

ENGLISH BITES!

My ~~Fullproof~~ English Learning Formula



MANISH GUPTA



English Bites! My 'Fullproof' English Learning Formula

Manish Gupta

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About the Book:

English Bites! My Fullproof English Learning Formula is the story of a man who goes from being tongue-tied in school to becoming a smooth talking banker. Through a series of hilarious personal adventures and misadventures, Manish Gupta provides easy solutions to problems faced by language learners. So, whether you're a vernacular speaker, a GRE/ GMAT/CAT/XAT aspirant or just a language nut, English Bites! will expand your vocabulary and improve your verbal ability. It may even help you love the English language a little more!

- Add over 1000 new words to your vocabulary and figure out easy and effective ways to expand your word bank.
- Combine etymology, mnemonics, jokes and anecdotes to better your understanding of the English language.
- Differentiate between similar sounding words and learn to use them right.
- Improve your general knowledge with trivia that spans brand names, automobiles, fine dining, love, money, banks, science and B-school jargon.

About the Author:

Manish Gupta is a banking professional. When not crunching numbers he is busy engaging with and examining the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of the English language. He also likes trivia, travelling, adventure sports, delving into human psychology, and giving professorial discourses to colleagues, family and friends, and practically anyone who can give him a patient hearing. An engineering graduate from Punjab Engineering College, Chandigarh and an MBA from XLRI, Jamshedpur, he lives in Mumbai with his wife Deepali, a medical professional, and daughters Tamanna and Prakriti.

English Bites! My 'Fullproof' English Learning Formula Details

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Gupta

From Reader Review English Bites! My 'Fullproof' English Learning Formula for online ebook

Readers Cosmos says

Manish Gupta is an angel for everyone wanting to give GRE or improve their vocabulary as never before have I seen such fun filled story with incidences explaining words, the various ways in which they can be used all into a story of his own journey into learning the language and his life around that time. The incidents are hilarious, keeps the read light and enjoyable.

The Review:

Positives: I was doubtful initially that the book might turn out to be boring but the writing and incidences kept it alive, not a single page seemed dis-interesting. the only rule to read this book is read it at your pace, one chapter a day or so, only then can you do justice to imbibing its essence and the authors efforts.

The USP of the book is the meanings(and believe me even the multiple ones) are all there, so one just has to look at the end of the page for them, which makes it an effortless and easy read.

Negatives: None

The Verdict: Highly Recommended read. Hats off to the authors efforts. Not a traditional self help book that people run away from. 4 stars on 5.

For a complete review please refer to my link text

Sundeepramp says

3.5

Foreword:

When I first received a mail from the author asking to review his book, I was pretty impressed from the way the mail was composed. The whole mail comprised of six lines and those lines contained the basic plot of the book, the publications (which played a big role on accepting to review his book right away) and his liking for our blog (which I presume is genuine and feel grateful).

It has been sometime since I last read a researched non-fiction. Of course, my last read, Wise Enough to be Foolish by Gauri Jayaram, was a non-fiction, but it was a story, while this book is a researched non-fiction on English language, trying and improving the readers' vocabulary.

Overall, the book was pretty helpful for the BR catalog and to me, an aspiring author, to plunge and discover undiscovered areas of literary genres.

I can't continue with the rest of the review without thanking Manish Gupta, the author, for writing and

sending the books over to us. Hope you are satisfied with our review, Manish ji.

After a good amount of thinking I decided to add two descriptions of the book - one from the jacket of the book and the one stated by the author in the mail - so that you, the readers, have a better idea of the aim of the book...

Plot:

From jacket:

English Bites! My Fullproof English Learning Formula is the story of a man who goes from being tongue-tied in school to becoming a smooth talking banker. Through a series of hilarious personal adventures and misadventures, Manish Gupta provides easy solutions to problems faced by language learners. So, whether you're a vernacular speaker, a GRE/ GMAT/CAT/XAT aspirant or just a language nut, English Bites! will expand your vocabulary and improve your verbal ability. It may even help you love the English language a little more!

- Add over 1000 new words to your vocabulary and figure out easy and effective ways to expand your word bank.
- Combine etymology, mnemonics, jokes and anecdotes to better your understanding of the English language.
- Differentiate between similar sounding words and learn to use them right.
- Improve your general knowledge with trivia that spans brand names, automobiles, fine dining, love, money, banks, science and B-school jargon.

From the mail:

It is a simple yet hilarious story of a small town guy who studies in the vernacular medium and extremely poor in his communication skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary, and how he discovers and invents interesting tools techniques to best the convent educated lot in his class. He finally realises his dream of an MBA, gets a great job in a multinational bank, marries the women from his dream profession (medicine) for his spouse, and how he gets stumped by English in the new nursery rhymes his kids begin reciting at home.

About the author (from the jacket):

Manish Gupta is a banking professional. When not crunching numbers he is busy engaging with and examining the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of the English language. He also likes trivia, travelling, adventure sports, delving into human psychology, and giving professorial discourses to colleagues, family and friends, and practically anyone who can give him a patient hearing. An engineering graduate from Punjab Engineering College, Chandigarh and an MBA from XLRI, Jamshedpur, he lives in Mumbai with his wife Deepali, a medical professional, and daughters Tamanna and Prakriti.

He can be reached at mystruggleswithenglish@gmail.com

Our review:

Cover Design:

The tagline - My Fullproof English Learning Formula - with the word, fullproof, rounded with red marker visibly prompts that the story is comical. (If you didn't get it. The tagline indicates that this book helps you learn English in a more faster way. But the word 'Foolproof' is misspelled as 'Fullproof'. Hope you get the witticism behind the tagline. If you don't even now, God help you.)

Also the comic person going head over heel.....

To read the entire review, click [here...](#)

Sarika Patkotwar says

*NOTE: We (The Readdicts) received a copy of English Bites! My 'Fullproof' English Learning Formula from author Manish Gupta in exchange for an honest review. We thank Manish for the book!

It's safe for me to say that author Manish Gupta's book, English Bites! My 'Fullproof' English Learning Formula came to me at the right time. My French Masters studies have me thinking and talking more in French than English or even my mother tongue for that matter.

My professor had once said that we pursue our higher studies in French under the impression that we have a great comprehension of the English language, which clearly isn't the case. The ever evolving, vast and widespread English language has more to it than we think and *English Bites!* made me realise that.

At first glance, *English Bites!* may seem like a reference type text for competitive exams. Well, I personally haven't referred to any such books but if this is how they actually are, then I don't mind reading them at all because this book was not only packed with interesting facts and lots of intelligence, but it's also an enjoyable and fun read.

The author speaks a lot about his own, sometimes silly and sometimes sweet, experiences while learning English and it was awesome to accompany him on his journey where we learn heaps of words and some really cool vocabulary relating to topics ranging from economics, coffee, sandwiches, doctoral terminology, educational degrees, marriage, the delivery of babies and lots more.

Some facts were so interesting that I shared them with my family to enlighten them and also to show them that I know something they don't. For example, did you know that the QANTAS in Qantas Airlines stands for Queensland And Northern Territory Aerial Services Ltd. and French Fries are called French Fries because the act of cutting the potatoes into finger like shapes is called frenching? This and loads more makes *English Bites!* a book that's packed with knowledge that's worth knowing and sharing.

If you love to know the story and facts behind anything but if you, like me, are too lazy to do research on your own, then *English Bites!* is the perfect book to begin with. I did feel that at certain times, especially when talking about a certain encounter or retelling a certain incident, the author abruptly stopped and moved elsewhere. But what was impressive was that the vocabulary was true to the context.

I would say that *Manish Gupta's* book is a great and knowledgeable contribution to the literary world.

Amrit Sinha says

Let me be honest ... when I first heard of English Bites! I thought it would be just another plain old boring English guide, ready to serve aspirants of GRE and other such competitive examinations. True, this book will definitely enhance your vocabulary and add several new words in your mental dictionary; but boring? No definitely not; rather, far from it.

English Bites! isn't a long discourse on word building and language strengthening; rather it is a unique methodology to build up your vocabulary and improve your verbal skill. You don't need to wrack your brain worrying about the complexities of this language anymore. You just need to sit back, relax, with a cup of coffee, and go lazily through the pages.

And yeah, do keep a pen and notepad by your side. That's recommended.

The book is divided into several chapters, each dealing with different phases in the author's life. Manish Gupta starts with his school days and moves on to engineering. Once he completes it, Manish is lured by the prospect of obtaining a management degree. Through his dedication and hard work, he gets into the prestigious management institute, XLRI. When he gets settled comfortably in his job and career, the author decides to get married and as planned by destiny, meets his match. They exchange marital vows, and after a few years, Manish and Deepali, his better half, are blessed with the amazing joys of parenthood.

Doesn't this feel like reading a story? Where does learning English fit into this? I know these questions must be raining in your mind. Let me sum it up for you in one sentence - this is a story that will take your English skills to heightened glory.

The author explains how he initially struggled with the language, often stumped by new words that he couldn't comprehend. However, with help of friends, he decides to delve deeper into this subject, and devises techniques that helped him enrich his knowledge on this matter. Manish Gupta collates these techniques and presents them in a lucid and coherent manner in English Bites!

What really clicks is the style of narration. The flow is smooth, and at times you feel that the author is there right in front of you, sharing with you his experiences that are encased in the pages. The tone is quite informal and packed with humor, and that's what I really find effective when dealing with a serious subject. Certainly, I wouldn't have liked another monotonous drag that could have further complicated the matter, instead of simplifying it.

English is magic, and Manish performs his tricks effectively. It's really interesting to know about the origins of several words that he has described in this book. For example, I have always believed that French Fries originated from France, but God, I was so wrong.

The interesting anecdotes and snippets keep you engaged every moment, and take you through the brilliance of the English language. The chapters are well segmented, and cover a wide array of topics, ranging from food to medical, and even nursery rhymes. However, I do feel that the author should have written a separate chapter that would have dealt with his school life. In this book, there is just a brief mention on that, and not a dedicated section to it.

I do have a complain though, and a serious one – Why didn't Manish write this book earlier? I wish I didn't have to wait so long to experience this delicious side of the English Language; but then, good things come to those who wait.

The tagline of the book says – "My Foolproof English Learning Formula." I agree. I now look at the pen and notepad, and feel glad to see the innumerable new words that I had jotted down in the course of reading this book. Truly, one of the best books to increase your fluency and command over the language, as well as improve your general knowledge.

Diwakar Narayan says

English Bites comes as a relief, playing the last ray of hope for the all those that aspire to mastery of English – be it a vernacular speaker hailing from the hinterlands of states of low literacy, an abbreviated-titled-exam aspirant or just a language nut. The book claims to add over a thousand words to your vocabulary and pours down on you informal and exciting ways to expand your database of active words.

How does Manish Gupta, the author of the book, manage to teach you over a thousand words in a book of just 334 pages? The answer is simple – he talks to you, tells you stories and gives you ample time to absorb the word till he gives you the next. The words are used in the right context that further helps you get an idea on how you should use it thereafter... and till the time you finish the book, you come to realize that many new words have been added to your memory.

The footnotes at the bottom of each page are a great aid. The sole purpose of these footnotes is to keep acquainting you with the meaning. This is how you come in contact with the new word and learn it then and there.

Overall, English Bites has been an excellent effort towards interests of word learners and has come out very well. I recommend this book to anyone and everyone who has even slightest of interest in enriching their vocabulary. Enhancement of their general knowledge is a plus, enabling them to boast of knowing things that nobody around them knows.

Paromita Bardoloi says

We shall all agree in one thing. If we ever went to school, we had that dictionary, Word Power Made Easy and Thesaurus neatly lined in our study tables. English in India is still a big deal. Of course it is spoken by 1.4 billion people across the world as either primary or secondary language and it is ever growing. English Bites is an honest attempt by Manish Gupta to introduce new words in our English vocabulary. But there is much more to this book than a book that teaches you new words.

Let us first give a huge round of applause to Gupta for creating a book which is one of its own kinds. If just written to enhance one's word power, it could have been another dry book that we pick only before going for an exam or in rare case while trying to figuring a word meaning. Gupta plays very creative with his presentation, not something one will generally expect. He weaves in stories, anecdotes, pictures, jokes and trivia to bring in new tough words, which also helps the reader remember those words with ease. That is where Gupta scores higher than anyone else writing a book on word power. He does not stop there, the narratives are mostly autobiographical and it is hilarious. He describes his days as a young boy struggling with his English to a suave man with polished English. This book traces anecdotes of almost twenty years.

If you are reading this book, let me remind you that this book needs to be read in bites. In gist, go slow. You just can't flip on pages like any other book of fiction. Each page demands your attention. Though the book is funny and a small smile will dwindle all over your face throughout, still you will need time to assimilate everything the author is saying in his simple style. The author has highlighted new difficult words in bold and has shared its meaning in the footnote which definitely saves the reader running for the dictionary.

The author definitely deserves special mention for finding such an interesting way to teach the readers new words and meanings. From wine to sports every topic is touched upon. We only wish there were more pictures, which added to the fun part of the book. This is definitely a book for anyone who wants to learn English with doses of laughter and fun. But as mentioned above, give time to this book. You might not grab the format at once, but once you do, you would know, it was all worth it.

Looking forward to Mr.Gupta next release.

Madhusmita says

The cover of the book showing a boy burdened with books trying to cram up all the information is quite apt. Even the name of the book is also quite interesting. I felt it can be interpreted in two ways.....(read more here:- <http://dreamzandclouds.wordpress.com/...>)

Arvind Passey says

Floccinaucinihilipilification. Review of 'English Bites'

*

No, floccinaucinihilipilification isn't the longest word in the dictionary... there are words with up to 35 letters that win the contest, though the medical fraternity, Manish Gupta will have us believe, insists on a word from their jargon as the one that wins the race hands down. But the point that I want to make is not about any contest between words but the fascination of a young boy's attention for such words. When I was Class X, I remember having come face to face with floccinaucinihilipilification and stared at it long enough for my principal Father Tony to come to me and say, 'Let me see what you are reading, my son.'

'I'm reading a dictionary, father,' I said.

He smiled and replied, 'Aha! So you too are bitten by this word bug. Good. Words are lovely things to fall in love with.'

That love is going strong till now... and this is one reason why I loved this book by Manish Gupta. Even during those days when I was fond of walking with my miniature dictionary open in my hands, the one thing that I searched for was the history behind words. No, I didn't have any book in my personal library that helped me... and books were not easily available in Jhansi, the small town where I come from. There was no internet and no online forums there to help me with my dilemma. So some of the first books that I bought when I started earning included ones on etymology, word origins, slang, and those that went on to explain the right usage. But they are all either like dictionaries and quite intimidating... or present their findings in a very clinical manner. If I call them siblings of text-books, I wouldn't be very off the mark.

But here is a book in my hands that is neither a text-book nor a frivolous spoof on words. There is a serious intent to explore the origins, meanings, usages, and any other modern or new-age connotations that interesting words might have... all woven into stories, incidents, and anecdotes. There are those words that appear simple and self-explanatory and yet turn up in an unexpected avatar to surprise you... and Manish hasn't missed any. No, this book is NOT a dictionary and is NOT a dull and dry collection of facts... the protagonist goes around talking about his battles, bouts and experiences with words that are connected. So the book has chapters where words from a similar experience hop in together... or gently lead you on to discover a different world without letting you feel that you are stepping out from a coffee house and through the kitchen where gourmet dishes are being prepared right in the midst of a gang of people where ventriloquists are smiling to baffle you with eloquent soliloquy that isn't gibberish at all! Yes, all this happens even as we are busy sorting out the differences between an espresso, cappuccino, caffè latte, caffè breve, and mocha!

Hope you are getting a drift of what I am trying to say... no? Wait, let me add that in between meanings, origins, and usage, the author kindly offers us a peep into detailed stories connected to words... and so we travel from the Malabar coast to a Parisian café or a cafetière à piston only to be shuffled across to read all about the famous Kopi Luwak...

...read the complete review here:
<http://passey.info/2014/04/floccinauc...>

Arvind Passey
www.passey.info

Samantak Bhadra says

Words are the building blocks of the realm of languages. They are little fairies born from varied forms of stardust that mate magically with a singular purpose of creating the magical intangible universe of ordered sounds that envelop us, lowly creatures, and provide for us a bridge which we tiptoe or gallop or dance or simply walk over. This bridge connects two souls, two islands, two lonely beings and helps them to smile and understand each other. Words are the air we breathe through our mouths. Sometimes, words are exhaled in unpredictable bursts that are momentary and compulsive desires to express and, therefore, extend our souls and thoughts with an omnidirectional aim of connecting, on the physical, emotional and metaphysical level, with another soul. The connection is the euphoric pinnacle of the euphonic saga that is called language.

Manish Gupta's "English Bites!" is a book that embraces words and gives them the royal treatment that they so rightly deserve. The book is filled with interesting words that, metaphorically speaking, pop out from holes underneath the pages. They are strewn all over the book in generous doses and, therefore, help to improve the vocabulary of the reader. To facilitate learning, the meaning of the word is lucidly explained along with examples that help to assist the reader in understanding the usage of the words. Footnotes have been used liberally and they serve to enlighten the reader as he courses through words flowing through the veins of the pages. On quite a few occasions, the author has provided anecdotes and stories which have caused the creation and/or the current pronunciation of certain words. These stories coupled with his experiences in life help to add a lot of humour to the text. Each chapter is a slice from the author's life. Humorous, candid and forthcoming, these tales about his past help in the learning experience as the reader treads along two parallel paths simultaneously, one being the stories and the anecdotes and the other being new juicy words that are marked off in bold. Light, lilting and funny, the book does not tread into mundane waters and, more importantly, it does not tend to preach. It prances along happily and occasionally throws across a wonderfully delicious word that the reader can savour at his own pace.

However, the pace of the narrative is undulating and, therefore, does not flow along harmoniously. Even though that could be attributed to the fact that the book is primarily an exercise in knowledge rather than fiction, the stories and the contexts in each chapter are quite widely separate from each other and, therefore, there are no connecting threads that can identify the book as a unified entity. Rather, each chapter is like a little island drifting along its own path which, therefore, tends to leave the reader swimming in uncharted territories. As a result, the multiple themes come together with each other and appear to befuddle the aftertaste that lingers once the reader has completed reading the book. All in all, the book is filled with a wonderful array of words which are, in turn, supplemented with interesting trivia. It is a bold and unique attempt and if one is looking to enrich one's vocabulary without immersing oneself in the drudgery of word lists and the

bottomless pages of a dictionary, then this book should be a good return on investment.

My rating of the book is 7.5/10.

Abhilash Ruhela says

Recently, we celebrated Teacher's Day with full enthusiasm and respect for everyone from whom we got to learn something in life, about life or that helped us improve in life. From last two weeks, I am reading a book "English Bites". I have finally finished it now. You can not say that I was stuck on it knowing my reading speed but this book was certainly not meant for reading in least number of hours but to explore every page of it by taking as much time as possible. On the day of Teachers, I remembered the author of this book- Mr. Manish Gupta because the way his book has been helping me from last two weeks in developing my vocabulary and English is phenomenal. All of my regular readers already know that I learn 2 new words daily and keep on revising the words that are being noted down earlier. Though I have stopped using them on my Blog due to request from some readers who are Freshers in this language and read mine to start with the basics. Hence, you can know how useful and productive this book is to me. :-)

"English Bites!" also has the tagline of "My Fullproof English Learning Formula" where Fullproof is being rounded off by a red circle. :-) Manish Gupta is a debutant and with this book, I am sure he is going to be followed by many fans who were waiting for an easy book that can improve their English. When someone like me who continuously work upon his English found this book to be a fresh way of teaching the language, you can predict how much useful it would be to someone who has not yet put an effort in learning the language. Picking up a Wren and Martin's grammar or Norman Lewis book may be a boring task for people but picking up a commercial novel with a debutant author being published by India's biggest publisher, Penguin, is the most interesting way of promoting the book in the genre. And the great thing is that the author claims guarantee that it's a useful book for anyone who is preparing for GRE/GMAT/CAT/XAT and similar competitive exams. He also claims that after the book is finished, 1000 words will easily be a part of our vocabulary. Yes, even I have noted down many words in my diary in last two weeks.

Author talks about his life in the book. About how he came from a vernacular background, how he changes his city, how he gets a friend, how they together start working in development of their language, how his grades start falling down, how then he faces interviews, gets job etc. With it, he keeps on talking about the only focus of his life- to improve his English. And that's something very unique about this book. Then, when you read any literary book, the writer and the publisher knows that a reader will be unable to understand at least 2-3 words every page but still they don't provide with an easy way to look for the meaning of those words. Manish Gupta has given a very good idea to all the future authors and the current ones too. On the page itself, he gives the meaning of all the difficult words which helps you in not picking up a dictionary or keeping it with you while reading this book. You don't even have to go to the last pages of the book to see the meaning in the glossary. It's on the same page itself. What more can you demand from a book?

Manish Gupta's writing style is quite professional. I just found this as a limitation that might make a reader feel this book as boring. Little humour, sarcasm and satire could have worked in the favour of the book but author has kept it too professional and formal. Another thing, he kept it totally focused on learning the language, he should have included some other facts about his life too and could have talked about it in an interesting manner. With it, he could have continued making us learn new words. Another limitation that I

feel is- the length of the book. It could have been short while a sequel could have been planned. But the pages of the book has also increased as the meanings of the words are given on each page so lets minus this drawback. Else, I would say that everyone who feels that he does not have a good vocabulary or even a basic foundation, can surely pick up this book. Author has written with too many examples. He has given too many facts that we don't know about the language that we use daily. He has talked about grammar without letting us know that he's teaching us the same. The trivia that he has mentioned every now and then in the book is the most interesting part of it. I just can't define in my words even after reading this book full of vocabulary that how helpful this book can be. :-) If you miss it, don't ever again complain that Indian authors are ruining the language as this new gentleman is here for us, for our good. :-)

Sachin Dev says

A fantastic resource for all types of "Language Nuts" & GRE/GMAT Aspirants looking to crack the verbal, Manish Gupta presents a lucid, well-thought out book that peels away the layers using an effective mix of "Etymology" & "Storytelling". Using a galore of anecdotal examples, real life situations & detailed footnotes, the author makes this language accessible and easy to understand & remember. you may use words like "Lexical Parallelism", "Topology", Homonyms etc to get your point across but the truth remains that this language doesn't bite.

And it takes one man's hilarious misadventures through life to lay this truth bare in front of us. Go ahead, take a bite. It don't bite back.

Here are my thoughts in detail: <http://bit.ly/Qyb8nh>

Shilpa Garg says

English Bites! is the author's own journey with the English language. The book charts his struggles and success with English, right from his school days to college and then later to his work life as a banker. In a very interesting manner with illustrations and anecdotes, humour and wit, the book acts as a learning guide for English.

What I liked about the book is that there are footnotes explaining the meaning of the words, their origin and interesting trivia on each page. So, one is not referring to a dictionary or leafing through the supplementary material at the end of a book, frequently. Though initially, it was tough reading an interesting anecdote in the first half of the page and then reading the second half of the page which had meanings, usage and some fun facts about difficult words. But as the book progressed, I enjoyed the process of reading the story and learning new words or validating my knowledge, simultaneously.

'Pls do read the book slowly....a chapter or two at a time', suggested the author in one of the mails that we exchanged and I followed it religiously. And this helped to soak and absorb the new words and their meanings better. There are over 1000 new words to add to our vocabulary.

The first half of the book deals with Manish's initial journey as he explored the various tips and tricks like mnemonics, limericks, rhymes, alliterations, and trivia to learn and remember words and their usage. It also throws light on various word plays in English language like Amphibology(ambiguous grammatical usage)

isograms (words in which no letter of the alphabet appears more than once), lipograms (words containing a particular letter have been deliberately omitted), palindromes (a word, phrase that reads the same backward or forward), oxymoron (a figure of speech in which incongruous or seemingly contradictory terms appear side by side), homophones (words that sound the same but have different spellings/meanings) etc.

The focal point in the second half of the book is general knowledge with trivia that spans areas like brand names, automobiles, fine dining, love, money, banks, science and B-school jargon.

While the first half is more engaging and has a conversational tone, the second half is a bit formal and is more of a matter of fact writing.

English Bites! is a big fat book of knowledge and learning. I believe a 200 page book would make it a breezy read, though.

English Bites! is a must read for all CAT, XAT, GRE, GMAT aspirants and all those who love examining the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of the English language.

English Bites! is not a one time read but something that I would like to read and refer to, from time to time.

<http://shilpaagarg.com/2013/10/englis...>

Subramanyam K.V. says

he importance of English (The global language) in today's world needs no introduction. We all know, how important it is to learn, be comfortable with and have a command on the language that is connecting the globe. With disruptive technologies and subsuming markets ruling the knowledge based economy we live in, a good command on English language is not just an asset but is actually a necessity.

While one can improve one's grammar doing grammar exercises, speaking to others and constructing simple sentences etc.. Learning new words, remembering and reusing them are completely a different cup of tea altogether. Imagine a situation where you are on a call and you do not understand the word or a jargon used by your foreign counterpart, for that matter imagine reading a report that makes you refer the dictionary quite often. Embarrassing and time-consuming isn't it? Probably that's the reason why almost all management aptitude tests have a section that tests the candidates' proficiency with the words.

Learning words is never easy, at least that's true for me. While sitting for my CAT, I remember receiving word-card-decks that TIME used to give us to learn the words. I found it tough to remember the words and was confused with the subtle nuances and idiosyncrasies (Manish, if you are reading this, don't accuse me of plagiarism J) of the language. I was always looking for an easier way to learn and remember these wonderful words and expand my vocabulary. For, most of the times when we read word lists, the biggest problem is that we have to create a story around the word and when you see the word you ought to remember the story and get the meaning right?

Now, what if there a story that's woven around 1000+ tough words. What if the story is a pretty enjoyable read that arouses interest and makes you look forward for the next chapter. What if it is ornated with few tough words here and there and also provides you the meanings at the end of the page. An offer you cannot refuse, isn't it? Well, that's what Manish Gupta did in his book "English Bites — my Fullproof English

learning formula". He has by and large provided an easy way to tackle this otherwise tough and obnoxious task of improving one's vocabulary.

The story starts with he going to school and the perception it creates about English in his mind. Then, we get to see English-Bites his years at college where he resolves to improve his English speaking skills. The troubles, travails and travelogues (cathay pacific incident) of the author tell us about his struggle with English and how he made himself proficient with the language. Revealing too much would be a spoiler here and hence I'd say this, by time the story reaches his toddlers, the reader would have smiled, guffawed, felt awed, enjoyed, scratched his head and still got all his words, their usages, a lot of trivia and a lot of GK too. Manish has embedded awesome trivia, nice anecdotes, hilarious jokes and interesting stories regarding the word origins in the book. From now on, every time I hear the word bedraggled I am gonna remember Manish's joke on that. Again every time he speaks about a tough word, it is in bold and italicized. At the end of each page the meanings and usage of all these tough words are well elucidated.

While the flow of story keeps us glued to the book, the trivia and the other stuff makes it more interesting. Manish speaks about words that have come from animals, behaviors, vehicles (penny farthing was ultimate), voyages (never knew that the word "POSH" had something to do with the British sailing to India), medicine and a wide variety of professions. Once you read the word and the story behind it you are not likely to forget either of them.

Then he talks about mnemonics that help us remember the words, spooners that make stuff look funny, self contradicting oxymorons, palindromes , lipograms and a wide variety of words and techniques that stimulate our curiosity and rouse our interest to learn more.

The biggest complaint I have against Manish and the book, is that he took too long a time to finish and release it. Had he released it 3 years ago I too would have used it for my CAT prep. Coming to the things that could have improved, at times I felt as if there were too many words on a page and I also felt that some of the topics were slightly getting dragged but it is okay as the essence of the book is to teach new words and help the reader.

From my experience with CAT, I would say it is a must buy for the CAT/GMAT and GRE aspirants. It would teach you a lot more stuff in a way that's fun. Not just For MBA aspirants, it's a must buy for any person who is serious on building good vocab skills. An ideal book for people in the services industry who are in customer facing roles.

Having said that, I would say that anyone who is reading it must read it in a slow and phased way, read a few pages -> pick a few words-> use them in front of your friends-> imbibe and internalize them and then move to the next chapter /pages in the book . That's the best way of reading it. Read it – use the words then reread it and you would have made yourself proficient in the vocabulary.

Read the book, every penny you spend on the book is worth it.

The review was originally published on my blog
<http://satyasurya.wordpress.com/2013/...>

Aditya Bhasin says

English Language- My Piece of moon
Clearly I love this language. Since my early schooling I loved English as a subject. No matter how many classes I've bunked in school but English was never on the list. I just could not let myself bunk English classes. While I was in class 9th and 10th and yeah 11th and 12th too I used to hate English literature. I used to tell my teacher to make me speak on any topic she like, give me something to write and I will do it best way possible but, just do not make me read literature. I hated that. I still remember what nightmares the book Flamingo used to give me. Even in my secondary and senior-secondary exams I never used to study for literature part [25 marks]. I did not prepare a single word even while my board exams. I just used to keep my focus on other three sections. And the best part was I never had to study for those three sections too

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Thankfully I never scored less than 75 in my English exams. Moving forward when it came to college I had to opt for English Hons as my major. I NEVER wanted it. It just happened. May be it was destined. Till this point in my life my speaking skills were very good. But, when it came to writing I used to make many mistakes.

Punctuation marks and wrong sentence structure were major among them. Time moved on and so does my graduation. There was a lot to learn while doing English Hons, but they did not improve your basic mistakes. It was more about deep study of language itself.

Today when I write this I am good with English as a language. I am improving every moment. I am not ashamed to accept that I still make mistakes but, I am proud and happy that I have improved *THIS* much in recent years. And I continue to improve every day.

Let's talk about the Book.

The book is a first person narration by Gupta. The book is his own story of mastering an alien language. The pace at which this book is been written is amazing. The transition is smooth and makes it a delight for any person to read this self-help book.

English Bites has to be one of the most well articulated book I've ever read. Especially when it is a self-help book. Saying that this book is an autobiography would not be wrong but Gupta is not acting a narcissist here. His attempt to write this 'autobiography' is wonderful.

This book takes you through a journey you would wish does not end. At some point this book is mesmerizing. If you love this language you would just do not want to stop. I would not hesitate to say that there is some magic in this book. But, to experience that magic you first need to love the language itself.

English Bites add a lot of words to your vocabulary, along with interesting trivia about the language. If you are deep in to language part you would love the origin of words given in the book.

At times it may sound like a cumbersome task but at the end it is surely increasing your knowledge base to a greater extent.

The word meanings given at the footer of each page helps you to a greater extent. You would never need to take a look at dictionary. The book takes your language skills to a greater level and is a must read.

Suggestions

Learning language is always a pleasure. Enjoy reading this book instead of reading for the heck of it. I completed this book in a week or so but I am surely going to give it another read once again. This time reading one chapter a day. This will help keeping the words in your mind and using them in your daily conversations.

Vaisakhi says

English Bites – My Fullproof English Learning Formula is indeed a foolproof formula as it makes learning words total fun. I still remember when I was small my dad used to ask me to learn 10 words from dictionary or newspapers and report to him in the evening. In school we used to hate the English lecture when we had a vocabulary lesson because it used to be the driest 45 minutes of the day. If only we had a book like this back then. The book is the story of the author who also was from vernacular medium and fought a long exhaustive war with English to finally conquer it. The journey is scribed in the book with pinch of humor, satire, a bit of emotions, all on a strong base of reality and is adorned with apt comic sketches and a lot of amusing trivia.

The book successfully erases the trite methods of learning languages and sets a new and a trend through this book, reason? The book not only a compendium of lot of words, it gives you the meaning of all the words then and there, at times with their origin as well. So you could let your dictionary rest and just enjoy the book

without any distraction. And if the reader is like me nothing could be better as I am super lazy while reading a book. I would rather re read the line two three times and figure out some meaning than check the correct meaning by travelling some meters, picking up a dirtied by age old dust Dictionary and hunting for the word in the yellowed pages. The book sounds amazing now right?

Read the whole review on <http://vaisakhimishra.blogspot.in/201...>
