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# useful links

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## Samples of entrance examination tests

[tests](#)

## Official translations of documents

Any students requesting the official and certified translations of their documents for the purposes of "nostrifikace," or any other translations of such sorts, are advised to go on to [www.itpunion.org/spip](http://www.itpunion.org/spip), the website of the International Federation of Interpreters and Translators. This website is offered in English version as well and offers the database of translators with their specialization. Good luck with your endeavour, KJP - The Department of Foreign Languages

## Evaluation of language skills

based on European framework of reference for languages.

In response to an expected cross-border mobility of labour force and students within the member states of the European Union, the Council of Europe elaborated a system of unified and internationally applicable evaluation of achieved language skills and qualifications. Individual levels reflect the objectives of learning and specify in detail what learning to undertake to be able to reach a successful integration in life and work abroad.

**The system recognizes the following 6 levels- A1, A2 Basic language use; B1, B2 Independent language use; C1, C2 Proficiency.**

**Try to determine the level corresponding to your achieved language skills** - evaluate to what extent you have mastered individual language skills and set the goal you intend to reach in the upcoming academic year.

[English](#)

[French](#)

[Italian](#)

[German, 2d p.](#)

[Russian](#)

[Spanish](#)

[Czech version](#)

## A brief self-study guidebook

**A brief self-study guidebook** and the preparation for the language courses, or a couple of hands-on pieces of advice on how to handle texts and media in their original version.

### ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES

Many of us need and strive to improve our language skills. To succeed, one needs to study **regularly** (just remember, what really matters is not the length of studying, but the time used efficiently).

Many students find it helpful to put aside 10 to 15 minutes a day for the language studies (the more time you find- let's say 30 minutes- the better).

Another pre-requisite to success is to work resolutely and systematically. "To be able to follow and comment on current affairs at home and abroad in Spanish" is a good and quite a realistic goal; however, such a goal is too general to reach quick and more significant progress. Try something more effective:

1. during language classes or during any dealings with a foreign language, try to specify the language particulars you intend to master
2. decide on the length of time you are going to devote to these particulars
3. outline the sources and methods to use to master the particulars
4. eventually, evaluate how well you did – to what extent you found the chosen materials useful and whether you managed to deepen and solidify the knowledge of the targeted task.

## THE ROLE OF WRITING

**Writing** plays a significant role in the learning process. Not only can you access your notes any time in the future, but with a little bit of discipline, the writing also facilitates the planning of any long-term work, recording of the progress as well as mapping of what is left to do to reach your goal.

Besides, owing to the psychological implications of the fact that a hand is slower than a tongue, you are afforded more time during the writing process to think about everything thoroughly and clearly.

One of the ways how to apply this theory to a real life is to write a structured learning journal. Below see an example of such a journal written by a student of English for the IPS (the Institute of Political Studies):

<b>Learning target:</b>	To improve my ability to report on and to speak naturally about ELECTIONS. At the moment my language seems unnatural and I do not know many typically used expressions.
<b>Time allocation:</b>	next 2 weeks
<b>Materials:</b>	<u>Oral/Visual/Audio</u> : BBC, Euronews, satellite television, Internet <u>Printed</u> : Newspapers; dictionary; Peprník: Angličtina pro pokročilé 2, p.69f.

### WEEK 1

MEDIUM	ACTIVITY	COMMENT
<b>BBC</b>	Listened to the news	Not very productive. Should have taken proper notes.
<b>BBC</b>	Listened to the news + recorded it; went bit by bit rewinding it back and forth and took notes	Identified 7 expressions which are commonly used: ... Will try to use them.
<b>Newspapers</b>	Read an article in the Prague Post	Got some interesting new vocab including phrasal verbs. Not entirely sure how they are pronounced.
<b>Peprník's textbook</b>	Went through the list of vocab	Memorising worked well.

### WEEK 2

<b>Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture</b>	Looked up some expressions	Good for checking out expressions already learned. Good examples.
<b>Concordancer*</b>	Had a look at some expressions using the COBUILD online concordancer	Discovered some interesting new phrases and synonyms, e.g.: ...

**CONCLUSION:** Recording, taking notes, and checking afterwards worked well with the radio news; concordancer proved to be excellent for seeing words in use. Must organise my notes! All in all - feel more confident. Must USE what I have learned!

## RETROSPECTION

If you find the above mentioned example a way too structured, try from time to time to think about the following questions:

- What was the target of the lesson? What was I supposed to learn?
- What is/was my goal (did I realize what I am good at or- on the contrary- what I am falling behind with compared to my classmates, what I need to work on- which grammar, vocabulary, and so on?)

- What new did I learn in the lesson (which vocabulary, pronunciation, and so on)
- What was easy for me and why (was it due to my self-studying, or because I simply liked it?)
- What should I focus on in the nearest future?

As the classic puts it:

**"I keep six honest serving men,  
(They taught me all I knew);  
Their names are What and Why and When,  
And How and Where and Who."  
Rudyard Kipling**

## INTERNET

**Internet** is an extensive source of authentic materials in a foreign language. Various search engines offer abundance of tests, quizzes and exercises designed for the practising of a general language. What we are mainly interested in, though, is the role of the internet in the language studies and its potential to satisfy the intentions and needs of the students at the FSV (the Faculty of Social Sciences).

The best way to start is with the search engines (such as [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) , [www.lycos.com](http://www.lycos.com) , [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) and others).

You can approach a huge amount of language materials with either activities prepared ahead of time- you can combine them with a variety of original texts (see below), or first you can browse the websites, download the corresponding texts and only then think about how to make the most out of them to assist your learning process.

One of the unquestionable advantages of the internet is the fact that it offers information which is more or less regularly updated. To follow current affairs in the text version can later facilitate the listening to the news in their audio or audio-visual form. "Find in this page" function located under "Edit" can help you follow the specific word in the context.

## DEALING WITH THE TEXT- LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

**News:** choose some up-to-date topic – a news headline -and prior to reading the article, try to write down the list of words you expect to find in the text (use the dictionary where necessary). After you do so, start reading the article and see which words you predicted well and which other expressions related to the chosen topic you found in the article.

**Phrases:** using the function Search, look up one common expression in the online newspaper archive of some renowned journal. Copy 15-20 sentences with this expression. Use the dictionary to find its meanings in different contexts. Afterwards, go back to the newspaper archive to look for 10 more sentences. Is it necessary to add another meaning to the list? Try to come up with sentences which would reflect at least 5 different meanings of the key word.

**Polemics:** using your favorite search engine, look up a couple of reports/polemics dealing with one controversial topic. Which words (phrases) were used by the authors when they:

1. emphasized their opinions
2. responded to opposing views from others? Put together the list of useful phrases and words which you can apply in the in-class discussions.

**Synonyms:** look up five synonymous pairs (e.g. takeover/coup) and attach to them 15-20 sample sentences used by native speakers. Can you come to any conclusions as to how often and in which context these expressions can be found?

**Opposites:** choose 7 key expressions in the text and attach words of opposite meaning to them. Turn them into sentences.

## RECOMMENDED SOURCES

**We have chosen the following websites to complement the websites recommended in individual syllabi of our teachers:**

**English**

Dictionaries: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/> , [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

Aardvark's EFL Resources: <http://www.englishforum.com/00/>

Audio and video files organized by a level of difficulty and covering a wide array of life skills

Grammar:

<http://englishpage.com>

<http://englisch-hilfen.de>

## French

Dictionaries; Leximagne - l'Empereur des pages

[http://globegate.utm.edu/french/globegate\\_mirror/dico.html](http://globegate.utm.edu/french/globegate_mirror/dico.html)

Centre Pedagogique du Quartier francais

<http://www.urich.edu/~jpaulsen/pedagog.html>

## German

Goethe-Institut - Leitseite: <http://www.goethe.de/deindex.htm>

## Spanish

<http://www.cervantes.es>

## Italian

- [www.virgilio.it](http://www.virgilio.it) Italian browser
- [www.lastampa.it](http://www.lastampa.it) website of ANSA- Italian News Agency

Italian journals:

- [www.corriere.it](http://www.corriere.it)

## Russian

General browsers:

- <http://www.yandex.ru>

News servers:

- [www.lenta.ru](http://www.lenta.ru)
- <http://www.novayagazeta.ru> listening to the news, on the right
- <http://www.kommersant.ru> video commentaries
- <http://www.ng.ru>

Online encyclopaedias:

- <http://www.krugosvet.ru/>

## Others

Tests in 21 languages and 420 language combinations:

<http://www.goethe-verlag.com/tests/>

## TELEVISION, RADIO

**Listening** to a programme or any another type of broadcasting in a foreign language primarily in order to see what's going on in the world around us is one way of using the time spent in front of TV for studying a foreign language. However,

we recommend to distinguish between the time when you simply intend to follow the news and the time when you really want to focus on studying the language.

Unlike audio or video-recordings which we can stop or rewind at any given time to better understand a certain passage or practise a better intonation and pronunciation, programmes which are not recorded present a greater challenge for us. Therefore, it is advisable to first decide on the language phenomenon we want to work on, and then accordingly choose a programme which fits our needs best. Also, think about the vocabulary you are likely to encounter in the programme as well as decide which aspects of broadcasting you are going to focus on (new vocabulary, pronunciation, methods of delivery, and others). Have a sheet of paper, pencil and dictionary within your reach and turn this habit into routine; your progress in language studies is then almost inevitable.

## VOCABULARY

No matter which source you decide to use for your self-studying purposes, you are always going to run into new words. While adopting them, make sure to ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I know exactly what the word means?
- Where should I place this word?
- Do I know how to pronounce it (in its isolated form or in the sentence)?
- Does the word usually link with any specific verb, adjective, adverb, and so on?
- Will I use the word frequently?

It is a widely known fact that our memory stores the words partly according to their meaning; therefore, it makes sense to divide the words into individual groups sharing the same meaning. However, it is also necessary to learn the words in combination with other words they are often linked with. If we learn the whole phrases, we will speed up the learning process. One of the ways how to do it is to systematically look for specific word combinations in the text (a good dictionary which contextualizes the word or a \* concordancer will prove to be of indispensable help).

## LANGUAGE S.O.S

You can still do something for your language studies even when you missed the 15-minute time slot allocated for studying. For example, when watching evening news try to isolate a few expressions and see if you are able to translate them into a foreign language. Or, after reading lecture notes or newspapers on the way to or from school, try to summarize the article or paragraphs to yourself – again in a corresponding language.

The Foreign Language Department holds its fingers crossed to you. We are here for you during our consultation hours.

Note: This material drew inspiration from the publication Guide to Self-Access Study 1990-00, compiled at the Dublin CLCS, Trinity College.

\* a computer programme, which upon the insertion of the key word or word combination looks up the examples which illustrate best their usage and function in the context.