

Read the article and answer the questions on the next page.

CAN YOU REALLY LEARN A LANGUAGE IN 22 hours?

WE ALL KNOW THAT PEOPLE LEARN BETTER IF THEY ENJOY LEARNING.

Jon Foster reports on an app that makes learning a new language like playing a game.

I've never been much good at languages. But next month, I'm travelling to a remote area of Central Africa and my aim is to know enough Lingala – one of the local languages – to have a conversation. I wasn't sure how I was going to manage this – until I discovered a way to spend just a few minutes, a few times a day, learning all the vocabulary I'm going to need.

To be honest, normally when I get a spare moment at home, I go on Facebook or play games on my phone. But, at the moment, I'm using those short breaks for something more useful. I'm learning a foreign language. And thanks to Memrise, the app I'm using, it feels just like a game.

'People often stop learning things because they feel they're not **making progress** or because it all feels like too much hard work,' says Ed Cooke, one of the people who created Memrise. 'We're trying to create a form of learning experience that is fun and is something you'd want to do instead of watching TV.'

And Memrise is fun. It's a **challenge**. It gives you a few new words to learn and these are 'seeds' which you plant in your 'greenhouse'. (This represents your short-term memory.) When you practise the words, you 'water your plants' and they grow. When the app believes that you have really remembered a word, it moves the word to your 'garden'. You get points as your garden grows, so you can compare yourself to other Memrise users. I want to get a high score and go to the next level. And if I forget to log on, the app sends me emails that remind me to 'water my plants'.

The app uses two principles about learning. The first is that people remember things better when they link them to a picture in their mind. Memrise translates words into your own language, but it also encourages you to use 'mems' – images that help you remember new words. You can use mems which other users have created or you can create your own. I **memorised** *motele*, the Lingalan word for 'engine', using a mem I created – I imagined an old engine in a motel room.

The second principle is that we need to stop after studying words and then **repeat** them again later, leaving time between study sessions. Memrise helps you with this, because it's the kind of app you only use for five or ten minutes a day.

I've learnt hundreds of Lingalan words with Memrise. I know this won't make me a fluent speaker, but I hope I'll be able to do more than just smile and look stupid when I meet people in the Congo.

Now, why am I still sitting here writing this? I need to go and water my vocabulary!



B 2.1. READING TEST | Version A

A. What's the writer's intention with the text?

____/2pt

1. Explain about different ways to learn a new language using different apps.
2. Discuss the pros and cons about learning a new language online.
3. Promote the use of an app to learn new languages.

B. Read the text again and answer the questions below.

____/6pts

1. How many times a day does the writer use the app?

_____.

2. Before using *Memrise*, what would Jon do in his free time?

_____.

3. What's one of the reasons Ed Cooke believes people find it difficult to learn a new language?

_____.

4. Where does the app move the words that you have truly learned?

_____.

5. Apart from translating, what else does the app encourage you to use to help you during their learning process?

_____.

6. What does *Memrise* recommend that you do after studying some words?

_____.

____/8pts

a. Words to learn	()	1. Water your plants
b. Short-term memory	()	2. Seeds
c. To practise the words	()	3. Move to the garden
d. To remember the words appropriately	()	4. Greenhouse

D. Read the article again and choose the correct answers for questions 1-4.

____/4pts

1) The writer wants to learn <i>Lingala</i> because he ... a. loves new languages b. wants to talk to people who speak it c. wants to try <i>Memrise</i> .	2) Ed Cooke wants learners to ... a. enjoy learning more b. improve quickly c. do more vocabulary practice.
3) 'Mem' is ... a. the <i>Lingalese</i> word for 'engine' b. a translation of a new word c. a picture that helps people remember new words.	4) Where do the <i>mems</i> come from? a. Ed Cooke creates them. b. Users can create them for themselves and other users c. Every user creates <i>mems</i> only for themselves.

Contributed by Alejandro Valencia, 2018 | Adapted from Empower B1+ (2015)