

LEVEL:	B1+
TIME:	90 MINS

HACKING LANGUAGE LEARNING

Activity 1: Warm-up

1. Why do you learn English? Do you learn any other foreign languages? If yes, which ones and why?
2. Name three languages you would like to speak fluently.
3. How do you understand Wittgenstein's words: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world"?
4. How do you learn foreign languages? Collect your ideas in the chart below and exchange them with your partner. Find out what you have in common. Do you use similar methods to learn languages?

ME	MY PARTNER

5. Why do people find it difficult to learn languages? Work with your partner/group and prepare some reasons.

Activity 2: Vocabulary before listening.**2A: Match the words (1-14) with their definitions (A-N).**

	WORD		DEFINITION
1.	to embarrass I	A	a process in which the existence of a problem causes other problems, and this makes the original problem worse
2.	to get the point L	B	showing or expressing strong beliefs, interest, or enthusiasm
3.	approach G	C	to have no choice except to do something
4.	attitude K	D	used as an exclamation of praise or approval
5.	cannot help but C	E	(not) a problem that needs to be considered
6.	superficial M	F	something certain to happen because people think it is likely and then behave in ways that make it happen
7.	passionate about B	G	a particular way of thinking about or dealing with something
8.	self-fulfilling prophecy F	H	the number of times that something happens during a period of time
9.	vicious circle A	I	to make someone feel nervous, ashamed, or stupid in a social situation
10.	Good for you/her/them D	J	to completely accept something such as a new belief, idea, or way of life
11.	to catch up with N	K	someone's opinions or feelings about something, especially as shown by their behaviour
12.	(not) be an issue E	L	to understand the reason
13.	frequency H	M	not important or not having a serious effect
14.	to embrace J	N	to improve in order to reach the same standard or rate as someone or something

Definition D: oxforddictionaries.com

All other definitions: <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>**2B: Find synonyms.**

1.	confident of D	A	shopping centre
2.	embarrass C	B	skill
3.	opportunity E	C	humiliate
4.	mall A	D	certain
5.	ability B	E	chance



Activity 3: TEDx Talk – Benny Lewis “Hacking language learning”

To watch the video scan the QR code or go to http://bit.ly/Hacking_language_learning

3A: Listen to Benny Lewis’ speech on learning languages and answer the following questions:

1. How many languages did Benny Lewis speak when he was 21? **One**
2. Did he speak Spanish after 6 months in Spain? **Y/N**
3. Which languages do the polyglots in the videos speak? Give at least 5 examples. **French, Estonian, Czech, Catalan, German, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, Wolof, Yiddish, Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, Swahili, Hindi**
4. What is the biggest problem of most foreign language learners? **They start learning languages with the wrong motivation – to pass an exam, improve career prospects or to impress people.**
5. Why do polyglots learn foreign languages? **Because they are passionate about the language – the literature, movie, books and the people.**
6. Is there a language gene? **Y/N**
7. According to a study conducted in Haifa, children are better language learners than adults. **T/F**
8. How do children and how do adults learn foreign languages? **Adults tend to study grammar books, whereas children play and have fun with the language, they live the language.**
9. Do you have to travel in order to learn foreign languages? Why? **Y/N You can connect with native speakers thanks to the Internet and you can practice with them in your town or city in e.g. a mall.**
10. Which language did he learn in Brazil? **Egyptian Arabic**
11. How should we learn new vocabulary? How often should we repeat it? **We should revise vocabulary with the right frequency just before we forget it – one day later, one week later, one month later. We can also use image association technique.**
12. Is perfectionism conducive to learning a foreign language? **Y/N**
13. Does Benny speak Irish? **Y/N**
14. Why has Benny become successful in language learning? **Because he has changed his approach and attitude and started living the language rather than learning by heart from books.**

3B: Say a few words why people don't learn foreign languages and why their excuses are wrong:

1. No language gene – People think that they don't have talent to learn foreign languages. Nope, everyone can learn foreign languages. Some people need less and some people need more time.
2. Too old to learn a language – Some people think that they are too old to learn a language. Yet, age is not an issue. Under right circumstances with a proper environment and encouragement adults are better language learners.
3. Can't travel to the country right now – Thanks to Skype, the Internet or globalisation you don't need to travel to practise languages.
4. Bad memory for all that vocabulary – Using proper techniques gives a boost to language learning.
5. Frustrate native speakers – Natives are pleased when people try speaking their language. Language learners shouldn't worry about mistakes because mistakes prove that they make progress.

3C: Adjective or adverb? Read these sentences which you heard in Benny's speech and choose the correct answer. If you are not sure or you want to check your answers, watch the speech again.

1. I did really [**poor/poorly**] with languages.
2. I'm not very [**sensible/sensibly**] though.
3. A very [**impressive/impressively**] video I saw once of this 16-year-old from America called Tim.
4. I want people to think I'm [**smart/smartly**].
5. A lot of us live in cities or town that are more [**international/internationally**] than what we think.
6. "That's what I want to be, I want to be at this very high professional level, have deep philosophical conversations", and that's fantastic and yeah it's [**impressive/impressively**] when you see people like that.
7. You don't have to wait until you speak the language [**perfect/perfectly**] and [**fluent/fluently**] and so on.
8. It's ok to be [**conversational/conversationally**].

3D: Match the halves to make expressions which Benny used. If you are not sure or you want to check your answers, watch the speech again.

1.	to improve E	A	language learning
2.	to impress F	B	faster
3.	to get into A	C	yourself
4.	to advance B	D	the language
5.	to catch up G	E	career prospects
6.	to do H	F	people
7.	to live D	G	with naturally talented
8.	to embarrass C	H	boring exercises