**11.3 EFFORTS TO IMPROVE**

**ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS**

English is a global language: international trade, etc have encouraged the use of English as a international lingua franca in any field—be it law, commerce or science. In India it is a special case because the country has so many languages and English along with Hindi provides convenient bridge for different communities to communicate. English as a language can be used to unite a community or society in terms of economic opportunities.

Thus it becomes imperative to learn English and improve the standard of it in schools, aided or unaided, from the very beginning.

**New admissions in different classes**

* New admissions in different classes need special attention, guidance and coaching because of their deficient Primary School-education and poor knowledge. We are required to help them even though it is not our responsibility. Stride in this Specific direction may lead to wish-for results.

**Advice to students**

* To read English news paper every day.
* Sometimes the difficult thing about English speaking is not the language itself, but how you think about it. If we think in Urdu/Hindi, we will have to translate it which is not an easy thing to do. The solution lies in thinking in English. We can do it anywhere any time. So, it is better to think in English when we are thinking about our day to day activities.
* Try to use English to English dictionary. When we, think in English, it is easier to speak in English.
* Whenever alone anywhere, try to speak to yourself in English at any chosen topic.
* If thinking in English, then try to speak the thoughts aloud. Confidence comes after practice.
* To make it a habit to watch English news and English channels. Choose a short part of a TV show and repeat it line by line. Try to match the tone.
* Choose a topic and speak in front of a mirror. The point of this exercise is to watch the face and body language during the practice. Talk continuously without a break at least for two or three minutes. If you stuck on a word you don’t know, try to express the idea in a different way.
* Stopping in between should not be a problem. Have a challenge, and try to speak next time even better. Practice makes a man perfect.
* Don’t worry about the construction of sentence or about the grammar just focus on speaking fluently.
* Knowing the correct way to use a word in any kind of sentence is important. This knowledge is helpful in spoken English.
* Practice the difficult words and tongue twister.
* Write a small essay and letter on different topics to different people for different purposes.
* Debate with friends on any given topic.
* Communicate with each other in English.
* Develop reading habits and read good books available in the library or purchase new one on the topics you like.
* Learn phrases, idioms, and synonyms to improve English.
* Choose a story that you really know well and tell it in English. Remember to think this story in English as you are telling it in English.
* Start with three activities a day and then gradually adopt all.

**Tips to improve English**

1. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes. Be confident. People can only correct your mistakes when they hear you.
2. Surround yourself in English. Put yourself in an English speaking environment, where you can learn passively. The best to learn is through speaking.
3. Practice every day. Make a study plan. Decide how much time a week you are going to spent studying and stick to it.
4. Tell your family and friends about your study plan. Get them to push you to study and also don’t let them interrupt you.
5. Practice 4 core skills, reading and writing, speaking and listening. These are all needed to be worked on for you to improve.
6. Keep a note-book of new words you learn. Use them in sentences and try to say them at least 3 times when you speak.
7. Do a lesson at least once a day.
8. Memorization of lists is one of the most common ways of learning vocabulary for a test. It’s only good for short term studying because you often do not retain the information that you have learn for a test.
9. Use your body clock. If you are not a morning person, study in the afternoon or at night.
10. Will you find words easier to remember? Try to remember an example sentence using that word rather than the word at its own.
11. Plan to take a test, you’ll find that you work harder when you need to study for something.
12. Saying that, it’s better not to study just to take a test. Think of the bigger picture. What can you do when you have a good command of English? How the quality of your life will improve?
13. Give yourself a long term goal. Focus on working towards it.
14. Give yourself short term goals too and reward yourself when you achieve each one.
15. Create an atmosphere in which you want to learn, not because you have to. You’ll learn more when you are learning because you want to.
16. Know what works best for you. Think about what methods have been successful for you in the past and stick with them.
17. Figure out how you learn. It can be by memorizing, reading, speaking, summarizing or other methods. Find out how you study best. It can be in a quiet place by you or with a group.
18. Get help, if you don’t understand something you have got to ask someone. Ask your teacher, class mates or friends for help.
19. **Review! Review! Review!** Make sure that you take the time to review things you have studied in the past.
20. It’s not a good idea to study on your own for more than 30 minutes at a time. Take regular breaks; get some fresh air and stretch your legs.
21. Don’t be in such a hurry to move up a level. Concentrate on the level you are at now.
22. Watch DVDs rather than TV. It’s better to use something that you can watch over again to catch information you might have missed the first time.
23. Watching TV only gives you the chance to hear something correctly first time. This is better for high level students. It can be great practice for speaking to native English speakers, so you don’t have to ask to repeat them!
24. **Read graded readers.** These books are especially written for your level. Read a whole novel. You can do it! You will feel great afterwards.
25. Children’s books have easier words and are a good alternative to graded readers.
26. News papers are a good place to find passive constructs. Read through an article and see if you can find the passive sentences.
27. Read for the general meaning first. Don’t worry about understanding every word. Then go back and look up new words.
28. For a word you don’t understand in a sentence, look at the other words around it. They will give you hint. Try to guess the meaning from the context.
29. Learn root words. They will help you guess the meaning of words. For example: *scribe=* write; *min=* small, *bios=* life, *logos=* study of etc.
30. When you learn a new word, think of all its other forms such as;
31. *Beautiful* (adjective), *beauty* (noun), *beautifully* (adverb).
32. Learn prefix (dis, un, re) and suffix (*-ly, -meant, -ful*), these will help you to figure out the meaning of words and build your vocabulary.
33. English, unlike Japanese, French, uses word stress. For new words’ count the two syllables, and find where the stress is? Only one stress per word and always on a vowel. Two syllable verbs have a stress on the second syllable (be**GIN**). Two syllable nouns (**TEA**cher) and adjectives (**HAP**py) stress the first.
34. Use English whenever you can. It’s as simple as that.
35. Don’t translate into English from your own language. Think in English to improve your fluency. Whenever alone, talk to yourself, of course not in a bus.
36. You can’t learn English from a book like driving a car, you can only learn through doing it.
37. The most natural way to learn the grammar is through talking.
38. Keep an English diary or journal. Start by writing a few sentences a day and then get into the habit of writing more.
39. Why not start an online **blog** and share your writing with the world.
40. To become a better writer brainstorm as many ideas and thoughts onto paper without worrying about grammar or spelling. Then think about the structure, after that write your piece using good grammar and spelling. Finally read it through or give it to someone else to check mistakes.
41. Keep an eye at your punctuation as it can totally change what you are trying to say. Check out the difference in meaning between these two sentences:
42. A woman without her man is nothing
43. A woman: without her, man is nothing
44. Sing your heart out! Show the world your beautiful voice. Learn English songs and sing along with them to improve fluency and intonation.
45. Get a pen friend or use chat-rooms, forums and community sites. If you can’t speak to someone in English. This is the next best thing.
46. **Shadow English CDs.** Listen to a few sentences, and then repeat what you heard. Focus on the rhythm and intonation.
47. **Have English radio on in your house.** Even ifyou are not actively listening to it, you will still be training your ears.
48. **Mirror CDs.** Read out loud along with a CD. Again this is great for intonation, punctuation and rhythm.
49. **Dictation,** listen to a CD or friend and write down what you hear.
50. Nobody likes to hear his own voice, but be brave and try it. Record your voice and listen to your pronunciation and intonation. It will help you to identify your problem areas.
51. Ask your helpful teacher if you can record his lessons. This is a great way to review; you can also listen to your teacher’s speaking speed and intonation.
52. Use an English/English dictionary as it will help you to keep thinking in English and not translating.
53. If an English /English dictionary seems scary, there are learner’s dictionaries for English students of your level.
54. Don’t become too reliant on your dictionary. Your dictionary should be an aid, not your main teacher. Try to guess the meaning of words rather than going straight for your dictionary.
55. Don’t give up! Stay positive! Sometimes you will feel that you aren’t learning quickly enough. Everyone feels like this, don’t worry about this. You’ll get there in the end.
56. Enjoy it! We learn more when we are having fun.
57. If you get nervous when speaking, take two deep breaths before you say something. You’ll speak better when you feel relaxed.
58. Keep yourself motivated by looking back at the textbooks and CDs you used in the past. You will be surprised at how easy that seem to you now! Congratulations, our level is improving.
59. You are never too young or too old to start learning English. Don’t make excuses not to learn, what are you waiting for?
60. Procrastination (hesitation) can stop you from being successful. To stop procrastination it’s important you understand if your procrastination is to avoid studying, or if it is your bad habit.
61. If you haven’t gotten the results you wanted yet, it’s not because you are bad at language, it’s because you have not found your own special way of learning it.
62. Use resources which match your level. Don’t use text/listening exercise which are too difficult or too easy. Use materials which challenge you but don’t frustrate you.
63. Don’t worry about making your accent perfect it’s an important part of your culture identity to keep your accent. Native English speakers enjoy hearing English spoken with an accent.
64. **There are many types of English:** British, American. South African, Australian and so on. None of these are wrong or not as important, English is English.
65. Instead be aware of the differences in America and British English and use your words accordingly. For example *Elevator* (US), *Lift* (British).
66. Carry cue card with you. These are small cards on which you can write new words. You can pull them out and look at them whenever you have a free minute.
67. Use post-it notes and stick them around your home. You can use them to label things.
68. You can’t ignore phrasal verbs (two words verbs), there are hundreds of them in English and they are widely used. The more you focus on their meaning, the more you will be able to guess the meaning of new ones. You will start to recognize their patterns.
69. Use your intuition. Go with your gut feeling. You will be surprised how often your first guess is the right guess, Be confident.
70. Gather your thoughts. Take a second to think about what you are going to say. You know the grammar but, may be you don’t use it correctly when you speak.
71. Meet new people. Make the effort to mix with English speakers in your town or city. You could join a club.
72. Be the person to start conversation in English. Try to keep the conversation moving and use listening words (‘really?/ ‘go on’ ‘what happened then’?). Don’t wait for others to speak to you. Go in there.
73. **Debate.** Discus topics in a group. Each person should choose a viewpoint (even if you don’t agree with it) and debate it within the group. Make sure you get your point across. Learn to listen actively. Active listening will help in the classroom and it will help you to get more out of. And contribute to more to, group study sessions. Focus on the person who is talking. Don’t fidget (nervous) or become distracted by other people or events. Concentrate at the speaker with your ears and eyes open. Follow the movements the speaker makes in an effort to hear more. It may help to repeat what you hear others say in an effort to understand their thoughts.
74. It is not enough to only learn English words. You can teach a parrot English word, but that doesn’t mean that it can speak English. You still need to have an understanding of grammar.
75. Verb, tenses are used by English speakers to talk about the timing of actions. You might not have the same expression in your own language. It’s important that you know these tenses and when to use them.
76. English has many irregular verbs. You should drill yourself on them.
77. Keep it up! If you take a break from speaking English, you will find that your level decreases and all your hard work has been wasted.
78. Don’t be put off by a bad taste score. Sometimes students have the ability to pass an English test, but can’t communicate well with English speakers. If you can speak freely in English, you should be proud of yourself.
79. Remember that, as long as you have tried your hardest, you succeed.
80. Learn English with a friend. You will have someone you can practice with and you can motivate each other to study.
81. Remember, the way we write English is not the same as how it is pronounced. For example ‘*ough’* has over 6 pronunciations. Familiarize yourself, the phonetic Alphabet. It will help you correctly pronounce words in the dictionary.
82. Get used to the ‘*schwa’* sound an unstressed and toneless neutral vowel sound. *‘schwa’* is the most common vowel sound in English. For example *‘a’* in *‘about’* and *‘u’* in ‘*supply’*.
83. Keep in mind that it takes longer to improve when our level is high. Usually the fastest progress is made when we are beginners. Don’t think that you are suddenly not learning anymore, it is just a less noticeable progress.
84. Make sure that your English matches the occasion. It’s OK to use slang with friends, but not in a business meeting. Decide in which situation it’s appropriate to use the words and phrases you have learned.
85. Textbook English is often different from the way we casually speak. To learn casual ‘slang’ watch movies.
86. Idioms can difficult to memorize, but they are great fun to use and they’ll make your English more colorful.
87. Make use of the internet. It is full of resources to help you learn.
88. Think about your strong and weak points. Write down which areas you want to improve on and work on improving them. Of course don’t ignore your strong points. Congratulate yourself on how well you have done.
89. Unlearn (recall) your mistakes. You probably make the same grammar mistakes over and over again. Use English test results as a study tool. Go over your mistakes and choose one or two that you want to focus on. Use your favorite grammar book to check rules.
90. Use the correct article (a, an, the). Be aware that there is more to this rule than a/an=nonspecific, the= specific. For example: a *university (*not *an university* because it begins with a consonant sound*)*, *an hour (*not *a hour* because *h* is often silent).
91. For fluency, try image training. Before you go to that restaurant think through what the waiter is likely say to you. Think of what phrases you are going to use.
92. Much communication comes through body language and gesture. These can be due to different cultures and countries. For example, the two fingered ‘V’ for victory symbol is fine palm-out. If you make it your palm facing towards you, you will offend a British person. It means …. Well you ask a British person and find out for yourself.
93. The easiest one—sleep! You’ll be able to concentrate more.
94. Take an English course in English speaking country’
95. If you are studying abroad, mix with people from other countries, not only the people from your own county. It’s not a good idea for you to live in a shared house with people from your own country. Enjoy a more cultural experience by spending time with people of other nationalities.
96. Have you thought about getting a job or doing an internship abroad?
97. Get yourself a qualified teacher.
98. Nobody can learn all of English language. No need to worry about trying. A useful short cut to learning is that in English we have lots of words that have the same pronunciation, but with a different spelling and meaning. For example ‘*here’* and *‘hear’* and many more. Build the vocabulary by knowing the different meanings.
99. Once you have a basic level of English, explore the different ways you can say the same thing. This makes your English more interesting to the listener and it should not be too difficult for you because you already know the basics. For example in how many ways can we say ‘*goodbye’* in English?
100. When you are on your English course, be prepared for your class. Do your home work as soon as possible and hand it in time. Review your notes and your last lesson a few minutes before the class. Doing this will refresh your memory and you’ll be warmed up for lesson.
101. Don’t get disturbed in class. Focus on the lesson; don’t stare out of the window; don’t be late; arrive a few minutes before the start of the lesson. Don’t sit next to people who won’t speak to you in English. Switch off your phone. Be organized; remember to take your text book and pen.

***Find a comfortable and peaceful place for quiet study. You need a place where you can focus 100%.***