

## Lesson 1. Esperanto U3A Box Hill – Term 1, 2018

1. Introductions. Using Esperanto to say hello and using it to introduce yourself. Saying please and thank you. Asking and responding to questions.
2. The importance of correct pronunciation in Esperanto.

### 1. Introduction and Questions.

Saluton! (Hello!)

Bonan matenon! (Good morning!)

Bonvenon al la Esperanto klaso. (Welcome to the Esperanto class.)

Mi estas Brian Belcher. (I am Brian Belcher).

Mi estas via instruisto. (I am your instructor/teacher).

Jen estas Barbara Hatley. Ŝi estas mia edzino. Ŝi helpos min en la klaso.

(This is Barbara Hatley. She is my wife. She will help me in the class.)

Bonvolu. (Please.)

Dankon! (Thank you!)

Nedankinde! (You are welcome!).

Ĝis revido/Ĝis (Good Bye!)

Kio estas tio? (What is that?)

Kio estas ĉi tio? (What is this?)

Tio estas seĝo. (That is a chair.) Seĝo means chair or a chair according to context.

Kio estas via nomo? (What is your name?).

Mia nomo estas .....

Saluton ..... !

Ĉu via nomo estas Ted? (Is your name Ted?) Responses to ĉu questions involve jes (yes) or ne (no).

Ĉu tio estas seĝo? Jes, tio estas seĝo. Ne, tio ne estas seĝo. Tio estas tablo.

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### 2. Pronunciation.

Esperanto is an international auxiliary language, designed to be learned by the speakers of the world's 6000 or so native languages. It is not just for English speakers.

Each native language has its own set of sounds. These sounds differ dramatically between languages. As English speakers we have the advantage that there are a lot of similarities between Esperanto sounds and those of Australian English. However, along with the speakers of all the other native languages we have to make some adjustments. What is very important is that we consistently sound words in the Esperanto way. For example, "tomato", means tomato in both languages but is pronounced differently.

According to linguists, Australian English has 45 sounds. Some letters and groups of letters have several different sounds associated with them. This makes pronunciation ambiguous. The design of Esperanto seeks to remove these ambiguities.

A basic rule of Esperanto is that every letter must be sounded (there are no silent letters) and each letter must have one sound only. When you hear an Esperanto word spoken, you know immediately how to spell it. And, conversely, if you see an Esperanto word written, you know how to pronounce it.

If we start with the English alphabet and then delete four troublesome letters q, w, x, y and add six new letters: ĉ, ĥ, ĵ, ĝ, ŝ, and ŭ, we end up with the 28 letters of the Esperanto alphabet. If we then add six diphthongs: aj, ej, oj, uj, aŭ, eŭ we have a total of 34 clearly identifiable sounds.

The five vowels in Esperanto: a, e, i, o, u, have the same letters as English. But unlike English, they represent five sounds - not the twelve vowel sounds of Australian English:

a (as in father), e (as in bet), i (as in machine), o (as in or), and u (as oo in moon).

Most of the consonants are more or less the same as English, with the following exceptions: c (as ts in cats), ĉ (as ch in church), g (as in go), ĝ (as in gem), ĥ (as in Scottish loch or German Bach), j (as y in yes), ĵ (as su pleasure), r is given a slight trill so that it can be clearly identified, ŝ (as sh in she), and ŭ (as w in water). The diphthongs are: aj (as in eye), ej (as in hay), oj (as in boy), aŭ (as in how), eŭ (as e gliding to a w sound) and uj (as u gliding to an i sound).

When reading the alphabet aloud or spelling aloud, the vowels are read as their actual sounds, while the consonants have an Esperanto "o" added to them. Try reading the Esperanto alphabet aloud: a, b, c, ĉ, d, e, f, g, ĝ, h, ĥ, i, j, ĵ, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, ŝ, t, u, ŭ, v, z.

Sounds in words are grouped into syllables and there are as many syllables in a word as there are vowels. When there are two or more syllables, the second last syllable is always accented. If there are two vowels together, they each represent a syllable. For example, "ree" means "again" and has two syllables re-e. So the first e is made a bit longer and possibly a bit louder.

Finally, make sure each syllable gets its full length and that there is no shortening or trailing off at the end of a word. Word endings carry critical meaning.

For example, est is the root for the verb to be. The infinitive of the verb is esti. The other parts of the verb are: estas (is/are present tense), estis (was/were past tense), estos (will be, future tense), estus (would be, conditional) and estu (imperative). Try saying these in random order to a class mate.

Adjust your pronunciation until they can clearly identify which word you are saying.

Brian Belcher,  
13-2-2018.