
Learning a language is very much like playing a game: you need to be strategic, know how to identify what's important and what's not so essential. You must assess probability and take risks. Sometimes you must make do with little (your word bank, your range of structures) but you must also try to be accurate. You also need to be open to the unexpected and use sources of information from different sources (not just verbal, but also visual, musical, etc) not to mention a large dose of intuition. There are grammar rules for you to work out, but otherwise, like a computer game, imagination and resourcefulness are key, not forgetting a willingness to have a go and occasionally to get it wrong.

This is a new computer game called LINGO: **where words are a matter of life and death**

You are unexpectedly dropped in a land whose language you need to learn as quickly as possible or you won't be able to access any resources in it and your life will be endangered. You meet a (reassuringly) peaceful-looking inhabitant.

1. He immediately launches into the following speech:

- *Garram! Brabo ari kala Plam*, (vigorously pointing to himself). *Kala brabo bari?* (gently pointing at you?)

What is he trying to say:

- a. Welcome to Plam. Have you got any luggage?
- b. I love Plam. Do you too?
- c. **My name is Plam. What's your name?**

2. Can you answer him?

Brabo ari kala X.

3. Someone else turns up and they greet each other enthusiastically.

- *Garram Sala!*, he says to the newcomer.

- *Garram Plam!*, she replies.

He turns to you and says, pointing to her:

- *Mari brabo kala Sala.*

Does this mean:

- a. I wish I'd not had a second cup of Sala.
- b. Next stop Sala.
- c. **Her name is Sala.**

4. He then says to her, showing a vat of boiling liquid.

- *Sala, kilas' pito?*

- *Vloum eminam, pristam! Kilam pito primstick!*, she replies, and she seizes her glass with gusto.

Does this mean:

- a. **Sala, would you like a drink? - Yes, please, thank you!**
- b. Sala, would you like a swim? - I'd love to, but I'm in a rush!
- c. Sala, are you interested in thermodynamics? - Certainly, let's get going!

5. He turns to you and says: *X, kilas' pito?*

What's your most likely answer, given you're keen to establish a good relationship?

- a. *Vloum eminam, pristam!* [intuition, risk-taking]
- b. *Vlam eminam, pristam!* [accuracy]
- c. *Pristam, kilas' pito.*

From this conversation, you have learnt quite a lot of words of different kinds.

6. Can you identify two verbs, and give their meanings? (the form of the infinitive is *-ac'*: eg love (noun): *vito*, to love: *vitac'*)

1. ***kilac'* = to want**
2. ***kalac'* = to be**

7. Can you identify two nouns?

1. ***pito***
2. ***brabo***

8. Can you find three ways of indicating possession (my, your, his/her)?

1. ***ari***
2. ***bari***
3. ***mari***

9. What's the most likely meaning of *primstick* in question 4?
very much

10. How do you say "to drink" in this language?
pitac'

11. What are the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular endings of verbs?

1. ***am***
2. ***as'***
3. ***a***

12. If home = *heimo*, in = *o*, how would you say: I want to want to go to my country?

kilam kalac' o heimo

(You can't always do what you want, and when you don't know all the words you need, you have to make do with those you have.)

The following links are useful if you want to continue to explore languages through games:

<https://kahoot.com>

<https://www.duolingo.com>