



**Provas Especialmente Adequadas Destinadas a Avaliar a Capacidade  
para a Frequência dos Cursos Superiores do Instituto Politécnico de Leiria dos  
Maiores de 23 Anos - 2012**

**Prova escrita de conhecimentos específicos  
de Inglês**

**Instruções gerais**

1. A prova é constituída por **4** grupos de questões obrigatórias;
2. A duração da prova é de 2 horas, estando prevista uma tolerância de 30 minutos;
3. Só pode utilizar para elaboração das suas respostas e para efectuar os rascunhos as folhas distribuídas pelo docente vigilante, salvo se previsto outro procedimento;
4. Não utilize qualquer tipo de corrector. Se necessário risque ou peça uma troca de folha;
5. Não é autorizada a utilização de qualquer dicionário;
6. Não é autorizada a utilização de quaisquer ferramentas de natureza electrónica (telemóvel, pda, computador portátil, leitores/gravadores digitais de qualquer natureza ou outros não especificados);
7. Deverá disponibilizar ao docente que está a vigiar a sala, sempre que solicitado, um documento válido de identificação (bilhete de identidade, carta de condução ou passaporte);
- 8.** A seguir ao número de cada questão encontra entre parênteses a respectiva cotação.

Leiria, 9 de Junho de 2012

## Part I

### Reading comprehension and writing

Read the text below carefully and then answer the questions that follow.

#### The hardest language

1. People often ask what the most difficult language to learn is. This is not an easy question to answer because there are many factors to take into consideration. Firstly, in a first language the differences are irrelevant as people learn their mother tongue naturally, so the question of how hard a language is to learn is only important when learning a second language.

2. A native speaker of Spanish, for example, will find Portuguese much easier to learn than a native speaker of Chinese, because Portuguese is very similar to Spanish, while Chinese is very different, so first language can affect learning a second language. The greater the differences between the second language and our first, the harder it will be for most people to learn. Many people think that Chinese is the hardest language to learn, possibly influenced by the thought of learning the Chinese writing system. Besides, the pronunciation of Chinese does appear to be very difficult for many foreign learners. However, for Japanese speakers, who already use Chinese characters in their own language, learning writing will be less difficult than for speakers of languages using the Roman alphabet.

3. Some people seem to learn languages readily, while others find it very difficult. Teachers and the circumstances in which the language is learned also play an important role, as well as each learner's individual aptitude and, above all, motivation for learning. If people learn a language because they need to use it professionally, they often learn it faster than people studying a language that has no direct use in their day-to-day life.

4. Apparently, British diplomats and other embassy staff have found that the second hardest language is Japanese, which will probably come as no surprise to many. But the language they have found to be the most problematic is Hungarian, which has 35 cases (forms of nouns according to whether it is subject, object, genitive...) This does not mean that Hungarian is the hardest language to learn for everyone, but that it obviously causes British diplomatic personnel, who are generally used to learning languages, many difficulties. With its 48 cases, Tabassaran, a Caucasian language, might cause British diplomats even more problems if they had to learn it.

5. Different cultures, and individuals from those cultures, may find different languages more difficult. In the case of Hungarian for British learners, the problem doesn't lie in the writing system, which uses a similar alphabet, but in the complexity of the grammar. On the other hand, native speakers of related

languages may find it easier to learn, while struggling with languages that a native speaker of English would find relatively easy.

6. No language is easy to learn well, though languages which are related to our first language are easier. Learning a completely different writing system is a huge challenge, but that does not necessarily make one language more difficult than another. For instance, experts agree that Chinese and Korean can be learned rather easily by speakers of Western languages; Vietnamese and Japanese, however, are much more complex. On the whole, it is impossible to say that one language is the most difficult language in the world.

<http://www.usingenglish.com/comprehension/5.htm> (abridged and adapted)

1. For a native speaker of Spanish, why is Chinese more difficult to learn than Portuguese? (up to 10 marks).
2. What factors make a foreign language easier to learn? Point out at least 2 (up to 10 marks).
3. According to the author, what is the most difficult language in the world? (up to 10 marks).
4. In your opinion, is Chinese easy to learn as a foreign language? Justify your answer. (up to 12 marks)
5. Find words or expressions in the text that mean the same as the following. (3 marks for each correct answer: 18 marks).
  - a) The language that you first learn to speak as a child;
  - b) A letter, sign, symbol or mark used in writing, printing or on computers;
  - c) Quickly and without difficulty;
  - d) All the workers employed in an organization considered as a group;
  - e) A new and difficult task that tests your ability;
  - f) Specialists.
6. Explain in your own words what the authors mean by “in a first language, the differences are irrelevant as people learn their mother tongue naturally” (paragraph 1; up to 15 marks).
7. Explain in your own words what the authors mean by “If people learn a language because they need to use it professionally, they often learn it faster than people studying a language that has no direct use in their day to day life.” (paragraph 3, up to 15 marks).

## Part II: Use of English

1. Rewrite the following sentences using the words provided in brackets. Keep the meaning as close to that of the original sentence as far as possible (*up to 10 marks each*).

- a) Some people seem to learn languages readily, while others find it very difficult. (**however**)
- b) Many people think that Chinese is the hardest language to learn. (**harder**)
- c) British diplomats and other embassy staff have found that the second hardest language is Japanese. (**according**)
- d) Experts agree that Chinese and Korean can be learned rather easily by speakers of Western languages. (**agreement**)

2. Put the verbs in brackets into the correct verb tense (active or passive) (*up to 5 marks each*)

- a) If British diplomats decided to learn Tabassaran, they \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a lot of difficulties.
- b) In the last two years, I \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to learn both Spanish and Chinese. It's difficult, but I'm not going to give up!
- c) Students \_\_\_\_\_ (encourage) to spend a year abroad during their degree course in order to be in close contact with the culture of the language they are learning.
- d) Although English is generally considered the world's lingua franca, the Chinese language \_\_\_\_\_ (become) increasingly important in global affairs.

**Part III:  
Translation**

Turn **paragraph 4** of the text into Portuguese (*up to 20 marks*).

**Part IV  
Composition**

Please write answers to both questions. You should write a maximum of 60 words for each part (up to 30 marks: 15 for each part).

1<sup>st</sup> Part:

What do you think a person needs to be a good language learner? Account for your answer.

2<sup>nd</sup> Part:

Do you agree with the following statement? Justify your answer.

*"Fluency in a language is more important than accuracy".*

Your composition will be evaluated using the following categories:

Fluency (up to 6 marks)

Relevancy (up to 6 marks)

Organisation of content (up to 6 marks)

Grammar (up to 6 marks)

Vocabulary (up to 6 marks)