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UNIT

1

Language in mission

Passage 1

Directions: In this section, there is a passage with 10 blanks. There is a word bank following the passage. Read the passage carefully and select one word for each blank from the word bank. You may NOT use any of the words more than once.

Can I successfully learn a language online?

Duolingo, a free language learning app, has been used in the entire U.S. public school system. Since its 1. _____ in 2012, more than 30 million people have downloaded the 2013 version of the app. Language learning has become an area in which the 2. _____ of mobile apps and interactive software have provided a choice to a range of people who were previously unable to gain access to foreign language education. Luis von Ahn, the founder of Duolingo, says that he was 3. _____ to find a way for people to learn a language for free. “There’s an irony that most of the people who need to learn a language don’t have much money, but learning a language costs a lot.”

One of the big changes caused by technology is the 4. _____ shift in language learners. English remains the resoundingly most in-demand language due in large part to the advantages it offers to the economic migrants.

A provider of online lessons with tutors in their native countries, also wants to see technology being used to make learning more 5. _____. “We want to connect students who were previously unable to get access to native teachers and link teachers with students outside of their cities.” Rosetta Stone, the longstanding provider of language-learning software, has 6. _____ time and resources into its research of the market and concluded that mobile is the way forward. “People are so hooked on being mobile, whether that’s a tablet or any other device they can lug around.”

Duolingo was designed to be like a game. “We have to find a way to keep them interested, and that’s where the gamification came in,” says Luis. He thinks that users are still 7. _____ from something else, but at least it’s somewhat useful. It depends

on what people mean by learning a language. “You can learn to the point where you can 8. _____ and have relatively simple conversations, but you probably won’t be writing any great works of literature,” says Luis.

Donavan Whyte, the vice president of Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), thinks that technology wouldn’t remove the need to be very motivated to learn. But he agrees that online tools are going to be most effective when used as one component of a bigger 9. _____ of learning tools. We’re not expecting users of Duolingo or Rosetta Stone to reach anything near 10. _____, but can they gain at least a basic grasp of a new language, and how will the experience of self-directed, technology-based learning work out for them?

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| A determined | B poured | C procrastinating | D squeezed |
| E dominate | F arsenal | G launch | H accessible |
| I explosion | J formidable | K demographic | L volume |
| M variety | N navigate | O fluency | |

Directions: In this section, there is a short passage followed by some questions or incomplete statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A, B, C and D. Read the passage carefully. Then decide on the best choice.

Inspiring students with learning disabilities to take up a language

Every year, thousands of language learners struggle with the additional challenge of a learning disability. In England alone, there are more than 229,000 school students with special education needs (SEN), with many going on to successfully take qualifications in French, Spanish and German.

SEN covers a wide range of learning disabilities, from mild dyslexia to severe, non-verbal autism. There's not a one-size-fits-all approach for teaching languages to SEN students. Instructors have to look for the strengths rather than worrying too much about the weaknesses.

Dr. Judit Kormos of the University of Lancaster says that the teacher needs to be aware of dyslexia and teach slightly differently: much more visually, acting things out and explaining things a bit more explicitly than they would do to other students. Some people are more receptive to audio channels of learning, and others are more receptive to visual channels, so using a combination of the two can be really effective.

John Gore, now 25, agrees that learning methods held him back before he was diagnosed. Teachers need to think about what students want the language for – many people want to learn a language for speaking but not so much for writing. Therefore, teachers can set slightly different goals for dyslexic students in terms of what they need to achieve.

Dr. Margaret Crombie also suggests that the written side of language learning can be played down if a dyslexic student is struggling. “Don't take away the written word, but maybe don't assess them by it.”

For language learners with more severe disabilities, however, it can be easy to assume that learning a second language may be too challenging. But it's always worth letting people try, according to Sally Holmwood, who teaches SEN students.

Even for pupils with the most severe disabilities, being exposed to another language could always be a positive experience. "On occasions, I've seen young people who are so turned off by the language that they don't want to go to school and it's affecting their well-being," says Crombie. "If it gets to that stage, then I think the time has come to ask whether it's worth it or not. But I would always let everyone have a try."

Sally Holmwood is of the same mind, pointing to the story of Carly Fleischmann, who eventually learned to communicate after years. "It brings it home that you don't necessarily know how much a child has understood, just because they're not verbally telling you that they've understood. You can't underestimate them."

1. Which of the following about SEN students is NOT true?
 - A They could take qualifications successfully in foreign languages.
 - B They may suffer from non-verbal autism.
 - C They can be taught in a standardized approach.
 - D They also have strengths in language learning.
2. Which of the following methods would NOT help teachers instruct dyslexic students?
 - A Including less reading and writing.
 - B Explaining concepts in an implicit way.
 - C Acting things out.
 - D Combining visual and audio channels.
3. What can teachers do to assist dyslexic students with language learning?
 - A Assess them by written words.
 - B Figure out their motives for language learning.
 - C Emphasize the writing side in teaching.
 - D Set the same goals for dyslexic and non-dyslexic students.

4. What is Sally Holmwood's attitude toward introducing SEN students to a second language?
- A Optimistic. B Disapproval. C Critical. D Neutral.
5. What would happen if SEN students are turned off by the language according to Dr. Margaret Crombie?
- A They would have better academic performance.
B They would have worse health conditions.
C They would be less likely to communicate.
D They would want to go to school.

Passage 3

Directions: In this section, there is a passage followed by 10 statements. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once.

Wanting it enough: Why motivation is the key to language learning

- A** Second language professionals, after explaining what we do for a living, are inevitably asked, “What’s the fastest foolproof method for learning a language?” Some of us would like to answer: Find a language partner, go to the country, and talk with someone who speaks only the language you want to learn and not yours. In academic terms, what we are recommending is that people make the most of something that is crucial for language learning – motivation.
- B** Most people think that learning another language after childhood is hard. Although not everyone who is motivated to learn manages to succeed, most people who do achieve a high level of success also turn out to be very strongly motivated.
- C** Researchers who study the relationship between language learning and motivation explain that some learners are “intrinsically” motivated. These learners might want to learn a language to a higher level so that they can understand their grandparents who live in another country and are getting older. Or, they might want to teach their children a second language because they want them to have the cognitive and social advantages of being bilingual.
- D** “Extrinsic” motivation, in turn, stems from outside sources, such as a student needing to pass a test in order to satisfy a language requirement. In practice, of course, people tend to have a variety of reasons, both intrinsic and extrinsic, for why they want to learn, and different aspects motivate them at different times.
- E** Professors Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert conducted pioneering work in studying motivation; they pointed out the importance of other qualities, such as aptitude. Based on their research in officially bilingual Canada, they noted that

some learners are interactively motivated to learn a language, meaning they feel an affinity for it, so they want to get to know the people who speak that language, and often, they are also interested in the culture associated with the language. This is similar to intrinsic motivation.

F Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, kicks in when people primarily want to learn a language for practical reasons, such as gaining a salary bonus or getting into the university, similar to extrinsic motivation. It has been shown to be less powerful in language learning success.

G Of course, people's motivation can change. Professor Zoltán Dörnyei from Nottingham University has pointed out that every different psychological perspective on human behavior is associated with a different theory of motivation. His own model is known as the "L2 motivational self system," and it focuses on learners' abilities to envision an ideal future for themselves as positive, competent and successful second language speakers.

H Dörnyei's model also recognizes that motivation is dynamic rather than static. So, motivation fluctuates as it is impacted by various factors in real time, moment to moment. A learner's motivation levels can go up or down depending on how motivated, interested, or involved their conversational partners are (these might be native speakers or fellow learners and their instructors in classrooms). In other words, motivation can be contagious.

I It can also be influenced by the task that learners are undertaking and how interesting and engaging it is. Deborah Tannen, professor of linguistics at Georgetown University and author of several best-selling books, says that each person's life is lived as a series of conversations. When asked how this applies to learning a language, Tannen notes that wanting to have certain kinds of conversations, with people one knows or wants to know, can be a huge motivator in learning a new language. She follows this up with a personal example. Although her first husband, who was Greek, spoke English fluently, Tannen had to learn Greek in order to communicate with his mother, a woman she came to love deeply.

- J** Dörnyei and his colleagues have recently carried out classroom research, finding that learners who can construct ideal self-images as successful second language speakers are better able to reach their goals. They need to have a clear road map of tasks and strategies to follow in order to do this, and Dörnyei makes the analogy between teaching a language and creating a training plan for an Olympic athlete. “Like sports coaches,” he explains, “instructors should take the perspective of trainers and cheerleaders, helping learners to imagine themselves in their ideal L2 personae and thus leverage their motivation to better their learning outcomes.”
- K** What about learners who are strongly motivated to learn a language but still don’t succeed? Some of us just don’t have strong aptitude for language learning. We might be good at other things, such as science, art, music or sports. Researchers traditionally look at the relationships among different kinds of aptitude and language learning outcomes. More recent approaches have started to study exceptionally successful second language learners – the rare few who end up sounding just like native speakers – to understand their particular cognitive skills.
- L** These are your working memory, which can be thought of as how you hold a phone number in your head before you write it down, and your associative memory, which refers to how well you connect new and known information or how strong your mechanisms are for implicit learning. The latter can be seen as the ability to figure out patterns in information. If you have these aptitude skills, along with high levels of various types of motivation, you’re most likely to succeed, especially if you have access to the instruction that has been tailored to match your abilities and interests.
- M** However, what about those of us who aren’t lucky enough to have this constellation of aptitude and motivation, or access to good instruction? According to Steven Pinker, an experimental cognitive psychologist, our behavior is a result of neurophysiological activity in the brain. There is no reason to believe that there is any magic going on. The idea of people being hard-wired for second language learning is fascinating and, perhaps, appealing in that it might be used to get some of us off the hook if our language learning journey is less successful.

1. It is suggested that people fully utilize motivation, which is essential for language learning.
2. Comparatively speaking, instrumental motivation has been proven to be less effective in language learning success.
3. Professor Zoltán Dörnyei's model acknowledges that motivation doesn't remain unchanged.
4. Parents who learn a second language in order to teach their children are recognized as language learners with intrinsic motivation.
5. Students who envision themselves as successful language learners have a better chance to achieve goals.
6. Practically speaking, people tend to have mixed and dynamic motivations in language learning.
7. A language teacher's involvement would have an impact on students' motivation levels.
8. One research revealed that learners who have an affinity for a language would also be interested in the culture associated with it.
9. The instruction which suits students' capabilities and interests would help generate better learning results.
10. The idea that some people are born better language learners may free us from the plight of unsuccessful language learning journey.

Writing

Directions: Write an essay on the topic – Is a test of spoken English necessary? You should write at least 150 words but no more than 200 words following the outline given below:

1. 很多人认为有必要举行英语口语考试，理由是……
2. 我的看法和打算
