



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B2 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 1 · 1B

Lost in translation

Theme · Around the World



Unit 1 · 1B

Lost in translation

Theme: Around the World



Learning objectives

- Use auxiliary verbs for emphasis, agreement and short answers.
- Use the..., the... + comparatives to talk about parallel change.
- Describe people, places and experiences with compound adjectives and modifiers.
- Recognise and produce natural English sentence rhythm.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up

In pairs or on your own, think for one minute about each prompt.

What's the most embarrassing language mistake you've ever made — or witnessed?

Which language do you wish you spoke fluently? Why?

Have you ever laughed out loud at a bad translation on a menu or sign?

Lead-in: what would you say?

Imagine you're abroad and you don't really speak the local language. For each scenario, decide what you would actually do — then compare with a partner. There are no wrong answers, only honest ones.

1. **emoji:** 🤔 · **title:** The menu of mystery · **prompt:** You're in a tiny family restaurant. The menu is in a language you don't read and there are no pictures. The waiter is waiting.

2. **emoji:** 🚶 · **title:** Wrong platform · **prompt:** A stranger on the train platform is asking you something urgent. You catch one word: 'Lisboa'. The train is leaving in two minutes.

3. **emoji:** 🗣️ · **title:** Dinner with the in-laws · **prompt:** Your partner's family is hosting you. Everyone is speaking fast in a language you barely understand. They keep looking at you and laughing kindly.

followUp: Which scenario would stress you out the most? Have you been in something like this before? Tell the story.

Reading: The myth of the perfect translator

It's a deeply-held belief among monolingual travellers that a good translation app will soon make language learning unnecessary. The more powerful the technology gets, the less effort we'll need to make. Or so the theory goes.

In reality, the opposite often happens. The more you depend on instant translation, the harder real conversation becomes. You stop noticing tone, you miss jokes, and you replace warm, slightly awkward human contact with a screen.

Professional translators know this better than anyone. "A sentence doesn't carry just information — it carries identity, history, humour, hesitation," says Aiko Tanaka, a Tokyo-based interpreter. "A machine handles the words. It doesn't handle the silences."

So do tourists really need to learn the language? Honestly, even fifty words help. Locals warm up to anyone who tries. And the more you try, the more confident you feel — even when you get it wrong.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. What does the writer suggest happens when we over-rely on translation apps?
 - (A) We talk to more people.
 - (B) Real conversation becomes harder.
 - (C) We learn languages faster.
2. According to Aiko Tanaka, what do machines NOT handle well?
 - (A) Words
 - (B) Grammar
 - (C) Silences and identity
3. What is the writer's advice to tourists?
 - (A) Don't bother learning — apps are enough.
 - (B) Even a tiny effort to speak the local language helps.
 - (C) Always travel with a professional interpreter.
4. The phrase "warm up to" in paragraph 4 means...
 - (A) become friendlier toward
 - (B) argue with
 - (C) ignore

Vocabulary in context

Find these in the text and match them to the closest meaning.

deeply-held — strongly believed over a long time

monolingual — speaking only one language

Tokyo-based — located / working in Tokyo

well-meaning — intending to be kind, even if unsuccessful

warm up to — gradually become friendlier toward

even when — regardless of whether

Vocabulary: compound adjectives & modifiers

broad-minded — willing to consider new ideas

widely-travelled — having visited many places

self-schooled — having learned without a teacher

Spanish-speaking — where Spanish is spoken / who speaks Spanish

long-haul — (of flights) very long

eleventh-hour — done at the very latest moment

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world-renowned — famous everywhere

unruffled — relaxed, not easily upset

absolutely — 100% — used with strong / non-gradable adjectives (exhausted, brilliant)

completely — totally — used with strong / non-gradable adjectives (impossible, wrong)

really — very — works with most adjectives (really tired, really good)

quite — (BrE) fairly with normal adj. / completely with strong adj. (quite tired / quite right)

fairly — a bit less than 'very' (fairly easy)

a bit / a little — slightly — usually with negative adjectives (a bit tired)

practice

Complete the sentences with ONE compound adjective or modifier.

1. She's really ____ — she's lived on four continents.

2. I'm ____ exhausted. I can't move.

3. We booked a ____ flight to Cape Town and couldn't sleep at all.

4. He learned Korean without ever taking a class. He's ____.

5. It was a ____ decision — we left the next morning.

6. The food was ____ delicious, honestly the best meal of the trip.

7. She's a really ____ traveller — nothing ever stresses her out.

8. Sorry, I'm a ____ tired — could we slow down?

Practice 2 — collocations & rewrite

Rewrite each sentence replacing the underlined phrase with ONE word or compound from this lesson's vocabulary. Keep the meaning identical.

1. She's <u>very willing to consider new ideas</u>.

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2. The museum was designed by a <u>famous-everywhere</u> architect.

3. We stayed with a <u>family where Spanish is spoken</u>.

4. The food was <u>fairly good, not amazing</u>.

5. The hike was <u>a little less than very tiring</u>.

Practice 3 — discursive writing

prompt: Discuss a memorable experience of miscommunication or connection with someone who spoke a different language.

Use at least FOUR of the target words from this unit.

Include one indirect question and one negative question.

Aim for a reflective, cohesive C1 register.

sample: The most broad-minded traveller I've ever met was my aunt, a widely-travelled woman who once talked her way out of a missed flight with nothing but gestures and a smile. She arrived, unruffled, having made an eleventh-hour dash through customs after a Spanish-speaking official mistook her passport for someone else's. Rather than panicking, she treated the whole disaster as an adventure, later telling the story to a world-renowned chef she met at the gate, who found it so funny he invited her to dinner. I often wonder what she would have done had he not laughed. Isn't it strange how a single misunderstanding, handled with humour instead of fear, can turn into one of your favourite memories? It taught me that the way we react to confusion says more about us than the mistake itself.



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Grammar focus: auxiliary verbs · the..., the... + comparatives

1. Auxiliary verbs — short answers & agreement — Use the same auxiliary that was used in the question or statement: • Do you speak French? — Yes, I do. / No, I don't. • She's been to Japan. — Has she? / So have I. / Neither have I. If the verb is in a simple present/past, the auxiliary is do / does / did: • He likes karaoke. — Does he? / So do I.

2. Auxiliary verbs — emphasis — Add do / does / did before the main verb for emphasis (stress the auxiliary): • I DO like it. (contradicting someone) • She DID call you — twice.

3. The..., the... + comparatives — Use it to show that two things change together: • The more you practise, the better you get. • The more powerful the technology gets, the less effort we make. • The sooner we leave, the more time we'll have. Form: The + comparative (+ clause), the + comparative (+ clause).

Exercise A — Short answers

Reply with a short answer agreeing (so) or disagreeing (neither), as indicated.

1. I love long-haul flights. (disagree)

2. I've never been to Japan. (agree)

3. She speaks four languages. (agree)

4. We didn't enjoy the tour. (agree)

5. He's been studying Italian for years. (disagree)

Exercise B — Add emphasis

Rewrite each sentence to make it more emphatic with do/does/did.

1. I tried to call you yesterday.

2. She speaks Mandarin, actually.

3. We enjoy your stories — really.

4. He understands more than he says.

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Exercise C — The..., the...

Join each pair into ONE sentence using *the..., the... + comparatives*.

1. You practise a lot. You speak well.

2. We left early. We arrived early.

3. He drank a lot of coffee. He felt nervous.

4. The city is big. It is hard to get around.

5. I learned new words. I felt confident.

Listening: A funny misunderstanding

Sam (American) is telling Lia (Portuguese) about his first day in Lisbon. Read the dialogue, then close it and answer the questions from memory.

Before you read

What kind of mistake do you think Sam made on his first day?

How does Lia probably react — laughing, embarrassed, or annoyed?

First read — gist

1. What was Sam trying to order?

2. What did he actually say?

3. How did the waiter react?

Second read — detail

1. Why did Sam confuse the two words?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. What did Lia advise him to do next time?

3. What does Sam say he's going to do now?

Lia: So, how was your first day? Did you survive?

Sam: I did survive — barely. I made the most embarrassing mistake at a café.

Lia: Oh no. What did you do?

Sam: I wanted an espresso, right? I typed "coffee" into my translation app and it gave me a word. I said it confidently. The waiter just stared.

Lia: What word did it give you?

Sam: Something that turned out to mean "chicken". I basically told the waiter, "One small chicken, please."

Lia: (laughs) Oh, Sam. He must have been so confused.

Sam: He laughed for about a minute, then brought me a coffee anyway. So sweet.

Lia: Honestly? Next time, just point at the menu and smile. The more you trust the app, the worse it gets.

Sam: Yeah, I'm going to actually start learning some Portuguese. Even fifty words would help.

Lia: Now you're talking. The sooner you start, the easier it'll be.

Speaking: language stories

Choose *ONE* situation. Use at least one auxiliary for emphasis (*DID, DO, DOES*) and one *the..., the...* sentence.

Scene: Best language mistake

A: Tell your partner about a real or invented embarrassing language mistake.

B: React with short answers (Did you? / No way!) and ask three follow-up questions.

Scene: Language app vs. classroom

A: Argue: apps are enough.

B: Argue: classroom learning beats apps.

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**Scene:** Travel advice

A: You're going abroad for the first time and don't speak the language.

B: You speak the language fluently — give honest advice.

Writing mini-task

Write 60–80 words about your relationship with a foreign language. Include: one auxiliary for emphasis (I DO speak...), one the..., the... sentence, and two compound adjectives.

Wrap-up

One compound adjective from today you'll use this week.

One short-answer reply you'll try next time someone speaks to you in English.

One thing in the dialogue that surprised you.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook — home practice



Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Lost in translation - Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary - compound adjectives

Choose the compound adjective that best fits each sentence.

1. She left for the airport at 5am without any plan. Total ____ traveller!
(A) self-schooled
(B) eleventh-hour
(C) broad-minded
2. He's never had a lesson - completely ____.
(A) self-schooled
(B) long-haul
(C) widely-travelled
3. She's been to 60 countries. Very ____.
(A) unruffled
(B) world-renowned
(C) widely-travelled
4. We flew from London to Sydney - a brutal ____ trip.
(A) long-haul
(B) last-minute
(C) self-taught
5. I love how ____ he is - he tries every new food.
(A) aloof
(B) broad-minded
(C) world-renowned

2. Modifiers - gradable vs. strong adjectives

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box. Be careful: 'very' does NOT work with strong adjectives.

BOX: absolutely · completely · really · fairly · a bit

1. I'm ____ exhausted - I haven't slept in two days.
2. That answer is ____ wrong, sorry.
3. She's ____ tired, but she'll be OK.
4. The film was ____ good - better than I expected.
5. It's a ____ easy exercise.
6. Honestly, that idea is ____ brilliant.

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Discuss the advantages of being a 'broad-minded' and 'self-schooled' language learner in the modern world.

Checklist:

- [] Use at least 3 compound adjectives
- [] Maintain a formal, discursive register
- [] Use cohesive devices to link your arguments

[] Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures

[illegible]

4. Grammar - short answers (so / neither)

Reply to each statement with a short answer agreeing or disagreeing as indicated.

1. I love karaoke. (agree)
2. She hasn't been to Brazil. (agree)
3. We didn't enjoy the trip. (agree)
4. He's studying Japanese. (disagree)
5. I can speak three languages. (agree)
6. They've never tried sushi. (disagree)

5. Grammar - emphasis with auxiliaries

Rewrite each sentence to add emphasis using do / does / did.

1. I tried to warn you.
2. She speaks Italian - really well.
3. We enjoyed your party.
4. He understands the question.
5. They invited us.

6. Grammar - the..., the... + comparatives

Join each pair into ONE sentence with the..., the...

1. You sleep a lot. You feel good.
2. The flight is long. I am tired.
3. He spoke fast. I understood little.

4. We arrived early. We got a good seat.
5. She practised a lot. Her accent improved.
6. I read difficult books. My vocabulary grew.

7. Grammar - find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has *ONE* mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. Neither I have been there.
2. The most you practise, the best you get.
3. I do called her yesterday.
4. She does speaks four languages.
5. The more big the city, the more hard it is.

8. Reading - true / false / not given

Read the short text, then mark each statement *T* (true), *F* (false) or *NG* (not given).

Yuki moved to Edinburgh five years ago. She had studied English since she was ten, but the first weeks were a shock - the accent, the speed, the constant small talk. She kept a tiny notebook in her pocket and wrote down every new expression. "The more I noticed, the more I learned," she says. "I did want to give up at first - honestly. But I never did." Today she works as a translator and laughs at her own old mistakes.

1. Yuki started learning English as a teenager. [T / F / NG]
2. Her first weeks in Edinburgh were difficult. [T / F / NG]
3. She speaks French as well as English. [T / F / NG]
4. She felt like giving up at the beginning. [T / F / NG]
5. She is now a tour guide. [T / F / NG]

9. Writing - guided task

Write 60-80 words about a language you'd love to speak. Include: (a) *ONE* auxiliary for emphasis (*I DO want...*), (b) *ONE* *the..., the...* sentence, (c) *TWO* compound adjectives.

Checklist:

- ☐ 60-80 words
- ☐ ONE emphatic do/does/did
- ☐ ONE *the..., the...* sentence
- ☐ TWO compound adjectives
- ☐ Clear personal voice

10. Audio: Listening - gist & detail

Play the dialogue. Cover the text and answer from memory.

Audio: Anna & Carlos · the 'embarazada' mix-up in Madrid

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

11. Audio: Listening - gap-fill (dictation)

Listen again and write the missing word in each line.

Audio: Anna & Carlos - key lines

Transcript with gaps:

A: Carlos, you always have the most incredible stories about language mishaps.

B: Oh, Anna, you know me! The more dramatic the opening, the worse it gets.

A: I can only imagine! Tell me about that time you used the wrong word at the family dinner.

B: Right! I did say embarazada. Loudly. In front of the whole family.

A: Oh no! Meaning 'pregnant' in Spanish, not 'embarrassed'! They must have been completely shocked.

B: They were! I swear, the harder you try in a panic, the worse the grammar gets.

A: It's so true! It's like your brain just short-circuits. So, what did you learn from that memorable evening?

B: Well, for one, the sooner I learn the false friends, the better. And honestly, the more mistakes you make now, the funnier the stories later.

1. The more ____ the opening, the worse it gets.
2. I did say embarazada. _____. In front of the whole family.
3. They must have been completely _____.
4. The harder you try in a _____, the worse the grammar gets.
5. The sooner I learn the false friends, the _____.
6. The more mistakes you make now, the _____ the stories later.

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

Rewrite the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using 2-5 words including the KEYWORD.

1. 1. I haven't been to Brazil. My sister hasn't either. → Neither _____ Brazil. (KEYWORD: HAS)
2. 2. When you read more, your vocabulary grows. → _____, the bigger your vocabulary. (KEYWORD: MORE)
3. 3. She really does enjoy classical music. → She _____ classical music. (KEYWORD: DOES)
4. 4. Long flights make me very tired. → _____, the more tired I get. (KEYWORD: LONGER)
5. 5. I love sushi. My brother loves it too. → _____ sushi. (KEYWORD: SO)

13. ■ Challenge - word formation

Complete each sentence with the CORRECT form of the word in CAPITALS.

1. She's a fast learner - extremely _____. (RESOURCE)
2. His Spanish is ____ correct, but a bit robotic. (GRAMMAR)
3. The translation was ____ inaccurate. (COMPLETE)
4. I admire her ____ - she never gives up. (PERSEVERE)
5. He's a world-____ interpreter. (RENOWN)
6. It was a deeply ____ experience. (MOVE)

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

Three of the four words/phrases share a meaning. Pick the ODD ONE OUT.

1. 1. Words meaning 'completely':
 - (A) absolutely
 - (B) totally
 - (C) fairly
 - (D) utterly
2. 2. Relaxed person:
 - (A) easy-going
 - (B) laid-back
 - (C) stand-offish
 - (D) chilled
3. 3. Done at the last second:
 - (A) last-minute
 - (B) rushed
 - (C) well-planned
 - (D) spur-of-the-moment
4. 4. Travelled a lot:
 - (A) well-travelled
 - (B) globe-trotting
 - (C) monolingual
 - (D) worldly

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Write a 120-150 word post titled "The best language tip I ever got". Use AT LEAST: 2 the..., the... sentences, 2 emphatic auxiliaries, 3 compound adjectives.

Checklist:

- ☐ 120-150 words
- ☐ At least 2 the..., the... sentences
- ☐ At least 2 emphatic do/does/did
- ☐ At least 3 compound adjectives
- ☐ Personal voice and clear advice

[illegible]

16. Self-check

Tick the things you can now do confidently.

- [] I can use short answers with the correct auxiliary.
- [] I can add emphasis with do/does/did.
- [] I can build the..., the... + comparatives sentences.
- [] I can use compound adjectives to describe people and travel.
- [] I can choose the right modifier (absolutely / really / fairly / a bit).
- [] I can read English aloud with natural sentence rhythm.

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- Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. On the left side, there are several short, dark vertical marks, possibly from a binder or staple. The paper appears to be part of a notebook or a set of loose-leaf papers.

4. Grammar — short answers (so / neither)

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Answer key — Class Book

Reading: The myth of the perfect translator

1. (B) Real conversation becomes harder.
2. (C) Silences and identity
3. (B) Even a tiny effort to speak the local language helps.
4. (A) become friendlier toward

Vocabulary: compound adjectives & modifiers

1. widely-travelled
2. absolutely
3. long-haul
4. self-schooled
5. eleventh-hour
6. absolutely
7. unruffled
8. bit
1. She's broad-minded.
2. The museum was designed by a world-renowned architect.
3. We stayed with a Spanish-speaking family.
4. The food was quite good.
5. The hike was fairly tiring.

Grammar focus: auxiliary verbs · the..., the... + comparatives

1. I don't. / Really? I hate them.
2. Neither have I.
3. So does my sister.
4. Neither did we.
5. Has he? I haven't.
1. I did try to call you yesterday.
2. She does speak Mandarin, actually.
3. We do enjoy your stories — really.
4. He does understand more than he says.
1. The more you practise, the better you speak.
2. The earlier we left, the earlier we arrived.
3. The more coffee he drank, the more nervous he felt.
4. The bigger the city, the harder it is to get around.
5. The more new words I learned, the more confident I felt.

Listening: A funny misunderstanding

1. A simple coffee — an espresso.
2. He used a word that means "chicken" in Portuguese instead of the word for coffee.
3. He laughed and brought the coffee anyway.
1. He used a translation app that gave him the wrong suggestion.
2. Just point at the menu and smile.
3. Actually start learning some Portuguese.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Lost in translation - Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary - compound adjectives

1. **(B)** *eleventh-hour*
2. **(A)** *self-schooled*
3. **(C)** *widely-travelled*
4. **(A)** *long-haul*
5. **(B)** *broad-minded*

2. Modifiers - gradable vs. strong adjectives

1. **absolutely**
2. **completely**
3. **a bit**
4. **really**
5. **fairly**
6. **absolutely**

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Sample answer

Being a self-schooled learner requires immense dedication, yet it offers a level of flexibility that traditional classrooms lack. A widely-travelled individual often finds that their broad-minded approach to culture is their greatest asset. While formal education is valuable, the ability to learn intuitively from real-world interactions is irreplaceable. For instance, during a long-haul trip, one might find themselves forced to communicate in a foreign tongue, leading to breakthroughs that no textbook could provide. Of course, eleventh-hour cramming is never ideal, but the pressure of a real-life situation often sharpens the mind. Ultimately, the more one immerses themselves in diverse environments, the more they realize that language is not just about grammar, but about connection.

4. Grammar - short answers (so / neither)

1. *So do I.*
2. *Neither have I. (or: Neither has my brother, etc.)*
3. *Neither did we.*
4. *Is he? I'm not.*
5. *So can I.*
6. *Haven't they? I have, several times.*

5. Grammar - emphasis with auxiliaries

1. *I did try to warn you.*
2. *She does speak Italian - really well.*
3. *We did enjoy your party.*
4. *He does understand the question.*
5. *They did invite us.*

6. Grammar - the..., the... + comparatives

- 1. The more you sleep, the better you feel.*
- 2. The longer the flight, the more tired I am.*
- 3. The faster he spoke, the less I understood.*
- 4. The earlier we arrived, the better the seat we got.*
- 5. The more she practised, the more her accent improved.*
- 6. The more difficult the books I read, the more my vocabulary grew.*

7. Grammar - find and fix the mistake

- 1. Neither have I been there.*
- 2. The more you practise, the better you get.*
- 3. I did call her yesterday.*
- 4. She does speak four languages.*
- 5. The bigger the city, the harder it is.*

8. Reading - true / false / not given

- 1. F**
- 2. T**
- 3. NG**
- 4. T**
- 5. F**

9. Writing - guided task

Sample answer

I do want to speak Italian fluently one day. I'm a self-taught learner so far - just YouTube, podcasts and a tiny notebook. The more I listen, the more I notice. My biggest dream is a long-haul trip from Milan to Sicily, talking to locals at every stop. I'm fairly easy-going about mistakes - they're part of it. Honestly, the sooner I book that ticket, the faster I'll improve.

10. Audio: Listening - gist & detail

- 1. In Madrid, at her host family's home.*
- 2. That she was embarrassed about being late.*
- 3. 'Embarazada' - which means pregnant in Spanish.*
- 4. He nearly choked on his soup.*
- 5. She panicked - the harder she tried, the worse her grammar got.*
- 6. Start proper Spanish lessons and learn the false friends.*

11. Audio: Listening - gap-fill (dictation)

- 1. dramatic*
- 2. Loudly*
- 3. shocked*
- 4. panic*
- 5. better*
- 6. funnier*

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

1. *has my sister been to*
2. *The more you read*
3. *does enjoy*
4. *The longer the flight*
5. *So does my brother love*

13. ■ Challenge - word formation

1. *resourceful*
2. *grammatically*
3. *completely*
4. *perseverance*
5. *renowned*
6. *moving*

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

1. **(C)** *fairly*
2. **(C)** *stand-offish*
3. **(C)** *well-planned*
4. **(C)** *monolingual*

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Sample answer

The best language tip I ever got was from a self-taught Italian friend: "Make mistakes faster." I did try, and it changed everything. The more I spoke, the more I noticed. The faster I corrected, the easier the next sentence felt. I used to be a really last-minute kind of learner - cramming the night before a trip. Now I'm fairly easy-going about it. I do practise every day, even for five minutes. Honestly, if you're an open-minded beginner, just talk. The sooner you embarrass yourself, the sooner you stop being afraid.

16. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.

Lost in translation — Workbook — Answer Key

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