

EFL

by

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INT. CLASSROOM (EMPTY) - EVENING

Title appears: EFL

Then: English as a Foreign Language

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

DAVID and LAURA walk side-by-side down the hallway to the classroom. They are followed by THOMAS and JULIA.

LAURA  
(in French)  
My English is already very good.  
I'm going to try and get into the  
C1 class.

DAVID  
(in French)  
I don't know if you can do that  
once the courses have started. It  
may be too late.

They enter the classroom.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - EVENING

LAURA, DAVID, JULIA, and THOMAS find their seats and take out books and stationery then finally sit down and wait for the teacher.

LAURA  
(in French)  
If I do it tomorrow. I think I can  
switch. Seriously, my English is  
too good for this level. It's a  
waste of my time.

DAVID  
(in French)  
OK, well. All I can say is good  
luck.

THOMAS  
(in French)  
Is this the right room?

JULIA  
(in French)  
Think so.

THOMAS  
(in French)  
Sure?

JULIA  
(in French)  
If the teacher isn't here at ten  
past we can always go and ask.

Enter JOCK, the teacher. He has a thick Scottish accent and, even though he's speaking English, everything he says is subtitled. The students can't understand anything he's saying.

JOCK  
Good evening everyone. My name is Jock and I'm your English teacher for the next four months. I know it seems a bit ridiculous to be Scottish and called Jock but, don't worry, it's not my real name. Some of the teachers in my last school gave it to me as a nickname and I kind of like it so you can go ahead and call me that too.

As you may already be aware, this is an introductory session just so we can get to know each other and find out a little bit about what's going to happen on the course. I'll start. As I've already said, my name's Jock, real name James, and I come from just outside Glasgow in 'Ecosse'. See? Only been here for a month and already picking up some of the native lingo.

So why am I here? Well, quite simply, I love language. There's something so fundamental about it - the ability to communicate, to express complex ideas, and create rock-solid bonds between perfect strangers. This thing that seems so basic on the face of it - just a couple of random sounds that follow each other - combine together with such profundity that it boggles the mind.

And each language expresses itself in such unique and marvellous ways. Take English with its flexibility and its richness. Its way of making the intangible tangible in a way that other languages just can't do. That's the kind of thing I really hope I can get across to you in the next four months. I hope you're as excited about that as I am.

PAUSE

JOCK

In the end, I think it's mostly about being understood. It can get very lonely when no one understands you. Misunderstandings, miscommunication. When you know perfectly well what's going on in your head but no one else seems to understand. In the end, aren't we all just looking to be accepted? To find our place in this messed up world? But how can you do that when people can't see what's in your head? All they see, or hear, is what comes out of your mouth? What if the stuff that comes out of your mouth isn't the stuff that's in your head? What then?

Being able to communicate is so important. And that's why I'm here. To help you lovely people to be better understood in the fine language of English - the most spoken second language on this glorious planet Earth.

JOCK receives a text message.

JOCK

Christ! There's something I completely forgot about. I have to head off right now. Really sorry about that. Listen, it's been a pleasure to meet you all and I look forward to seeing you all again on Tuesday. That's at 7 o'clock here in this room. Is that alright for everyone? Great, we'll be doing verbs. See you on Tuesday then.

Bye!

JOCK exits.

SHOT OF DUMBFOUNDED STUDENTS.

Eventually:

THOMAS  
(in French)  
Who was that?

DAVID  
(in French)  
No idea.

LAURA  
(in French)  
I hope the teacher turns up soon.

JULIA  
(in French)  
I'll go and see if they're coming.

JULIA gets up and goes to the door.

FADE TO BLACK.