

## Reading

1 Read the text and complete gaps 1–5 with sentences A–G. There are two extra sentences.

### Lost in the translation

In 1977, American president Jimmy Carter visited Poland and tried to say something in Polish. But his translator hadn't done a good job. <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ It wasn't a good start to his trip.

Translation is a difficult business. Nobody knows that better than 23-year-old Melike Kara, a translator in Istanbul. Melike is Turkish, but she grew up in Germany and speaks perfect German and English. <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ When I asked her what the most difficult thing to translate was, she said 'poetry'. This is because you can't translate a poem word-by-word. It has to sound nice in the other language, too. Melike has also translated film scripts. 'Serious films are OK,' she says 'but comedies are really difficult. A joke in one language simply isn't funny in another language. So you have to think of something else.'

Melike told me that there was no writing on the screen in Turkish cinemas. Instead, she said that actors recorded new Turkish dialogue for foreign films. The translated dialogue must be exactly as long as the original words – so the on-screen actors' mouths don't move when there's no sound. This takes ages to write. <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ But when you do your job well, it really looks like the actors are speaking Turkish.'

Nowhere is translation more important than at the United Nations in New York. There, I met Masoud Abadi, who works as a translator in United Nations meetings. 'It's a very difficult job,' Masoud told me, 'because I have to listen to the conversation, and translate it at the same time. People don't speak slowly, or stop and wait for you to translate. And you mustn't miss what anyone says.'

Every day, people at the United Nations translate hundreds of important documents. These can be anything from business agreements to important political discussions. The translators use computer translation programs, but they also have to check everything themselves. <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Masoud told me he could speak four: Arabic, French, English and Farsi.

Translating documents correctly can be very important. In 1840, the British and the Maori people signed a peace agreement in New Zealand. <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Both sides were very happy when they signed the agreement. But today, the Maoris and the New Zealand government are still arguing about what it says!

- A And all translators at the United Nations have to speak three languages perfectly.
- B Because of her language skills, she gets a lot of translation work.
- C Some translators fly around the world, travelling with leaders to important meetings.
- D But there were big differences between the British and the Maori translations of the agreement.
- E Wars have started because of mistakes like this.
- F 'I have to watch the film again and again,' Melike told me, 'until the dialogue is exactly right.
- G He said something rude, and everyone began to laugh!