

Award Winning ConnTESOL Essay by George A.

No one ever imagines themselves speaking to others in a language different from their native language. I would have never thought of it, because it seems so difficult, different, and strange. However, here I am, in that very same position, speaking to people in English, a language that was once foreign to me. I'll admit that transferring my thoughts and what I want to say from my native Arabic into English hasn't been at all easy. The two languages are completely different, with different alphabets, and consisting of exceptionally different sounds and pronunciations.

Experiencing the major transformation of moving to the U.S., and doing things I had never considered doing, like speaking a different language, changed a lot of things for me, including my plans for the future. Learning English opened a lot of doors, such as planning to possibly attend medical school and studying to become a cardiologist. This is a significant goal, one I had not even ever considered before learning English.

Most medically related college majors are taught in English. This is one of the main reasons why many young men and women are discouraged from studying one of these majors. Learning English has given me the chance to do it, and one day, I may be able to return to Syria to help people like me, whose first language is not English, so that they may be afforded with the same number of choices that I have available to me. Being able to read, write and understand the English language will afford people like me with many more, and varied, opportunities.