printed material in English.
- The first 100 make up about one-half of all written material in English
- The first 300 make up about sixty-five percent of all written material in English.

Taken From: *The Reading Teachers Book of Lists, Third Edition*; by Edward Bernard Fry, Ph.D, Jacqueline E. Kress, Ed.D & Dona Lee Fountoukidis, Ed.D.

The first of these Twenty Sentences contains 53 words in all and 10 of the 25 most commonly used words. If the first 25 words constitute 1/3 of English, then 10 of those 25 constitute a thumb suck of around 1/7th of English.

What this is

The intention here is to wholly learn the fundamentals of the language. Initially we do not care about grammar at all. Just learn it – word for word, phrase for phrase learn it, like a child would. Once you have done so, you will have a framework of what is “right”. You can then take that framework and progress as you wish. You may only want the fundamentals. You may go on to language classes in which case having the fundamentals will make that process much easier. You may start interacting with the new language speakers and then you simply build and expand on what you already know.

What this is not

The intention here is not to replace more formal lessons or language classes. That will still be necessary to become fluent with any new language. In addition, this is not a phrase book. Learning this will not make you fluent, but it will give you a good head start, with pegs of familiarity on which to expand your knowledge.

Additional Thoughts

In this learning there is no mention of grammar or grammatical terms. There is no word for word translation list to learn. The final section does contain grammar and lists for revision and reference. This is not to say that grammar is not important. It is significant. But in order to convey the intent "*I would like to...*" you do not need to know that that is technically a present conditional tense. More importantly initially, is knowing how to express that intent.

This language learning tool uses colour, text and sound to convey meaning and learning is by intuition, absorption, and repetition. It links sounds, words and meaning. Initially we will be working on languages using the same Roman based alphabet. The next step will be to link letters as well as sounds, words and meaning - hence languages with different alphabets.

The use of colour will be a problem for colour blind people, and we are working on a solution for them.

Some people say it is too hard to learn another language. But, can you learn one sentence? Can you learn one phrase? Can you learn one word? Of course you can. Do so. Go at whatever rate suits you, but the fundamentals of another language are within your grasp – another language, another culture, another world. Learn something today, and tomorrow you look back on knowledge increased.

