



# LANGUAGE LINKS

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## What's happening this week?

The OCC Brain Game will be held at the Prince Palace Hotel this Friday, May 18. This is a fun activity in which ILC students gather and work together in teams in order to answer lots of general knowledge questions. Prizes will be awarded to the team that has scored the highest number of points by the end of the morning's activity. It is a great chance for all ILC students to practise their listening, writing and speaking skills, while widening their general knowledge.

This activity also marks the end of the Oral Communication Course (OCC). As their final assignment, the OCC students will run the activity, thereby putting the knowledge they have gained throughout the course into practice. On behalf of all teachers, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all OCC students on this achievement.



### NOTE:

- \* Please be at the Prince Palace Hotel by 8.45 a.m.
- \* Casual dress is not acceptable

### Tentative Schedule

09.00 OCC Brain Game  
10.30 Coffee/Tea Break  
10.45 OCC Brain Game (continued)  
12.00 Lunch

## LEARNING STRATEGIES

### How to Improve Your Speaking and Pronunciation Skills

The first rule of speaking English is to speak clearly and concisely, and to use simple vocabulary. (Remember, 'KISS' = keep it short and simple.)

Keep in mind, too, that you probably won't converse just with native speakers. There are roughly 380 million native speakers of English in the world, but as many as a billion people speak it as a second language. So it's a good idea to avoid idioms and slang. Short sentences are just as good (if not better) than long explanations. The value in what you have to say is what you say, not how clever you look or sound when you say it.

#### Pronunciation skills

Accents don't matter, but pronunciation is important.

#### Learn the phonetic alphabet.

List words that have the same sound, and add to the lists as you learn more words. Work on one problem sound at a time. Read slowly, concentrating on the pronunciation of particular words. Record yourself, keep the tape and record yourself again later to check if you have improved. Don't be shy – ask a friend to listen to the tape, too. Don't worry about sounding exactly like a native speaker: it is more important to speak clearly and pleasantly than to sound like the Queen of England.

The most important thing to think about is whether people can understand you or not. If you have a problem being understood, then find someone who speaks English clearly and try to copy the way they speak. Pay particular attention to speed and diction.

Adapted from: <http://www.learnenglish.de/ImproveEnglish/improvespeakingpage.htm>

**Usana**

# Culture Corner



## BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN GERMANY



- Germans are strongly individualistic.
- The German thought process is extremely thorough, with each aspect of a project being examined in great detail. This process is often very time-intensive. However, once the planning is over, a project will move very quickly and deadlines are expected to be honoured.

- Germans do not like surprises. Sudden changes in business transactions, even if they may improve the outcome, are unwelcome.



**Punctuality** is a necessity in Germany. Arrive on time for every appointment, whether business or social. Being late, even if it is only by a few minutes, is very insulting to a German executive.

- In business situations, **shake hands** at both the beginning and the end of a meeting. Additionally, a handshake may be accompanied by a slight bow. Reciprocating the nod is a good way to make a good impression, as failure to respond with this nod/bow (especially to a superior) may get you off to a bad start. Be sure to look directly into the person's eyes while shaking hands.



- Business is viewed as being very serious, and Germans do not appreciate humour in a business context.
- Germans keep a larger personal space around them, approximately 6 inches more than North Americans do. *However*, it is not unusual that when in line at a store cash register, Germans will crowd up very close to the person in front of them.

- People that have worked together for years still **shake hands** each morning as if it were the first time they were meeting.



# Here's the Answer...

## How do I express an opinion?

Q

I'd like to know some ways to express an opinion. Could you tell me?

A

Following are ways to express opinions and introduce information.



- Use *on the one hand...on the other hand* to introduce two different points of view:

On the one hand, cycling to work is good exercise. On the other hand, you breathe in a lot of fumes, which is bad for you.

- To say the exact opposite of something is true, we use *on the contrary*.

He is not mean. On the contrary, he's very generous.



- To say what we think, we use *in my opinion*:  
*In my opinion, we shouldn't pay tax on clothes.*



- To state someone else's opinion, we can use *according to*:  
*According to John, nurses don't earn enough money.*



- Firstly* and *first of all* are used to introduce our first point:

*Firstly, I will explain on the use of acupuncture to cure back pain.*



- At first* describes the beginning of a situation, often with *but* if the situation changes:

*At first, I didn't like her, but now I think she's quite nice.*



Source: Tayfoor, S. 2004. *Common Mistakes at First Certificate and How to Avoid Them*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# FUN WITH ENGLISH

## No.7 Too many words 1

Replace the words in bold type in the following sentences with a single word. (The first letter of the word is given.)

1. The man **who controls a tennis match** told Connors to start serving. (u.....)
2. He **was very sorry** for the way he had behaved. (r.....)
3. Many people **told beforehand** that John F. Kennedy would be assassinated. (f.....)
4. He was a happy person who was always **expecting the best to happen**. (o.....)
5. Last weekend, I had the horrible experience of having to visit the **place where dead bodies are kept until the funeral**. (m.....)
6. Because of the bad acoustics, the actor's words were **so low that they could not be heard**. (i.....)
7. The **people who were sitting in the church** listened attentively to the vicar's sermon. (c.....)
8. He had great **strength of body to fight tiredness** and could run for hours without stopping. (s.....)
9. My cousin is **able to use both hands equally well**. This was a great advantage when he broke his arm since he could still write with his other hand. (a.....)
10. My doctor gave me sleeping pills because I was suffering from a **prolonged inability to sleep**. (i.....)

### Answers no.6

- |                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. meanders    | 6. devastated/<br>destroyed |
| 2. dentures    | 7. airworthy                |
| 3. impregnable | 8. amnesia                  |
| 4. matricide   | 9. ascertain                |
| 5. negligible  | 10. insatiable              |

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