



Thinking in English

One of the hardest things about learning another language is learning to think in that language.

It does not happen spontaneously, but you can learn to think in English if you work strategically.

Let's look at 5 strategies you can start applying straight away.

1. Avoid translations

In order to think in English and participate well in class, you need to learn to manage without dictionaries and translation apps. Often when you look up translations you will realise you knew the answer already anyway, so trust yourself and use your time more effectively.

If you do need to check the meaning of a word or phrase, try using a **thesaurus** or an English-English dictionary instead. This will also help you learn more words with the same or similar meaning.

Note, however, that generalist dictionaries may not give you the specialised academic meaning you need, so always pay attention to the context of the whole text.

2. Talk to yourself

Practise phrases, pronunciation and intonation by speaking to yourself. Listen to other speakers and try to emulate the rhythm and flow of their speaking. This will also help you understand new words as they are used in different contexts.

It may feel silly sometimes, but practising phrases on your own will give you more confidence in using them in conversations, whether socially or in class.

3. Focus on phrases

Instead of focusing on the meaning and use of individual words, focus on phrases or short strings of words to make them a natural part of your conversation.

4. Be a beginner

Put yourself in an environment where you can't rely on your first language. For example, start a new hobby or study a subject you are not familiar with in your first language.

5. Work in context

Finally, context is very important in learning a language, so make sure you develop your thinking skills in many different contexts and interests.

This will help ensure your fluency isn't limited to only some parts of your life.

The key to thinking in English is leaving your comfort zone. Take risks and trust yourself to succeed!