**My English Studies**

Today it is quite evident that everyone should know at least one foreign language.

Knowing one or more foreign languages makes it possible to get acquainted with different ways of thinking, to understand a new civilisation. Learning a foreign stimulates mental abilities and gives you a chance to appreciate a new literature, a different culture and to broaden your outlook.

Besides, knowing foreign languages has a practical value. It helps to improve the quality of your work, because it reduces the time lost on obtaining the necessary information.

The knowledge of other languages is very useful, especially if you have to work abroad or of you must read foreign literature in the original. If you know the language of a foreign country, you can talk to its people and understand what they are speaking about without anybody’s help. The knowledge of foreign languages also helps young people of different countries to develop friendship.

As for me, I’m learning English, because in the recent years it has become not only an international language, it is now a number one language in the world. Besides, English is becoming a lingua franca. A lingua franca is a language chosen for international purposes.

At the beginning of the 21st century English more widely spoken and written, than any other language has ever been. It has become the language of the planet, the first truly global language. English has become the world’s important language in politics, science, trade and cultural relations. Three quarters of the world’s mail and its telexes and telegrams are in English. More than half of the world’s scientific periodicals and eighty per cent of the information in the world’s computers are also in English. English is the main language of business. It is the language of sports: the official language of the Olympics. In a number of speakers it is second only to Chinese. At the same time it is the most widespread language in the world. It is the official language of the UK, of the USA, Australia and New Zealand. English is used as one of the official languages in Canada, the Republic of South Africa and the Irish Republic. It is also spoken as a second language by many people in India, Pakistan, numerous countries in Africa. The number of second language speakers may soon exceed the number of native language speakers, if it hasn’t happened yet.

Everybody can see now the importance of English, listening to the radio and music, watching films on TV. As for me I have always wanted to study English deeply since I began learning it at school. My English lessons were always very interesting and I liked them most of all at school. WE started learning English with the alphabet, transcription and sounds. Then we learned some English words, conversation phrases and dialogues by heart, read and translated easy texts. Of course, sometimes we worked in the language laboratory listening to the recorded tapes and doing laboratory exercises, but that was not enough. From lesson to lesson we improved our knowledge, learned more and more new words, grammatical structures and put them into practice of speaking. Soon we were able not only to read and translate texts but to discuss their contents in English, to communicate with one another. Our teacher always told us that it is very helpful to listen as much as possible to different English educational programmes on the radio and on TV. I have a lot of English cassettes at home and try to listen to them almost every day. To my mind, English is not an easy language to learn. There is a big problem of speaking, punctuation, a large number of exceptions to any rule. This language is very idiomatic and the prepositions are terrible. English is one of those languages which may be seen easy in the beginning but then the bridge between basic knowledge and mastery takes a long time to cross. But if you cross this bridge it will give you great satisfaction. Even now the ability to speak to foreigners in their native tongue gives me great freedom and satisfaction. It’s important also to read foreign authors in the original, which makes our outlook wider. It is not surprising that many intellectuals know several foreign languages. Besides, learning a foreign language opens great opportunities nowadays. You certainly know that with the development of international contacts hundreds of joint ventures appear in every city, every industrial and cultural centre. They need specialists who know one or two foreign language. Also foreign businessmen, delegations and missionaries keep coming to our country, and they all need interpreters. Out tourists and businessmen go abroad. So many people study foreign languages in every possible way. Teachers of foreign languages are in great demand. Such teachers needn’t fear they may remain unemployed.

Among the great number of languages that exist on our planet today there are some, which stand out. Scientists distinguish 13 great languages. These are the languages that are spoken by no less that 50 per cent of people on the Earth. They are Chinese, English, Russian, Spanish, Hindi and Urdi, Indonesian…

A person who knows these languages can speak to and understand almost 2 thousand million people doesn’t suffer from the language barrier. Today there are a lot of people in Europe and Asia who know several languages. A person who knows several languages is called a polyglot.

It is known that different languages can come into fashion or go out of it. It is generally considered that the most fashionable language in the world nowadays is English. Spanish also becomes very popular. It is learnt nowadays more often than earlier. Oriental languages are also widespread today. Learning a foreign language has a practical value but the choice of a foreign language sometimes depends on a fashion. If under fashion we mean the demands of life and society. Thus, the knowledge of a foreign language today is a life necessity.

The English language surrounds us like a sea, and like the waters of a deep sea it is full of mysteries. English is and has always been constantly changing. Some words die, some change their meanings and all the time new words appear in the language.