



HOW TO BOOST YOUR LANGUAGE LEARNING!

Our first post dealt with how to learn a language successfully. What was said specifically was that the way you mentally approach the process of learning is almost essential to learn a language successfully. If you haven't read it, please scroll down!

Today's post will be all about two important steps to take to ensure a fast progress in your learning process! Now, I am fully aware that each person has their own pace and their own time. I completely understand that some tips work for some people and some don't for others. However, in my experience as both a language learner and a private tutor, I have seen how some methods certainly help to ensure progress as we dive into our target language!

Before getting into it, I wanted to highlight two important aspects of language. One is *competence*, and the other is *performance*. Competence refers to our inner knowledge of a language, whereas performance refers to the actual production of language (For more information about this topic, please check this article! <https://sites.educ.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.bilash/Best%20of%20Bilash/competencyperformance.html>)

I have found that in order to boost your language learning, we need to invest in both aspects. One is reinforced by the other. Please keep reading!

Step #1 (*competence*) → Dedicate time to understanding the grammar or vocabulary of the language you are trying to learn.

I believe this is a very helpful step! If we don't, it is the same as trying to solve a math problem without the formula. For instance, if you want to learn Spanish or are already in the process, dedicating time to understanding its grammar will help you to know when to use what or in what context. You will certainly gain the main tools by doing this. Although jumping directly into trying to use the language without the knowledge would eventually lead you to being able to use the language by trial and error, dedicating time to understanding it will make that journey shorter and much more effective. Again, if you have a hammer and try to use it without knowing what it is and how to use it, it will take you more time to figure it out!

There are multiple ways to learn grammar, although if you don't know anything about the target language, I recommend going to the basics and finding some clear and short theory that helps you understand it better.

And then... put it into practice! That is what our step #2 is about!



Step # 2 (*performance*)→ Put your new knowledge into practice immediately!

This step is equally as important and useful as the previous one! Knowledge is highly reinforced by practice. There are different ways to put your new knowledge into practice, and if you don't know people who speak that language with whom you can practice, being creative is key! So, how can you do this? Be intentional about looking for contexts where you can practice. It doesn't necessarily have to involve finding a group of people who can speak that language, although that would be great to! But for instance, if you learned the word *coche* (car), go outside and count how many *coches* pass by your house; if you learned the gerund form of the verb *caminar*, which would be *caminando* (to walk= walking), tell yourself you are doing that **when you're actually walking: *estoy caminando***. In any situation you are in, try to always make an effort to practice what you learn!

If you practice these two steps regularly, you will see great results in your language learning! Investing in competence and performance is a great method to establish knowledge and being able to use that knowledge effectively. In my experience as a tutor, I have seen that the majority of students of any language invest either in competence only or performance only. Although that is good and it helps you, investing in both will absolutely boost your learning process. Many people fall into the belief that in order to practice a language you need to actually go to another country where that language is spoken to be able to practice. Nothing further from the truth! You can find those contexts in your surroundings, as long as you are intentional. Now, I am not saying that you shouldn't do your best to be exposed to people who speak the language you're trying to become fluent in. That is certainly amazing and I encourage that! But if you don't have those connections yet, there are a lot of contexts around you where you can practice what you learn immediately. If you want to ensure a fast and effective progress, practice should be **immediate and also constant.**