

TASK 1

Here are some extracts from an article on mistakes language learners make. Read texts A-F and headings 1-6 carefully. IN BLOCK CAPITALS, write the letter of the text next to the corresponding heading in the space provided. Notice that:

- **There is one text which does not go with any of the headings.**
- Answers must be based exclusively on the information in the texts.

TOPIC:

LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: FIVE MOST COMMON MISTAKES

A.

There's a school of linguistics that believes language learning begins with a "silent period". Just as babies learn to produce language by hearing and parroting sounds, language learners need to practise listening in order to learn. This can reinforce learned vocabulary and structures, and help learners see patterns in language.

Listening is the communicative skill we use most in daily life, yet it can be difficult to practise unless you live in a foreign country or attend immersive language classes. The solution? Find music, podcasts, TV shows and movies in the target language, and listen, listen, listen, as often as possible.

B.

In language learning, attitude can be a key factor in how a student progresses.

Linguists studied attitude in language learning in the 1970s in Quebec, Canada, when tension was high between Anglo- and Francophones. The study found that Anglophones holding prejudices against French Canadians often did poorly in French language learning, even after studying French for years as a mandatory school subject.

On the other hand, a learner who is keen about the target culture will be more successful in their language studies. The culturally curious students will be more receptive to the language and more open to forming relationships with native speakers.

C.

Linguists have found that students with a low tolerance of ambiguity tend to struggle with language learning.

Language learning involves a lot of uncertainty – students will encounter new vocabulary daily, and for each grammar rule there will be a dialectic exception or irregular verb. Until native-like fluency is achieved, there will always be some level of ambiguity.

The type of learner who sees a new word and reaches for the dictionary instead of guessing the meaning from the context may feel stressed and disoriented in an immersion class. Ultimately, they might quit their language studies out of sheer frustration. It's a difficult mindset to break, but small exercises can help. Find a song or text in the target language and practice figuring out the gist, even if a few words are unknown.

D.

Some learners are most comfortable with the listen-and-repeat drills of a language lab or podcast. Some need a grammar textbook to make sense of a foreign tongue. Each of these approaches is fine, but it's a mistake to rely on only one. Language learners who use multiple techniques get to practise different skills and see concepts explained in different ways. What's more, the variety can keep them from getting stuck in a learning rut.

When choosing a class, learners should seek a course that practises the four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). For self-study, try a combination of textbooks, audio lessons, and language learning apps.

E.

Many learners don't understand that languages are different from each other, and that very often **you simply can't translate particular words and expressions directly**. Doing so more often than not results in very unnatural sounding speech. A very simple example is the use of personal pronouns such as "I" or "You" In so-called "pro-drop" languages such as Spanish, where personal pronouns are very rarely used because they are redundant. Yet the vast majority of English speakers learning these languages seem to have a hard time getting their head around this simple fact. When you start learning a foreign language, start from a blank slate. You need to forget about whatever patterns or expressions you got used to employing in your native tongue, especially if you're learning a language from a different family. Get used to absorbing new patterns and expressions without always referring back to your mother tongue.

F.

It doesn't matter how well a person can write in foreign script, conjugate a verb, or finish a vocabulary test. To learn, improve, and truly use your target language, we need to speak. This is the stage when language students can clam up, and feelings of shyness or insecurity hinder all their hard work. In Eastern cultures where saving face is a strong social value, EFL teachers often complain that students, despite years of studying English, simply will not speak it. They're too afraid of bungling the grammar or mispronouncing words in a way that would embarrass them. The key is that those mistakes help language learners by showing them the limits of language, and correcting errors before they become ingrained. The more learners speak, the quicker they improve.

G.

Being extremely motivated for a short period of time can wear you out, after which you'll have to take a break and relax. We're all super excited when we start learning a new language. We feel like buying every single book we can get our hands on and spending hours every day studying the language. Most of us have this initial motivation boost, but the problem is that when this flow of motivation comes to a stop and the tide reverses, we're in for some disappointment. A lot of people give up because they drain themselves way too quickly. Don't be one of them.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationadvice/9750895/Learning-a-foreign-language-five-most-common-mistakes.html?fb>

<http://www.lingholic.com/learning-foreign-language-10-most-common-mistakes/>

HEADINGS	Text letter
0. Not listening enough	
1. A single method	
2. Don't drain your batteries	
3. Fear	
4. Lack of curiosity	
5. Rigid thinking	