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MY KEY TO NAILING ANY LANGUAGE

LET'S GO!

*My Key To
Nailing Any
Language*

by

Veronica Ivanova

First Edition, 2017

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ATTENTION!

You're reading the sample of the book

“MY KEY TO NAILING ANY LANGUAGE”.

The sample contains 8 pages from it.

I want to pinpoint that this sample contains some theoretical and inspirational parts of the book so that you can “feel its vibe”, if you will. For practical parts (tips, tricks, hacks, techniques, and my “trusty pattern for nailing any language”) see a full book! The book is dedicated to learning any language as easily as possible while enjoying it.

You can get a full version here:

<https://payhip.com/b/WKTO>

Enjoy!

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Table of contents corresponds to the full book so that you can check out what it has to offer! Chapters presented in this sample are in bold.

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INTRODUCTION

Let's say you've found an amazing book that promises to teach you a desired language in a month. So, you spend an hour or two a day to cram all the rules, to learn all the words and to read all the texts from its daily lessons. After a couple of super boring hours you are done! Exhausted but glad that it's over for today. You close the book and happily go back to your normal life! This lasts a week... it only gets more and more tedious. You start to skip a day or two so that your head won't explode. A few more days go by, and you start to contemplate the whole idea of learning this dang language. Maybe it's not for you after all... So you quit.

The thing is, many people want to know another language, but not so many want to actually learn it. And it's understandable as no one likes studying. But what if I tell you that there is another way? That learning process can be exciting and enjoyable. Simply because you will learn a language doing whatever you like! I believe that you don't need to be certain age, to live in a certain county, to have certain abilities to learn a foreign language.

I intend to share what I've discovered for myself over the years and hope that it'll help you as well!

REASONS TO LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

Time has to pass anyway

What a weird reason, you might think. Fair enough. But this phrase actually made me start learning English. I had 3 free summer months ahead of me, and it simply hit me – time will pass anyway. After these 3 months I might be at the same place I am now or might actually get something out of them. Same with you – some time from now you might or might not speak a new language. And it's only up to you! I hope this “revelation” will influence you as well.

It broads your horizons

“The limits of my language are the limits of my world” (Ludwig Wittgenstein). It is very true, indeed. Every culture has different outlook on the world, and by learning a new language you can adopt it! Thus, you won't be limited to the way people see things in your country.

Every language affects you

It has a lot to do with the previous reason. I do notice that every language make me think and speak differently. And turned out I'm not the only one who thinks so. I've heard it from many people who speak several languages as well. They even claim to have several personalities depending on a language! How cool is that the language can make such an impact on you. And I'm convinced it's only for the best.

It fascinates people

Yes, people are actually impressed by somebody speaking a foreign language because not so many people can do that. It never surprises me though – I believe that it's something any person can achieve. And I'll show you how! Besides, it's always a pleasure for foreigners to hear people speaking their language. So, it's a good way to make new friends!

It's an amazing way to train your brain

Scientifically speaking, learning languages creates new neural pathways between nerve cells. Long story short, it means that your brain will function better. And it's definitely perfect for improving your memory.

GRAMMAR

From what I know, some polyglots believe that it's unnecessary to learn grammar. They say that children while learning their native language don't cram any rules at all. This theory is no wonder to me because many polyglots started learning languages being kids. However, I started late compared to them, so it didn't really work for me. I am convinced that the way children's brain works is completely different from adult's way. That's why what works for children is not quite appropriate for adults. "Feeling" a language like native speaker takes a lot of time if you're not a kid anymore. So, in order to nail a language you might need some grammar.

I believe that knowing grammar is more important than knowing thousands of words. What's the point if you can't put them together in a sentence? On the other hand, if you know at least basic grammar rules, it won't be difficult for you to look up words that you don't know to build a sentence.

Metaphorically speaking, I build my vocabulary "on top" of the grammar. That's how I like to learn a language because it makes my knowledge organized rather than sporadic.

Imagine a thread with beads. A thread is what keeps beads together, right? So does grammar. Beads are the words. When you know the structure of a language – you are free to do whatever you want with it. Because you are not only able to repeat sentences you've read or heard somewhere but also to create your own! Pick any bead you like! But if your thread's too weak... you know the drill!

I advise you to **start with basic grammar**. There're so many good books dedicated to grammar nowadays that it's not a problem. If it's still hard for you, then maybe look for grammar for kids – everything should be explained better there. You can also find lots of amazing **grammar lessons on YouTube!** Remember, when you're just starting, you don't need to learn all the rules at once. Take your time. Everything will make sense one day.

READING

When I only started my learning process I was taking advantage of my perfect short-term memory. I thought that if I learn like 200 words a day I'll learn a language quickly. Luckily, my perfect memory being short-term, it took me not much time to realize that I'm going nowhere with it.

With that being said, I want to share my technique for learning new words without actually learning them. Why so? Because as you'll see you don't have to cram words from the list! As this chapter is called "*reading*", that's what we're going to do.

As I said, my technique is based on reading. And first of all you need to choose the right text to read:

- Don't go for a book. It's too time consuming and you'll be stuck just with one topic. Better **start with articles**.
- **Choose articles of different topics** so that your vocabulary is diverse. They should also be focused on **daily activities** if you're only a beginner. You don't need to be able to speak about the quantum processes in the language you learn if you can't even ask "How are you?"
- An article shouldn't be too hard for you. Otherwise you'll be disappointed and probably think: "*I will never be able to understand this!*" Believe me, you will. But also keep in mind that easy texts will quickly make you bored. So, **pick texts that are slightly hard for you**. Just slightly!
- As I already mentioned, if you have problems with translation you can **use texts, audios, videos that provide translation to your native language**. Normally those are texts for beginners, which is exactly what you need. But don't always rely on the offered translation. When you put effort into translating words yourself you memorize them in the process.

On the next page you'll find out how to learn new words productively while reading. I believe it's by far the best way to learn new words efficiently. I hope you'll find it helpful!

LISTENING

Who needs a native speaker when there're tons and tons of video and audio? It's 21st century – you don't need to travel to the other continent to listen to a charming accent of a native speaker. Just turn on YouTube!

For many language learners oral speech poses difficulties even when they understand all words from it. They simply can't make it out. It happens when people learn a language mainly through books or at class. *The reason is that they're not exposed to a spoken language and oral speech.* Besides, at class they hear each other speak with an accent influenced by their native language; therefore they are not used to the proper one. So, in order to master a language and be able to understand oral speech you need to listen and watch a lot.

There are many options for listening: songs, podcasts, audio books, and audio lessons. So, listening is an essential part of learning languages. You won't know how words are pronounced if you just stick to a book. However, some textbooks provide CD's with audio versions of the texts from the book. Don't you skip the listening part!

We all know how a song can stuck in a head that it's impossible to shake it. Let's take advantage of that and use it as a tool to remember new words without putting too much effort in the process. **I consider listening to songs to be one of the best ways to learn a language.** They're full of useful phrases that are good to know. Besides, you can listen to songs anywhere: in queue, in car, in bed.

You can also find websites that offer to read and listen to articles at the same time. For English learners it would be **Voice of America**¹ and for German learners – **Deutsche Welle**². I'm sure you can find similar websites for most of the languages. Try listening to articles first so that you can estimate how much you can understand without reading.

If you find listening to audios boring, watch videos! I dedicate next 3 chapters to learning while watching as it's very efficient.

¹ www.learningenglish.voanews.com

² www.dw.com

LEARNING WHILE WATCHING

Watching your favorite movie or TV show can be very productive and fun at the same time if you do it in order to learn a language. I've heard many opinions on how to do it efficiently. Let's get through them.

Watch a movie without any subtitles. Some people believe that subtitles can be distracting, and you shouldn't use them at all. It surely works if you know the language already, but if I know nothing in, let's say, Japanese and turn on Japanese movie – it will seem nothing more than a melody, at least to me. It's not going to give you anything if you don't know this language. And that's what I want to focus on – watching movies when you only start to learn a language.

As we've figured out, watching movies without subtitles should be done by advanced learners. Moving on to another opinion – **watch with subtitles in your native language.** What happens? Now you know that melody has a meaning. So what? It doesn't sound appealing to me. Jokes aside, subtitles in your native language can only help you know what the movie is about. But they won't make you understand the speech in the language you're learning. Thus, you won't learn any new words or phrases; you will only understand what you already know.

Now the way I consider being the smartest. When I decided to watch movies in English it was logical for me to use English subtitles as well. Otherwise how am I going to make out words people are saying? I believe that the only way for a beginner is to **watch a movie with subtitles in the target language** and translate them in the process. This way you get to learn new words, not just hear words you already know. Of course, if some sentences are too hard for you – you should definitely check out subtitles in your native language to help you understand an original phrase. But subtitles in your target language should be your main focus.

Yes, it surely takes a lot of time. I used to come home after school and start watching a new episode of my favorite show straight away. And I usually would finish it before going to bed. But hey, it worked!

QUIT DISTRACTIVE BELIEFS

Many people live with a dream to learn a foreign language but don't really do anything to achieve it because they're sure they can't. Can they?

“It's hard”. Yes, many people don't start because they've already decided it's not doable for them. But why not give it a shot?

“You need to have a talent/good memory”. You don't need anything special to learn a language. You already have everything you need. In the next chapter and the one called “Brain Train” I talk about this in details.

“You need to visit a certain country”. You don't have to go to other country in order to practice a language. In fact, I know people who went abroad and came back with no result. Surely, new environment pushes you to adopt, but if you're stubborn enough you might not 😊 Anyway, don't see it as an ultimate option for learning a language. It's not for everyone. If you prefer to learn a language without leaving your comfort zone – feel free to do so. I assure you, if you do everything right, you have a big chance at succeeding.

“You can't learn a language just by yourself”. When I entered my university I had never learned German before. And I really wanted to see if it's possible to learn a language only at uni. Turned out, it's not. See, it doesn't matter how great, smart, amazing your teachers are, no one can learn a language for you. Going to class and hoping that's it – not really a right thing to do. YOU – that's what it takes to learn a language. Other people can only help. But YOU are enough.

“I will never be able to remember/learn/understand this”. It's ok to have such thoughts till you know that it's not true. It's not about ability; it's about time and desire. When I started watching movies in English I thought that there's no way I can understand their speech. When I first saw the list of German irregular verbs I thought the same thing. However, I didn't give up and eventually succeeded. Sooner or later you'll nail everything! Just give it some time. And dedication!

ONTO THE POSITIVE BELIEFS

It's time to swap your beliefs to positive ones. Prepare for the dose of motivation!

Any person has the ability to learn at least one extra language. You've done it before with your native language. Somehow all kids manage to do it. How? They don't doubt their ability. They don't give up. That's the secret. Moreover, as you manage to learn one foreign language, it gets easier because you start to see what your strengths are and how to do it the way that works for you.

It's not about having “super powers”, it's about using what you've got. Figure out your strengths and weaknesses. For instance, I have a perfect short-term memory, but my long-term memory sucks. That means if I don't constantly revise information, I might forget it. Luckily, with languages I don't have to sit over books to do so, I just need to use a language from time to time. And I gladly do it by watching movies, listening to songs, etc. That's how it works for me. Same thing with you – figure out you abilities and wing it!

Think about all those amazing things you can do once you know the language fluently. What are your little goals? Keep those things in mind. If there's no point for you to learn a language, it'll be tempting to quit whenever you run into an obstacle.

You don't need to believe. When I started learning English I didn't think I could possibly succeed. I had the same negative beliefs from the previous chapter. But I did it anyway. So, if you still don't believe in yourself – don't waste your energy on convincing yourself that you can. Just go for it.

Do not stop. Promise me that you won't stop and I can promise you that you will succeed. Give yourself a year. And make sure that every day you do at least something language-related. Then see what happens. I assure you that following tips from this book you'll get results.

I believe in you and I wish you to succeed!