

Connection Commentary

Hi, this is AJ, welcome to our first commentary. This one is called “Connection.”

In the commentaries I am going to talk about a specific topic. Now these are not lessons, so there will be no mini-story lessons, no vocabulary lessons. It’s just an extra bonus listening material for you.

Now these commentaries are all spontaneous. So there’s no script, I’m not reading from anything, I’m just talking freely and spontaneously about the topic. So this is a very natural conversational style, just a little extra bonus, fun, material for you.

So just listen to these freely and there’s some text so you can read them if you don’t understand some part or some word. You can use a dictionary or just read so you understand. But it’s just some fun, free, easy listening for you. So let’s start.

The first commentary is about the topic of “Connection.” And, in fact, the full title is “Connection, Not Communication.” What do I mean by that? Well, I want to talk about the purpose of English. Why you are learning this damn language. Why are you doing it? Why am I teaching English?

That’s the question I started with and I’ve been asking myself that question for a while. Why do I teach English? I mean, in fact, I’ve been asking that question for a couple of years, but, especially recently, I’ve been thinking, you know, why am I an English teacher? What is my purpose? And I thought about it for a long time. I’ve written in my journal about it and I keep asking myself this question. Why am I really teaching English? I mean what is my purpose? What am I really trying to do with the Effortless English Club, with these lessons?

And you know I thought about it and I thought you know it’s not because I love the English language, specifically. I don’t think English is better than another language. You know English is no better than Spanish or Japanese or Portuguese or Chinese or Thai or anything else. And, you know, I’m interested in linguistics and language learning, but it’s not my passion. It’s not my focus in life. It’s not my deepest meaning or purpose.

And, honestly, I don’t believe that everybody must learn English. Most people in the world can have a great life without English, so why am I doing this? I kept asking myself, why? Why am I doing this? Why do we learn languages and especially, why English?

Maybe you need to ask yourself this question, I mean really think about it because a lot of people start learning English for some outside reason. It's not a very emotional reason. It's not a very powerful reason. They start learning English because their teacher tells them "You must learn English, no choice." Or they have some very, you know, weak reason like, you know, they want to get a better job or they want to pass some test. But that's not a very deep reason either, it's not very powerful.

Well, for my own purposes my own answer was that connection was really the reason. I want to connect with people. What do I mean by that? It means that I want to have a deeper, emotional, intellectual, mental connection with other people. I want to learn from their feelings and I want them to learn from me.

I want to learn from their minds, I want to learn their ideas, I want to be inspired by them and I want to do the same for them. I want to share my emotions, my feelings, my ideas with other people all around the world and I want that from them. I want to share their emotions, their ideas, their feelings.

I don't really care about the specific vocabulary or pronunciation, not really. Those are just tools. They're just a way to get what I really want. What I really want is that connection with other people. I'm guessing that's what you really want. And right now, in this time in the history of the world, English is one of the best languages for that because English is a language that connects so many countries in Science, in business, in our social lives, in travel.

Right now English is really the most useful, the most practical language for connecting people from many different cultures, many different religions, many different nations, many different social groups, it's just great too. But it's a tool for what? It's a tool for connection. And, for me, the word connection is a much stronger word than communication.

Communication, for me, is kind of weak. You know I talk blah- blah- blah you listen, blah- blah- blah it's only about information. You know, for me, when I think of this word communication I think that I'm giving and getting information, but I want more than just information.

If you only want information you can just read English and you can read books. You know that's really enough, to be honest. If you just want to learn facts, well learn to read. You can learn to read and read lots of great books and websites and everything.

But, if you want to connect with another human being, you want to feel their emotions and you want them to feel yours, you want to share that heart-to-heart connection, that human-to-human connection, a real connection between human beings, between a group, a tribe, a family; well that requires speaking.

Because speaking is how we communicate emotion, you can hear it in my voice and I can hear it in yours. That's why we want to speak English well and understand English well; we want to connect with other human beings. That's why I'm teaching English, that's why I love it. Because I love going to Thailand, for example, and meeting Thai people and connecting with them and making friends and hearing their ideas and feeling their emotions and I love to share my own with them.

And it's the same. I can do that with people in Japan or people in Europe or people in Latin America. It's amazing. I love it. That's why I teach English because I want to connect with people everywhere in the world. I've learned so much from doing that, from that amazing experience. And that's why I'm so energetic about it and that's why I really, really love it, that's why it's my passion.

So I want you to think about this yourself as an English learner and really think about this idea of connection, connecting with other human beings. Not just sharing information, connecting with them, learning about them, their lives, their emotions at a much deeper level.

If you do that you'll realize, oh, this is why I'm learning. And you'll realize you don't need to be perfect. You can connect with somebody with really bad English. Even if you're kind of a beginner you can connect with them because you can share your feelings and your thoughts by being open, by being honest. You don't need to be perfect.

How do you do that? For example, you can get on our Forums. This is an easy way to do it, it's so, so easy. Even if you feel oh, my English sucks, it's okay. Get on the Forums and just write a little bit about yourself, share something about yourself. Share some of your feelings, share something about your life, share your dreams, share your goals, your fears, I don't know, anything, just something honest and real.

If you do that I know -- because I've seen it happen again and again and again on our Forums and in life -- other people will connect with you. And they'll do the same with you and you will create real connections. You will create real friendships with people in other parts of the world, just by writing a little bit on the Forums, but your focus is on connection, not on English. You're using English as a tool, as a way to connect. Always remember that. English is not your final goal, connection is your goal.

If connection is your goal you can start immediately, right now. You don't need great English you just need to be honest and open. And then at the next level you can get on the Forums. You can share your Skype or some other chat ID. You can actually talk to people. It's doesn't matter.

Maybe your pronunciation is terrible, maybe it's great, I don't know. It doesn't matter. As long as you're honest and real and open you will connect with other people. Share your feelings. Share your ideas. And in that way you will make even stronger friends, stronger connections around the world. You will learn from other people who are from

other countries, other cultures, other religions and you will grow as a human being and by sharing you will help them grow as human beings.

That is our deepest purpose for learning English or any other language. That is my deepest purpose for teaching English. It is the deepest purpose of the Effortless English Club. So it's absolutely necessary, important, vital, to use the Forums and to use the Master Member Site, to connect. If you don't connect why learn English, what's the point? You're just studying for no reason. You're just working and working and working and there's really no deeper purpose to it.

So you've got to connect, it is the most important thing to do. More important than the lessons, more important than vocabulary, more important than the mini-stories, more important than pronunciation, is just being open, honest and connecting with other people. You can do that as a beginner, it does not matter. Your level or your ability does not matter.

So think about this and then just do it. It's a little scary. I know it's scary. I've had to do it myself. My Spanish is terrible, because I just don't have a lot of time and I just don't spend much time studying it, to be honest. But, you know, still I went to Guatemala and I used it a little bit and I connected with a few people and it felt great.

And I'll tell a story later in another commentary about an experience I had in Italy with Italian. And I know almost zero Italian, but I used the little bit I had and I connected with some people and it felt fantastic. And that's much more important than passing a test.

All right, I hope I have convinced you. I hope that as you go forward, as you keep learning English, keep growing, I hope that you will always remember this central purpose, this final, ultimate goal of connection. Never forget that this is the reason you're learning English, to connect with human beings. That's why we're doing it. That's the purpose of any language.

Well I will see you for the next commentary, until then have a great time. I hope you've enjoyed this and have a great day.