

BEARING TIME

1. READ

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Tell us your language learning experiences.

**Dan Booster**

28

Last year the company I work for moved offices to Doha, Qatar, so I had to move too. I couldn't speak a word of Arabic so daily communication was a very big obstacle, and my busy work schedule didn't allow me to attend an intensive language course. So for nearly a year now, I have been using an online method. Working online really suits me as I can study anywhere, anytime. This method has proved to be very useful, but I've made good progress only in the past few months.

This is because I have been participating in a language exchange programme with a local person. He has been studying English for 4 years and wants to improve his speaking skills, so we have been meeting twice a week ever since I joined the programme. We talk for an hour in English and then for an hour in Arabic, and we have both benefited enormously! We haven't been practising grammar or anything like that. We just talk naturally about subjects that interest us. I'm slowly coming to grips with the language and I'm finally starting to feel confident about myself. I have been thinking of getting a novel in Arabic and starting to work on my reading skills, too. I'll just have to get used to reading from right to left!



Lizzy Silver

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posted
at 12:43

I have lots of Mexican friends, so over the years I've picked up Spanish words and expressions. However, I couldn't actually hold a conversation in Spanish, so I decided to learn it properly by going to a language school. In the past whenever I enrolled, I dropped out in a month or two. But this time I decided not to give up so easily. I've been attending for six months now and have completed a great deal of work. I have started understanding the language and using it correctly.

I have also been chatting online with my friends in Spanish and they have been helping me with some of my grammar problems. It's great; I'm practising and socialising at the same time! Recently, I have been watching films in Spanish, too. I don't add English subtitles, of course, and I try to imitate the pronunciation and intonation. And everyone tells me that I've improved a lot. Isn't that something to be proud of?

2. WRITE D for Dan, L for Lizzy or B for Both.

1. I'm learning from face-to-face meetings.
2. The Internet has helped me learn.
3. I had to learn fast.
4. I use a variety of media to learn.
5. I'm planning on trying a new idea.
6. I'm getting help from someone.
7. I'm learning just for the fun of it.
8. I met someone through my learning experience.