

Week 1: Introduction to English for Geography

1. The Importance of English in Academic and Scientific Fields

English is widely recognized as the international language of science, education, and communication. In academic contexts, the dominance of English is reflected in the publication of scholarly journals, international conferences, and collaborative research projects. For students of geography and land use planning, English enables access to cutting-edge research, geographic databases, and software tools, most of which are developed and documented in English. Furthermore, proficiency in English opens opportunities for global academic exchange and professional development in international organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank, and environmental NGOs.

Sources:

- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Graddol, D. (2006). *English Next*. British Council.
- Hyland, K. (2009). *Academic Discourse: English in a Global Context*. Continuum.

2. Academic Self-Introduction (Name, Major, Academic Year)

Introducing oneself in an academic context is a foundational skill, especially in international or interdisciplinary settings. A clear academic self-introduction should include:

- Full name
- Field of study (major/specialization)
- Academic level or year
- Academic interests or goals

This allows others to understand your background and engage in meaningful academic dialogue.

Examples:

- “My name is Ali. I’m a second-year student in Geography and Land Use Planning. I’m interested in environmental policy.”

- “Hello, I’m Fatima. I study geography, and I’m particularly focused on urban sustainability.”

3. Key Vocabulary in Geography

Understanding and correctly using basic geographical terms is essential for communication and comprehension in the field. Below are five foundational terms with their definitions:

- **Geography:** The study of the Earth's physical features, human societies, and the interactions between them. (*Oxford English Dictionary*)
- ***“Geography is the scientific study of the Earth's surface, including its physical features, climate, vegetation, population, land use, and the interaction of humans with their environment.”***(Gregory, D., Johnston, R., Pratt, G., Watts, M., & Whatmore, S. (2009). *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (5th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell)
- **Map:** A visual representation of an area that displays physical, political, or thematic information about that location. (*National Geographic Glossary*)
- ***“A map is a symbolic depiction emphasizing relationships between elements of some space, such as objects, regions, and themes, often represented on a flat surface.”***
(Robinson, A. H., Morrison, J. L., Muehrcke, P. C., Kimerling, A. J., & Guptill, S. C. (1995). *Elements of Cartography* (6th ed.). Wiley).
- **Region:** A specific area defined by distinct physical, cultural, or functional characteristics, such as climate, economy, or population. (*Johnston, R. J. (2000). The Dictionary of Human Geography. Wiley-Blackwell.*)
- ***“A region is a portion of the Earth’s surface that is defined by certain unifying characteristics, which may be physical, human, or functional.”***(Knox, P. L., & Marston, S. A. (2013). *Places and Regions in Global Context: Human Geography* (6th ed.). Pearson Education.)
- **Climate:** The long-term pattern of weather conditions in a specific region, including temperature, precipitation, and wind. (*IPCC Glossary, 2021*)
- ***“Climate refers to the statistical weather information that describes the variation of weather at a given place for a specified interval of time, typically averaged over 30 years or more.”***(IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). (2021). *Sixth Assessment Report – Glossary*. Ahrens, C. D. (2012). *Meteorology Today* (10th ed.). Brooks Cole.)

- **Environment:** The natural world, including land, water, air, plants, and animals, especially as it is affected by human activity. (*UNEP Environmental Terminology*)
“The environment encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth or in a particular area, including air, water, land, flora, fauna, and the built environment shaped by human intervention.” (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2022). *Global Environment Outlook – GEO-6*. Botkin, D. B., & Keller, E. A. (2014). *Environmental Science: Earth as a Living Planet* (9th ed.). Wiley.)

4. Forming Questions and Classroom Expressions

Mastering basic question formation and classroom expressions is vital for successful participation in English-medium learning environments. Questions in English typically follow a subject-verb inversion pattern when using auxiliary verbs or the verb “to be.”

Examples of useful questions:

- “What’s your field of study?”
- “Why do you study English?”
- “Can you repeat that, please?”
- “How do you pronounce this word?”

Classroom expressions:

- “I didn’t understand.”
- “Could you explain this again?”
- “How do you say ... in English?”
- “My specialization is geography.”

Basic structure rule:

In WH- questions: **WH-word + auxiliary verb + subject + main verb**

Example: “Why do you study English?”

In yes/no questions: **Auxiliary verb + subject + main verb**

Example: “Do you understand the question?”

Source:

- Swan, M. (2005). *Practical English Usage*. Oxford University Press.
- Murphy, R. (2012). *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge University Press.