



A1 SEMINAR 1 – ANSWER KEY

Language

Task 2 (in millions)

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Chinese (Mandarin) — 1000 | 7. Portuguese — 180 |
| 2. Spanish — 330 | 8. Russian — 170 |
| 3. English — 320 | 9. Japanese — 120 |
| 4. Hindi — 300 | 10. German (standard) — 100 |
| 5. Arabic — 240 | |
| 6. Bengali — 190 | 73. Czech — 12 |

Task 3

1) 6%, 2) Czech Republic, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Finland, 3) those who don't speak any foreign language, 4) One third, 5) UK, 6) Luxembourg, UK and Ireland

Task 4

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|---|--|
| a) The script | f) Japanese students he has taught |
| b) The oral side/(holding) a conversation | g) A dictionary |
| c) Simple greetings, vocabulary | h) You get (a lot of) individual attention |
| d) A Japanese engineer | i) Plenty of chance to practise (the language) |
| e) Writing things down | j) The sounds |

Tapescript:

Interviewer: So, if you were going to learn Japanese, and you needed to learn that for a specific reason, and within a given time, how would you go about learning it?

Brent: I think with Japanese I would probably make a decision right at the outset about whether I was going to try and learn the script, and I would probably say, 'No, I'm not going to try and learn the script!' I would concentrate on the oral side, I would concentrate on trying to become reasonably competent at holding a conversation. Then I would try and work out which areas of the language I thought I should learn I would need. So, for example, if I had a job, say I was an engineer for example, I would try and work out what are the sort of conversations that I think are important for my job, what sort of conversations would I need. And from that go and learn simple things like simple greetings, some of the vocabulary that goes with it, how you string words together.

Interviewer: How would you learn them?

Brent: Ah! That's the tricky way, tricky one, should I say. Erm, it probably, in the ideal world, it'd be great if I could get my hands on a Japanese engineer who's both, not prepared to teach me but to act as a sort of mentor and a guide, to keep me on the track. Somebody who you could say, 'Now, how do you say that in Japanese? – "There's something wrong with this concrete." – How do you say that in Japanese?' And slowly building up the knowledge of the language like that. And one thing I have, that a number of people have told me about learning a language from that level is to write things down – don't rely on your memory. So if, going back to my example 'What's the matter with this concrete?' get it from, if you have a friendly Japanese person engineer in the background, getting it from them and actually writing it down and memorising the little phrase.

Interviewer: How do you write it down if you don't know the Japanese script?



Brent: Just write it down phonetically. I've, from Japanese students that I've taught, I've asked them very basic phrases like 'How are you?', 'Thank you very much' and they always write it down phonetically. I think that's perfect.

Interviewer: But you wouldn't first go and look for a book of Japanese for engineers?

Brent: I might. Depends how, depends how desperate I am. From experience if you go off and try and find the relevant literature on it, it's often not what you need. So I would tend to...I'd definitely buy a dictionary. So I'd use a variety of techniques and strategies.

Interviewer: And you wouldn't feel it was important to be in a class – of other people learning the same language?

Brent: Yes, actually, yes I think that is a very good idea. To get, for a couple of reasons, to get you into some basic forms of the language and also to get the sounds of the language right. I think that's crucial.

Interviewer: Is that better than private lessons?

Brent: Depends how much money you've got! I think with one-to-one, with one-to-one you get a lot of individual attention, sure, but you often don't have a lot of opportunity to practice your language forms. Whereas in a properly constructed classroom situation, you should have plenty of chance to practise it and get your tongue around it and try and get the sounds right. I think it's absolutely crucial in any language to try and get those sounds right, because if you don't, you'll go up to somebody – doesn't have to be Japanese, it could be anybody – and you produce your phrase, which you've been working on for a long time and they'll just look at you, they don't know what you're talking about! And it's not because the grammar's wrong or the verb's in the wrong place, or the syntax is wrong, it's because you haven't got the sounds right. If you can concentrate on getting those sounds right, I firmly believe you're halfway there.

Task 5

1 about 6800 languages **2** 4000 are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people **3** about half are endangered

Task 6 1C, 2E, 3A, 4F, 5D, 6B

Task 8

1. He speaks English well enough to get **by** in an English speaking country.
2. Have you ever been **to** the U.S.A?
3. Let's discuss this issue over lunch. (no preposition)
4. If you don't understand a word, look it **up** in the dictionary.
5. I'd like to introduce Mr Maiden **to** you.
6. We met **at** a conference two years ago.
7. She translates **from** Czech **into** English.
8. I need to take a course to brush **up** my German.
9. Excuse me, would you **by** any chance be Mr Atkinson?
10. I study Spanish and Portuguese **at** Masaryk University.

CROSSWORD

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|------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. dialect | 7. pronunciation | 13. sentence |
| 2. tongue | 8. antonym | 14. idioms |
| 3. sarcasm | 9. slang | |
| 4. proverb | 10. vocabulary | |
| 5. synonym | 11. accent | |
| 6. cliché | 12. jargon | |