

Exercise 1

Comparison with R. Rodriguez

After reading the story I think it's pretty obvious that the way Richard Rodriguez learned English and the way I learned English are very much different.

Technology seems to make a difference. At the age of 4 I got a computer and English computer games. Also, my parents often watched international news reports from CNN. I think I had better "help" learning English at an early age, from technology, from my parents and in school.

In addition, I did not get the impression that English was bad, like Rodriguez could get when they didn't speak to him in English. On the contrary, my parents taught me that the English language and to be internationally and globally prepared was important.

As an example, that's the reason I'm named "Alexander", with an "x" and not "Aleksander".

Something is similar too. I think all children learn languages by focusing on the sounds at first, not the words. That way it's easier to understand what's said, and to pronounce it correctly.

Rodriguez seemed to think that English was impersonal, and I can understand he got that impression, but I've never had any thoughts of English, but positive ones.

Nowadays I feel I still learn English in movies, computer games, and at school. I think I've learned the most at school, and I'm very satisfied with the way I've been taught English since 4th grade.

When I see how many obstacles Rodriguez had and much "help" I've had and compare that, I'm almost ashamed of myself. Rodriguez learned so much out of so little and that's admirable.

Exercise 2

English relevance

In about 7 years from now I'm hopefully a "sivilingeniør", or a "graduate civil engineer" which is as close as you can get in English. I'm planning to be a graduate civil engineer within computer science.

If I'm going to graduate successfully and understand everything, I need to be good at English. Primary because most computer language are in English. It's hard to translate terms like "Random Access Memory", and even if you did, it just

won't sound right. "Norsk Språkråd" have tried, they translated "World Wide Web" to "verdensveven" and it's just not working. I happen to think it's a good thing computer language is the same all over the world, it makes it a lot easier to communicate about it without translating everything.

There are a lot more examples on English being relevant for my future. All of the books I'll have to read at the university about computer science are in English. It's not hard to imagine why a 5000-page book is not translated to Norwegian. Not only will it be hard and time-consuming, but you will be ridiculed when you translate "Random Access Memory" to "Tilfeldig Tilgangs Minne" and "Universal Serial Bus" to "Universal Seriell Buss". English will also be needed in lectures and suchlike. What if Bill Gates came and I couldn't understand him? That would be highly unfortunate...

After school, English would still be relevant. I'm hoping to get a well-paid job in a big international firm, maybe abroad. Either way English will be important for communicating locally and globally. Maybe all the paper work needs to be in English, then they won't hire me if I'm not good at it.

Oh, I must not forget. Even if I study computer science or have a responsible job, I also have spare time. In my spare time English will be relevant too, I can't just watch Norwegian movies, news and documentaries, or just travel on vacation in Norway.

As explained, English will be relevant for my studies, work, travel, communication and spare time. English is a world language and an "online language" and my skills in English will be important for me in many many years.