

## A Time to Learn



## CONNECT to the topic

Linguistics is the study of language. One area of linguistics is the study of how people learn language. As babies, we all learned our native language from people around us. Many people learn a second language as children or adults.

**A THINK ABOUT IT** Work in a small group. Read the statements. Check (✓) your opinion. Compare answers with a partner.

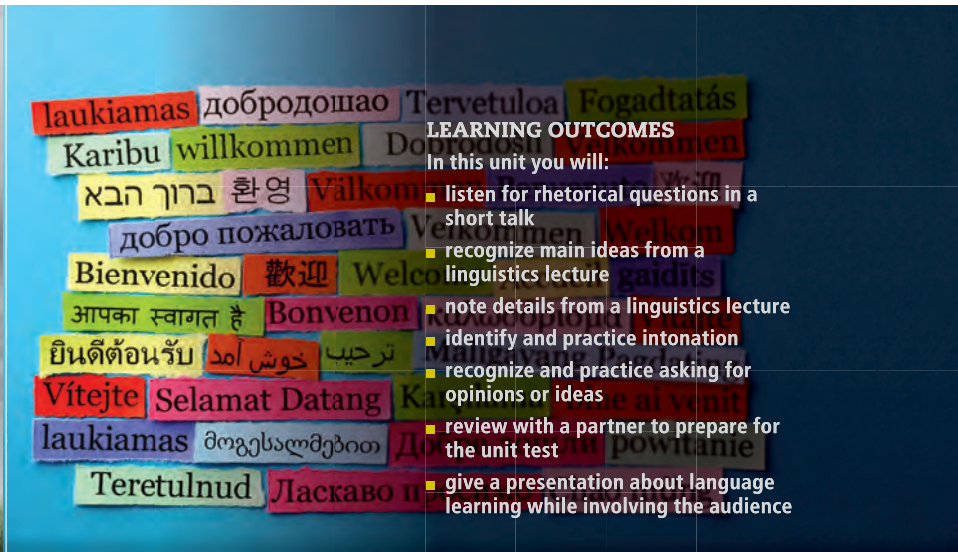
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
• Children learn new languages easily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Adults can never learn a new language well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• A good way to learn a language is to live where it's spoken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Some languages are very difficult to learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Learning new languages is easy for some people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• There are benefits (helpful results) of learning new languages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Share your opinions with the group. Use examples from your experience to explain your opinions.

**B TUNE IN** Listen to an interview with linguist Julia Chintha, talking about bilingualism. Then check (✓) the statements as *True* or *False*.

	True	False
1 More than 75 percent of people in the world are bilingual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 In Indonesia, Indonesian is used as a common language at school and work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 One in four people in the world speak Chinese as a native language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 English is the most widely used second language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 In the United States, about 25 percent of native English speakers are bilingual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C DISCUSS** Discuss these questions in a small group: *Which languages do you use in your everyday life? Why are you learning English?* Explain your reasons.



## BUILD your vocabulary

- LISTEN** The boldfaced words are from the unit lecture on language acquisition. Listen to each passage. Read along. Then circle the best meaning of the boldfaced word.

There are several different **theories** about how people learn language. But no one really knows how language **acquisition** happens.

- 1 A **theory** is an explanation of something that \_\_\_\_\_.  
a might or might not be correct      b is definitely correct      c is completely wrong
- 2 Language **acquisition** is \_\_\_\_\_ a language.  
a teaching      b speaking      c learning

This semester I'm taking an English language class. Next year I'm going to Australia, so I have a lot of **motivation** to study. English is a **critical** skill that I need to learn before my trip.

- 3 **Motivation** is the \_\_\_\_\_ you want to do something.  
a time when      b reason why      c place where
- 4 A **critical** skill is a skill that is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a easy to learn      b very important      c not useful

During the first year of life, babies go through a **period** called babbling. During this time, the baby makes sounds but can't say words yet. Linguists think that babbling plays an important **role** in language learning.

- 5 A **period** is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a a length of time      b a sound      c an age
- 6 Playing a **role** in language learning means \_\_\_\_\_ language learning.  
a having a problem with      b giving a reason for      c being a part of

Why do so many people study English? There are many **factors** that make it a popular subject. One **obvious** reason is for education. Many students need to study textbooks that are in English.

7 A **factor** is \_\_\_\_\_ that affects a situation.

- a the only thing                      b one of several things                      c the most important thing

8 An **obvious** reason is a reason that is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a easy to notice                      b hard to understand                      c interesting to know about

I think that living in another country is the **ideal** way to learn a new language. You're in an **environment** where you have to speak the language all the time, so your **brain** begins to take in the new language.

9 The **ideal** way to do something is the \_\_\_\_\_ way to do it.

- a most complicated                      b most expensive                      c best possible

10 Our **environment** is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a how we do things                      b the time needed to get somewhere                      c the conditions around us

11 The **brain** is the part of the body that \_\_\_\_\_.

- a controls how you think                      b turns food into energy                      c takes air in

**B PAIR WORK** Work with a partner. Notice the boldfaced words. Reorder the words and write the complete sentence. Take turns saying the sentences.

1 Today's **lecture** is ( acquisition / language / **on** / second ).

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Your thoughts and movements are ( brain / **by** / **controlled** / your ).

\_\_\_\_\_

3 Early childhood is ( a / **for** / critical / learning / **time** ).

\_\_\_\_\_

4 In my English class, we're ( **an** / **environment** / all-English / **in** ).

\_\_\_\_\_

5 Hard work is ( **factor** / important / an / **for** / doing well ) at school.

\_\_\_\_\_

6 A long drive is ( the / to **listen** / ideal / **to** a language learning podcast / time ).

\_\_\_\_\_

7 Hussein has ( English / learning / **motivation** / strong / **for** ).

\_\_\_\_\_

8 One obvious ( **for** learning / **reason** / a new language / is ) to travel.

\_\_\_\_\_

9 I studied ( for / **period** / French / a / short / **of** time ).

\_\_\_\_\_

10 Parents have ( an / **in** / **role** / their children's lives / important ).

\_\_\_\_\_

11 We read an article ( about / language learning / **theories** / **on** ).

\_\_\_\_\_

## FOCUS your attention

### Signal Questions

A speaker often uses a question to focus listeners' attention. Sometimes the speaker does not want an answer to the question. Instead, the speaker uses a signal question to introduce a new point or to signal important information. These are usually called *rhetorical questions*.

#### REGULAR QUESTIONS

When asking a regular question, the speaker usually ...

- stops talking.
- looks for raised hands.
- calls on someone to give the answer.

#### RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

When asking a rhetorical question, the speaker often ...

- pauses briefly.
- looks at the listeners directly.
- continues speaking without waiting for an answer.

 **A TRY IT** Listen to an excerpt from a lecture on linguistics. What information does the speaker signal with rhetorical questions? Complete the notes below as you listen.

Linguistics: Learning Language

1 Babies: How do \_\_\_\_\_?

– hear language

– ready at birth

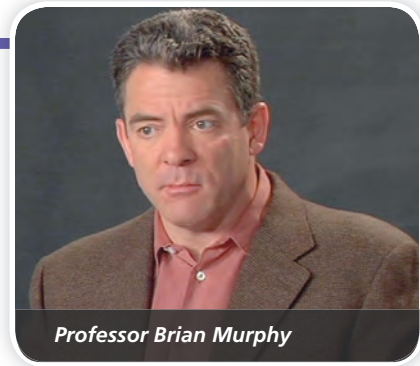
Why do \_\_\_\_\_?

**B PAIR WORK** Compare notes with a partner.

## WATCH the lecture

**A THINK ABOUT IT** You are about to watch the unit lecture on second language acquisition. What do you think is the most important factor for learning a second language? Check (✓) one factor.

- ☐ intelligence      ☐ the learning environment  
☐ a good teacher      ☐ other: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ age



Professor Brian Murphy

**B LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Close your book. Watch the lecture and take notes. Be sure to note the main factors in language learning.

**C CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING** Use your notes. Choose the best answer, based on the lecture.

- 1 The professor compares himself to Steven, who is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a a six-year-old boy  
b a sixteen-year-old teenager  
c a sixty-year-old man
- 2 The critical period is a time when \_\_\_\_\_.  
a a child can learn language very easily  
b teenagers stop learning language  
c adults have difficulty learning language
- 3 The critical period \_\_\_\_\_.  
a has a small effect on language learning  
b is one of several factors in language learning  
c is the most important factor in language learning
- 4 Other factors for successful language learning are \_\_\_\_\_.  
a teachers, textbooks, and homework  
b intelligence, personality, and study habits  
c environment, attitude, and motivation
- 5 The main point of the lecture is that \_\_\_\_\_.  
a adults can't learn a new language  
b age is not an important factor in language learning  
c there are several factors that affect language learning

**D LISTEN FOR DETAILS** Close your book. Watch the lecture again. Add details to your notes and correct any mistakes.





**E CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING** Use your notes. Read the statements and check (✓) the correct name, based on the lecture. Some statements may be true for both people.

	Steven	Professor	
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	speaks English now.
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	is learning Chinese.
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	recently started studying a new language.
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	is in the critical period for language learning.
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	is in an environment where he hears the new language all the time.
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	could learn better in a different environment.
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	feels embarrassed when he makes mistakes in the new language.
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	wants to learn the new language to talk with his friends.

## HEAR the language

### Rising and Falling Intonation


English speech has a pattern of **rising and falling intonation**. Intonation is the pitch (high and low) of the voice. The pitch can rise slightly (go up) or fall (go down).

One use of intonation is to signal when an idea is finished. Rising intonation shows that the speaker is not finished and plans to say more. Falling intonation shows that a speaker has completed an idea.

Learning to notice intonation in sentences will help you become a better listener.

#### EXAMPLE

*It's easier for kids to learn than it is for adults.*

 **A LISTEN** Listen to the statements from the lecture. Note the speaker's intonation over the boldfaced words. Write an up arrow ( ↗ ) when intonation rises and a down arrow ( ↘ ) when intonation falls.

- 1 And then we'll talk about other factors, such as the learning **environment**, **attitude**, and **motivation**.
- 2 Now, from the show of **hands**, I see that many of you've had your own personal experience with language **learning**. And I have recently, **too**.
- 3 And so I've been going to **class**, you know, listening to language **CDs**, and I'm **learning**, but it's **tough**. It's tough to learn a new **language**.
- 4 This is so **unfair**. We've both been **studying** a new language for the same amount of **time**, but he's learning it so much more **quickly**.
- 5 Many people, including linguist Robert **DeKeyser**, would say no, you have to look at other **factors**.
- 6 Now when I was watching Steven in the **classroom**, playing with his **friends**, it was clear he didn't feel at all embarrassed about his English language **abilities**.
- 7 You know, he can't speak perfectly **yet**, but when he made a mistake, he didn't **care**, and neither did his **friends**. They just kept on **playing**.
- 8 So clearly, a person's attitude about **learning** is very important in acquiring a second **language**.
- 9 So we're both motivated to **learn**, but perhaps my motivation isn't quite as **strong**.
- 10 As for **me**, I'm not ready to give up on Chinese just **yet**!

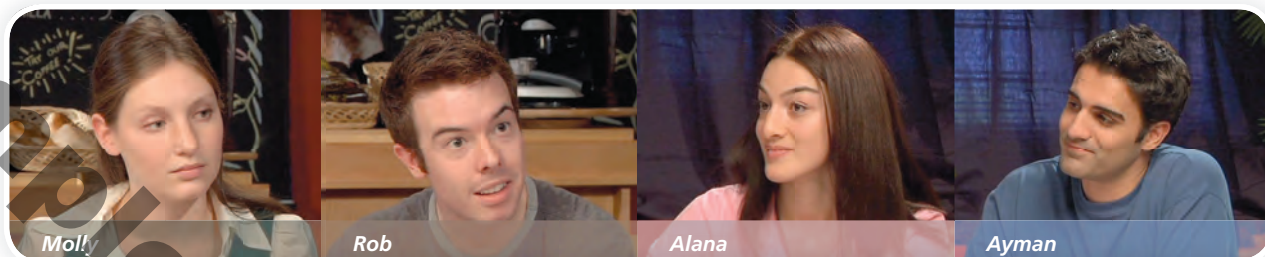
**B PAIR WORK** Practice saying the sentences with a partner. Be sure to use the correct rising or falling intonation.

## TALK about the topic

### Asking for Opinions or Ideas



**A FOLLOW THE DISCUSSION** Watch as the students talk about the critical period theory. Read each comment. Then check (✓) who makes the comment.



	Molly	Rob	Alana	Ayman
1 "The big thing is that it's harder to learn a language if you're an adult, right?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 "I came to the United States from Russia as a teenager."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 "Oh, really? I thought kids learned easily."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 "To me, the critical period explains a lot."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are the students doing in their discussion of the lecture? Circle one or more.

- a giving relevant examples      b sharing opinions      c reviewing the main points



**B LEARN THE STRATEGIES** Watch the discussion again. Complete the comments with the phrases you hear. Then check (✓) the discussion strategy that the student uses.

how so	what does everyone think	what other factors	what about you
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	Asking for clarification or confirmation	Asking for opinions or ideas
1 <b>Rob:</b> "OK, so _____ about this 'critical period' theory?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 <b>Molly:</b> " _____?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 <b>Rob:</b> "Really? _____?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 <b>Rob:</b> " _____? What was it like for you?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion Strategy** Everyone appreciates being asked about their thoughts on a subject. By asking for opinions or ideas, you can bring up new ideas and help others become involved in the discussion. It's easy to ask, *What do you think?* The next step—listening—is where your learning begins!

**C TRY IT** In a small group, discuss one or more of these topics. Try to use the discussion strategies.

- In your experience, how does the critical period affect language learning?
- How do factors such as attitude, environment, and motivation affect language learning?
- How can you be a successful language learner?



## REVIEW your notes

**REVIEW** Read your notes. Did you write down key words and meanings? Can you explain the main ideas? Work with a partner to discuss the list of terms from the lecture. Then complete these notes.

Term	Def.	How it affects Steven (ex.)	How it affects professor (ex.)
critical period			
language learning environment			
attitude about language learning			
motivation for language learning			

### TIP!

Remember: Rhetorical questions are meant to make you think about a topic. You don't need to answer the question aloud.

 Now you are ready to take the Unit Test and the Proficiency Assessment.

## EXPRESS your ideas

### Learning a Language

In this unit, you have learned about how environment, attitude, and motivation affect language learning. What strategies do you find helpful for language learning?

**TASK** Give a short presentation with suggestions for learning a language. Work in a group to prepare and practice.

#### Prepare

- 1 Brainstorm. Each group member should choose one language skill to present about. Choose from this list:

Giving presentations	Pronunciation (Speaking clearly)
Grammar	Reading
Learning vocabulary	Writing
Listening	Your idea: _____
Making conversation	

- 2 In your group, discuss these questions:
- What is difficult about learning this language skill?
  - What are the best methods to improve this skill?
- 3 Choose three suggestions for improving this skill. Make an outline.

#### Practice

- 4 Practice with your group. Take turns giving your presentations. Practice involving your audience with questions. Give each other feedback.
- 5 Practice by yourself. Record your presentation or practice in front of a mirror until you feel comfortable and remember your main points.

#### Present

- 6 Deliver your presentation to the class. Ask questions to involve your audience. Look at your outline quickly to help you remember your ideas, and look up again at your audience. Do not read your presentation.
- 7 Answer 2–3 questions from the audience.
- 8 As you listen to your classmates' presentations:
- Take notes on the main ideas of each presentation. Note a useful or interesting suggestion for improving your language skills.
  - Write one question to ask each presenter.

#### Evaluate

- 9 After all of the presentations are finished, discuss the information, including: *What is the most useful suggestion for improving your language skills? What is the most interesting or unusual suggestion for improving?*
- 10 Use the Unit 2 Presentation Evaluation Form (in Appendix C) to evaluate your classmates' presentations.



#### Presentation Strategy: Involving your audience with questions

It is important to get the attention of your audience and keep everyone interested in your presentation. One way to do this is to ask questions. You can ask questions to:

- get the audience thinking about your topic: *What do you know about ... ?*
- connect your audience to the topic: *How many of you ... ?*
- get the audience's opinions on your topic: *What do you think ... ?*
- introduce a new topic: *What does this mean?*

When you ask questions, be sure to use the correct intonation. Make eye contact with your audience. Wait and listen for responses. Repeat or summarize the responses and make brief comments.

#### OUTLINE: LEARNING A LANGUAGE

##### I Introduction

Ask a question to introduce your topic

Tell the audience which language skill you will talk about

##### II Suggestions for improving the language skill

Explain one method for improving with details about how to do it

Explain a second method for improving with details about how to do it

Explain a third method for improving with details about how to do it

##### III Conclusion: Recommend the best way to improve and why you like it

##### IV Interaction: Answer questions from the audience