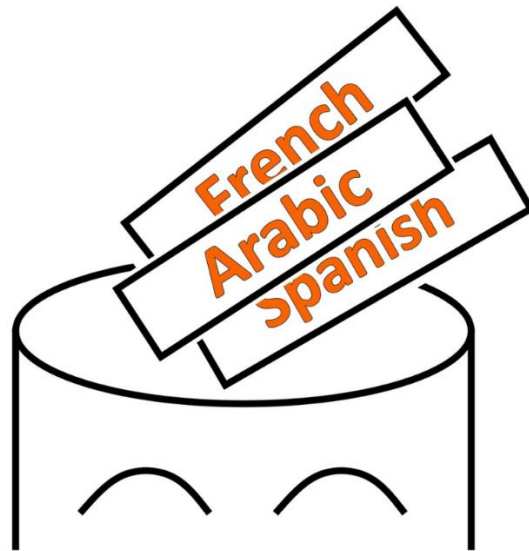


HOW TO FINALLY LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE



**For Those Who Have Failed
Multiple Times Before**

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HOW TO FINALLY LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE: FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FAILED MULTIPLE TIMES BEFORE.

CHAPTER 5

BE VERY VERY CLEAR ABOUT YOUR *WHY*

Most of my failed attempts suffered from not having a good *Why* (the reason someone wants to learn the language). I was usually trying to learn a new language to impress other people – to be able to say I’m fluent in multiple languages or put it on my resume. So I’d give up whenever it got tough as impressing other people wasn’t worth the effort.

It was only when I had a good *Why* that I finally learnt 3 languages in 2 years.

Now I only learn a language when I am travelling to a country so I can speak to the local people. I’m fascinated with how people live their lives, especially those who are totally different to me. The media only shows a biased view of foreigners. Learning a language allows me to communicate directly with these people and understand their lives.

Jordan was the first country I visited where I could speak the local language. It gave me access to people and experiences I just wouldn't have had if I only spoke English and used a translator.

One of these encounters was with an old woman who was selling freshly made stuffed bread (similar to a calzone) at the local food market. She showed me how she makes the bread and also told me about her business, her children and her hopes for their lives.

I’ve visited 14 countries before my trip to Jordan. Knowing the local language changed my experience of how I travel. And now, I never want to travel to a country and not know at least the basics of their language.

Below are some common but bad reasons people want to learn a language:

- It will look good on their resume.
- So they can say “I can speak [language]” or “I speak [number] languages”.
- To pass an exam.
- It may be useful (in the future) in their job.
- They want to travel to [country] sometime in the future.

The problem with the first three reasons is they are externally motivated. Learning a language is hard and if all you are after is validation from other people, you will quit. And the last two reasons are too ambiguous about when, if ever, you will use it.

When I speak to other people who have successfully learnt a language as adults, their reasons are:

Their reason.	The emotional effect it has on their life.
They want to speak to a partner’s parents or a family member, who can’t speak English.	To improve their connections with loved ones.
They want to understand/learn about their heritage.	To understand themselves or their family better.
They are moving abroad so want to learn the local language.	To make their and their family’s lives easier.

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They are fascinated with the culture and have knowledge about it but are restricted to learning more without the local language.	To increase their joy in the subject.
Their job requires it now or in a few months for a specific project/role they will be working on.	To earn more money now/soon which can be used to improve their life.

You should notice all of the successful reasons people learn a language are intrinsically motivated - the individuals benefit from it, even if no one else knows they know a new language - and they all have strong emotions attached to them.

This is one of the main reasons they were able to succeed.

How to find your *Why*.

Ask yourself “Why do I want to learn this language?”. But really dig deep. Ideally, until you have an emotional reason and not just a logical one.

You are most likely to succeed if there is an emotional reason behind your *Why*.

If you are struggling to find an emotional reason, answer the question above and then ask yourself “And why is that important to me?”. Continue to ask this second question to each of your answers until you have a good *Why*.

An easy way to know if you have a good *Why* is if you can answer the following three questions all with a yes.

1. If I could never tell anyone I learnt the language and I would never get praised for it, would I still want to learn the language?
2. Is there an emotional benefit to me learning the language?
3. Am I willing to go through the difficulty of learning a language to gain the benefits from question 2?

Added bonus – once you have your *Why*, work out when you plan to use it. Give it an exact date if possible.

If you enjoyed this chapter, you can purchase the full book at:

US - <https://amzn.to/3tIPwwL>

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