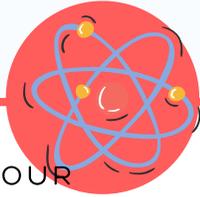


PROACTIVE LEARNERS

5 Tips for learning a second language

EXPECT TO CREATE YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

That is right! It is called *Interlanguage* and it refers to the learning stage in which you combine structures from your mother tongue and your second language. You will move away from this stage as you become more competent!



ERRORS AND MISTAKES SHOW YOUR CREATIVITY

Errors and mistakes show your coherent and structured assumptions about how to express your ideas in the second language. When there is a language barrier. So, sharpen it up!



DIG FOR LINGUISTIC FOSSILS

These are errors that you use consistently up to the point that they become "fossilized" in your mind. What to do? Be aware of them and replace them with the correct form. It takes practice!



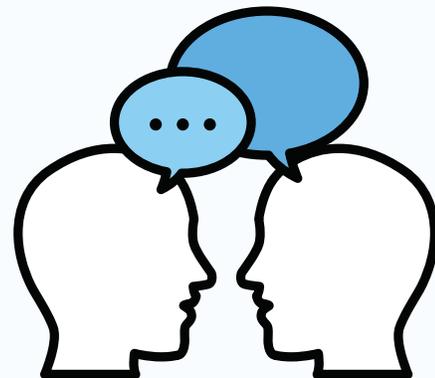
GET TO KNOW YOUR LANGUAGE LINGO

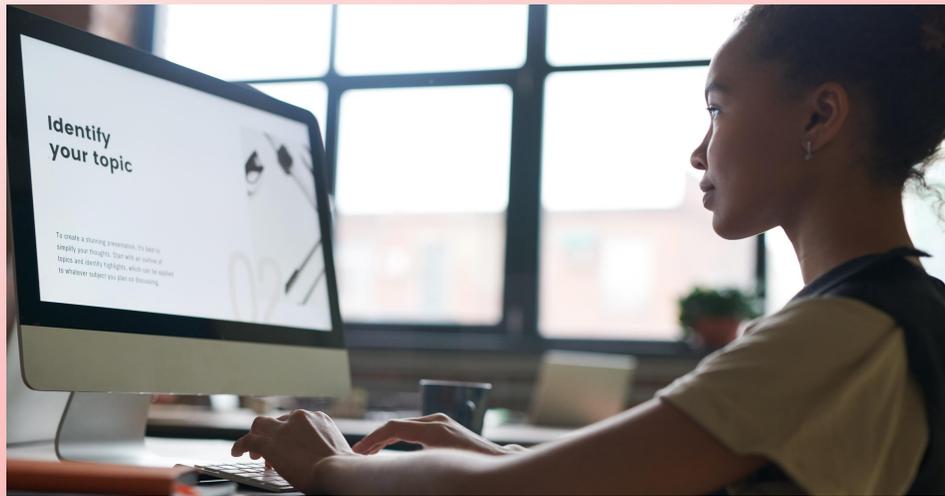
Phrases like "mother tongue", "bilingual" and "second language" help you understand your language learning process and set up the right expectations and goals.



BENEFITS OF LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE

Not only are you achieving your personal goal as you communicate better in the second language, but also you are getting other mental, physical, social and even financial benefits along the way. Get to know them and surprise yourself!





Tip #6

Making up your own language???!!!

It is part of your learning process and is called *Interlanguage*, which means a form of language with features of: your mother tongue, any other language(s) that you may speak and the one you are learning.

An example? When an English speaker asks in Spanish, *¿dónde es el baño?* instead of *¿dónde está el baño?*

Why does it happen?

There is a direct correlation between your competence in the second language and your interlanguage. The better you become in the second language, the faster you will move away from this stage.

What do you usually do during this phase? You...

- transfer words or structures from other languages
- use rules where they do not apply.
- are constantly checking what you are saying and how, which slows down the communication

What can you do?

- go deeper in your knowledge of the new language
- take the right courses for you
- interact with native speakers
- Immerse yourself in the new language: the more you are in contact with it, the better you will communicate.

Tip #7

Don't worry if you happen to fall into an error or a mistake, because they show your creativity!

What is the difference?

You do an error when you do not know how to express something in the new language and you fail to say it properly.

You make a mistake when you fail to say it properly despite the fact that you know how to say it...yes...correctly. It can happen for various reasons: the speed of the conversation, the type of information, your listener's accent, your level of comfort during the conversation, etc.

In both cases, you apply coherent and structured assumptions based on your experience to overcome the language barrier. You use any language tools you have to express your idea and it is there where your creativity comes to light. Then your listener lets you know by their reaction, whether you managed to convey your message with success or you need to think of better ways to express it. Most of the time, there is room for a second chance.



Tip #8

Digging for linguistic fossils?

In the same way animals and humans remain as an impression on a stone, there are words and structures that learners may consistently be using incorrectly that seem to be fossilized on your brain and you are not aware of it.

Why does that happen? When a grammatical rule seems to be too difficult or their knowledge is still limited and adding new structures may not be possible, the learner fossilizes a form that may be grammatically incorrect, but still helps them communicate.

The good news is that as the learner goes deeper in their knowledge and becomes aware of those errors, they can be replaced by the "correct words and structures". In time and with practice, those fossils become error of the past!





Tip #9

Basic lingo

In the same way you need to know some coffee lingo when you go to Starbucks to order the right drink for you, it is important to be familiar with some language lingo so you can set the right expectations and training.

Let's take a look at the following terms: mother tongue, second language and foreign language.

The language you learn as a child naturally and without any formal instruction is your mother tongue. This is your language of nurture, the one you use to express your most intimate feelings and that you may study later at school. A second language can be one of the two languages your community uses for public communication, and usually starts as a language of instruction at school. You can use it in various contexts, but with some limitations. A foreign language is a language of your choice that is not spoken in the community you are living, but that you want to learn for personal or professional reasons. It always starts with a formal training at school or language institutes and you can use it in various contexts but with limitations.

This general distinction may help you understand your process and set realistic expectations. For example, you may start studying Spanish as a foreign language, but if you eventually move to a Spanish-speaking country, Spanish may become your second language, as close to your heart as your mother tongue.

P.S. Second language also refers to the second, third or fourth language that you speak.

Tip #10

Advantages of learning a second language

Switching between two or more languages during the day fosters the development of certain physical, emotional, social and intellectual skills.

For example, if you speak English and Spanish, you...

- develop more explicit understanding about how English and Spanish work
- improve your reading and writing skills
- can have Spanish as the foundation to learn another Romance language, such as French or Italian
- have better memory, problem solving and decision-making abilities
- get stronger analytical skills in English and Spanish
- find your voice in each language and express accordingly
- develop a broader worldview and social understanding by learning to live in two worlds and to understand them

...and these are just a few!!!

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