

# Parrot Time

The Thinking of Speaking

Issue #18 November / December 2015

## Study Abroad Programs

Olivier Elzingre gives a brief history  
and his thoughts



## The Secret Life of Diacritics

A look at those little marks affecting  
your pronunciation

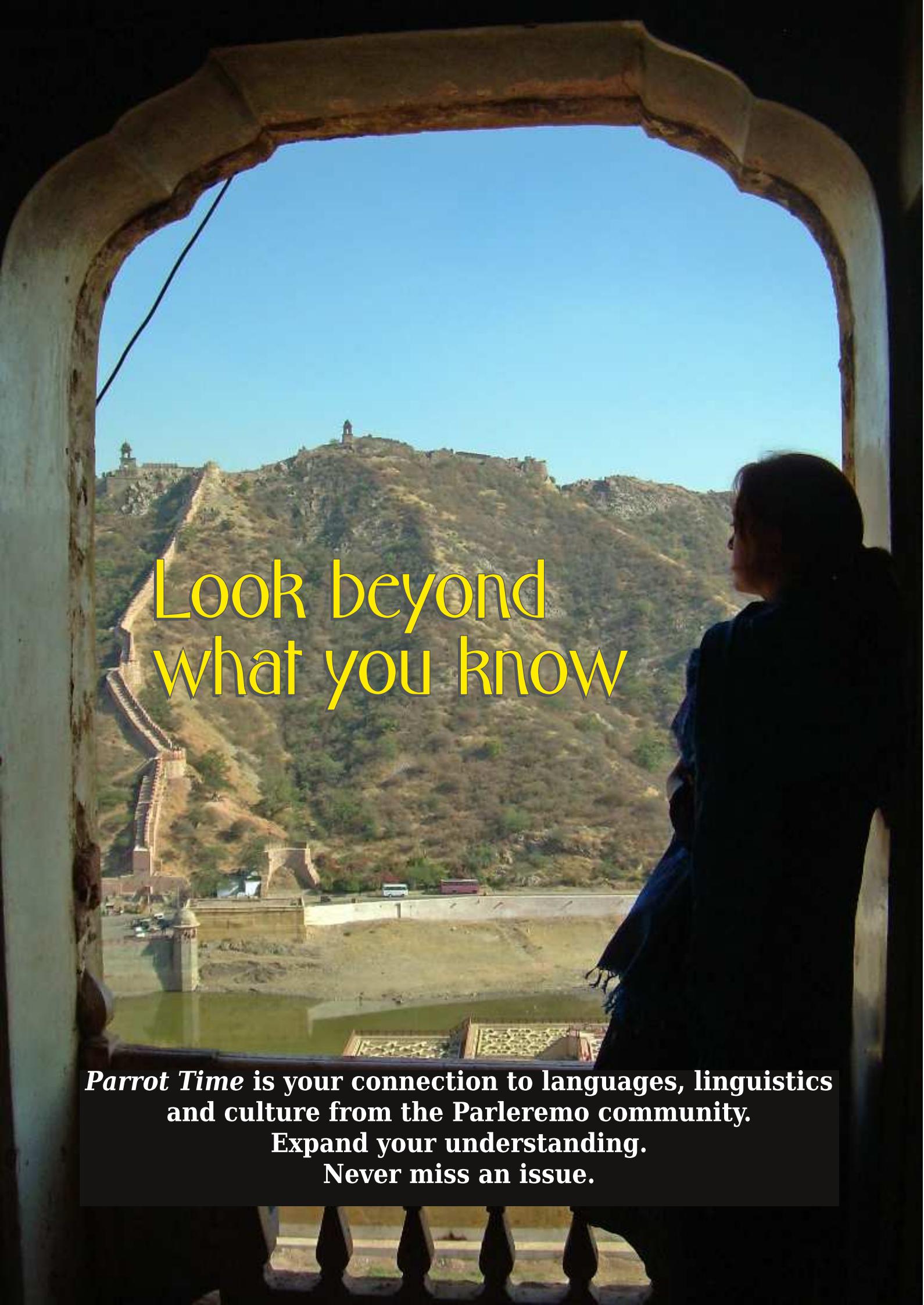
## Google Translate Exposed

Learn how it succeeds and fails

## Gestures and Cultural Differences

Meanings of 5 different hand signals





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# Parrot Time

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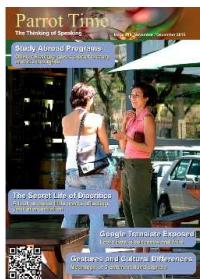
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**Cover:** Two women are talking in the street. One of them is an exchange student who is spending time in another country to study and master the language.

## Features



### 6 Broadening The Mind Travels The World

Guest writer Olivier Elzingre shares his thoughts on study abroad programs as well as a look at their history over the centuries.



### 14 The Secret Life of Diacritics

Ever look at a word and see little marks about certain letters, like a squiggly line or a pair of dots? Ever wonder what they are and why they are there? Welcome to the secret life of diacritics.



### 24 There Are No Wrong And Right Gestures, Only Cultural Differences

Guest writer Kendal Knetemann of LingoHut gives us the meaning of 5 different hand gestures.



### 28 Google Translate Exposed: The Truth Behind Everyone's Favorite Translator

While being the most used machine translation service in the world, Google Translate has both good and bad aspects. Guest writer Paul pulls back the digital curtain to show us how it succeeds and fails.



## Departments

### 05 Letter From The Editor

### 32 At the Cinema - Queen

### 40 Book Look - The A to Z of Learning German

### 43 Where Are You?

### 44 Basic Guide to Papiamentu

### 48 At A Glance

Ar kalbate lietuviškai?

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Make friends,  
Have fun!*

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# The Importance of Travel

I wrote a blog article recently in which I asked the question of whether language learning and travelling needed to be automatically linked in the modern age. Traditionally, resources like audio courses and phrasebooks have presented material to aid the tourist or the businessman, rather than someone who was learning a language for enjoyment.

My question came about when I realized how much we can learn and practise by utilising the internet. Technology has made it possible for people to learn another language without ever having visited a country it is spoken it.

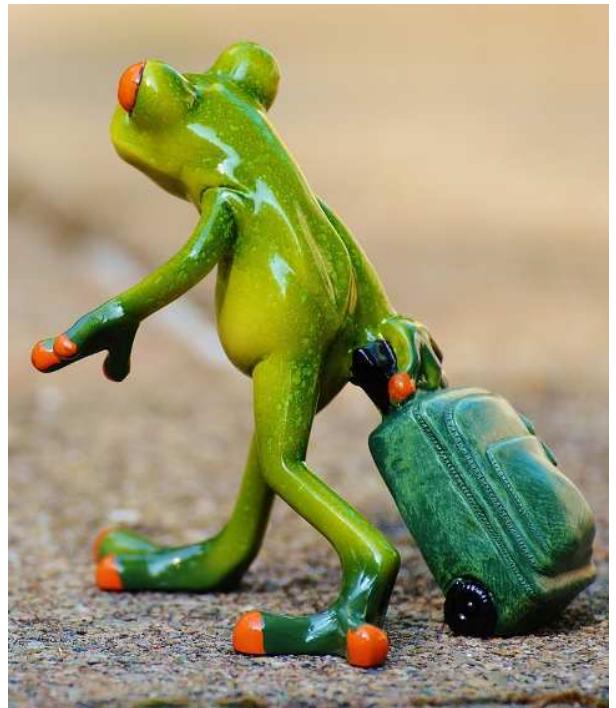
What it did not look at is the importance of travelling itself to help open up your mind in other ways. Even if a student can talk to Spanish native speakers while living in Africa, as an example, they are missing out on the full cultural experience. Technology can give them music and video of these things, but nothing is the same as being there.

I personally would never want to trade my trips to Italy or Japan for anything. I learned so much about other people during those times, but I also learned very important things about myself.

In this issue, Olivier Elzingre explores the historical and modern importance of travel as a means of broadening our knowledge, through his own experiences and those of others. He also looks at how language barriers can drastically affect these journeys.

In the film “Queen”, which I review this month, the main character, Rani, also finds the importance of travel, as she struggles to pull her life together after a cancelled wedding. She learns about others, herself, and gains a greater perspective on what is truly important.

I thank you for continuing your own journey with us each issue, and I hope you find your own mind broadening when exploring these pages.



**Erik Zidowecki**  
ERIK ZIDOWECKI  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

**Broadening  
The Mind**

**Travels  
The World**

**by Olivier Elzingre**



# Broadening The Mind Travels The World

An American lecturer based in Germany suggested to me that many students participate in an exchange program in order to escape something, and that she wouldn't be surprised if a large percentage of those students suffer from some psychological imbalance. Another academic refers to Erasmus, the European Union tertiary exchange framework, as Orgasmus, highlighting the Contiki-like aspect of the experience. At the same time, many universities make study abroad a compulsory part of their programs. Whilst there is a recognition that study abroad offers a potentially rich learning experience, there also exists a fear that students engage in activities of questionable educational value. If teachers and parents hope for the best while fearing the worst, program organisers and providers advertise the positives: language gains, friends for life, becoming part of a new culture, being more attractive to future employers and so forth and so forth. Photos on the providers' advertising material do not hint at the potential challenges, or even strife students may actually encounter.

But first let's take a step back. Study abroad is nothing new. The 17<sup>th</sup> century Grand Tour was an opportunity for wealthy young men to travel Europe through different courts and great houses, for the purpose of creating connections with other European great families and to learn the dominant languages of the time. It was only in the middle of the XXth



Men in the cabin of their ship while sailing on the Grand Tour.

century that programs have been offered by professional organisations, going some way (though by far not all the way!) into democratising the practice. The catalyst to the creation of those organisations is to be found in the world wars and reflected the spirit contained in the adage "Lest we forget".

Some of the most active study abroad program providers have started as a result of war time engagement. Air Field Service (AFS), for example, began as a group of American soldiers were experiencing the WWI French trenches. Youth for Understanding's humble beginnings are found in a church's effort to help young Americans and young Germans develop some cross-cultural understanding in the wake of WWII. One of Rotary Youth Exchange Program's main impetus was found with an airman's traumatic experience in Japan during WWII. Returning to

his Australian home, his self-imposed new mission was to create more positive bonds between Australia and Japan. In Europe as well, the *Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse* (OFAJ – the Franco-German Youth Office) was created by president de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer to improve their relationship, as they were sharing the experiences of post WWII reconstruction hardship.

From their conception, it's obvious that study abroad programs have a humanistic, moral and ethical dimension. Did this spirit infuse the experience of all those who later took part?

If literature is anything to go by, three biographical novels can help understand how students experience visiting a foreign country as a student.

The Japanese author Shusako Endo wrote "Foreign Studies" (1965), the first part



Music Festival at the Office franco-allemand pour la jeunesse in Berlin.

of which tells the story of Kudo a young Japanese Christian who spends a term in Rouen, France. His stay was difficult, as pressure is put upon him to fulfil the unfinished missionary task of his host family's dead son. Kudo's welcome announces the challenges to come.

*You will be able to see for yourself what a true Christian home is like. They have great expectations for you.*

That terrible word *expectation* appears a number of times in the short story, a statement of power accompanied by a heavy dose of guilt upon Kudo's frail character. The power imbalance between the hosts and the visitor lead the hosts, who are

obviously dealing with unresolved grief, to remain oblivious of Kudo's sensitive intelligence, and the complex culture he represents. Kudo's identity is thus not acknowledged, to the point that he is renamed Paul, after the family's lost son.

Kudo struggles to become more self-assured, as he feels particularly hindered by his inadequate level of French. Yet the permanent miscomprehension, the cultural gap between the parties allow the student to grow, as he gains insights in what he feels to be right and wrong. I find this representative of the reality. Some of my own students, who have reported difficulties in their host communities, also described how tensions with the host families forced

them to develop certain coping strategies.

Another novel which questions the development of its main character's identity in a foreign setting is entitled "L'étudiant étranger" (1986, *the foreign student*), written by French author and media personality Philippe Labro. It is an autobiographical story set in Virginia. Labro, a funded international student in a small university in the 1950s, struggles to comprehend the contradictions he sees in the host culture, which promoted ideals of respect and gentleness steeped in racial segregation. Labro discovers his own prejudice during his stay in Virginia, falls in love with Virginia with all its contradictions and finds the limits of his sense of morality. In

# Broadening The Mind Travels The World

short, Labro's story is one of identification and successful acculturation.

As opposed to Kudo, Labro is comfortable with his identity as a foreign student. The locals accept Labro's foreignness. One of the key differences between the two characters is their level of language. Whilst Kudo perceives his own French as limited, Labro appears not to suffer similar doubts. A story about self-representation and identity negotiation that I find particularly speaking comes from Eva Hoffman, a Polish immigrant in Vancouver in the 50s, who wrote in her book "Lost in Translation: A life in a new language" (1989):

*I am enraged at the false persona I'm being stuffed into, as into some clumsy and overblown astronaut suit. I'm enraged at my adolescent friends because they can't see through the guise, can't recognize the light-footed dancer I really am. They only see this elephantine creature who too*



Travelling students enjoying street musicians in Europe.

*often sounds as if she's making pronouncements.*

If you ever conducted a conversation in a language other than your first, you would have felt this very unique level of frustration.

More recent books have focused on a lesser introspective dimensions of the experience.

Brian Scott Ary, author of "Study Abroad Unauthorized" (2007), was very clear about

his three motives for traveling to Spain: "Learn a little Spanish. Have a little sex. And go to Ibiza". Although Ary's words may not make the final cut on a YFU flyer, this less educational aspect of study abroad not only exists, but plays an important role in negotiating the challenges of study abroad experience. It's no secret that an outgoing personality helps make progress both in understanding the culture and learning the language. Academic researcher Allison Spenader, whose PhD thesis explored the experiences of four US teenagers in Sweden, would certainly agree with this. She found that her participants identified with the local culture much better when they adopted a positive attitude and participated in available activities. As a consequence of their engagement, those who participated learned the language to a higher level of proficiency than those who didn't engage.

The experiences described in the three novels above are



International students sightseeing ruins in Azerbaijan.

vastly different from each other, and yet are recognisable aspects of what is taking place in study abroad.

What each of these novels offer is just a perspective. When you read them, you may be tempted to judge. Judge the hosts, judge the traveller. This is where you need to stop for a second. Study abroad is not about judgements, it is about understanding. Identity is not about a single person. It is about the negotiated role of a person in a context. Culture is not the characteristics of a person, but the result of a long evolving contact between people and their history.

Mobility is a very familiar concept to me. As an 11 year old, I spent three months in England, staying with non-French speaking relatives. Probably encouraged by the success of my first experience, my parents sent me to Germany for 6 weeks as a 16 year old. Toward the end of my high school years, I participated in a study tour to Prague. Later, I enrolled as a foreign student in Leeds university for 4 years, one of which was spent in Lyon teaching English (and meeting my Australian wife). I then moved to Australia, where I became almost immediately a foreign post graduate student. Finally, I became a language teacher and have sent small student cohorts from Australia to France every year for the past 9



International students speaking to Japanese children in a Japanese elementary school.

years. It is because of all of these experiences, some of which list among my best memories and other among the worst times of my life (sorry Germany, nothing against you), that I became a language teacher and that I am involved in academic research in study abroad. Possibly the most important lesson that I have learned so far is that every single study abroad experience is unique and yet still highly comparable to all others.

I wanted to write this article to share some of my thoughts. What I didn't want to do is give advice. I will not tell you that you must go on exchange, that you will have

a great time or that you will not. I won't tell you that you should go on a study abroad at a particular age. I will not even tell you that you ought to learn languages. All I hope is if you or your children ever consider taking part in a study abroad program, be ready to be surprised. And don't hesitate to email me about your experience! **PT**

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**Parrot Time** is always looking for guest writers, so if you are interested in writing for us or donating something you have written for your own blog, please contact us at [editor@parrottime.com](mailto:editor@parrottime.com).

We look forward to your contributions!



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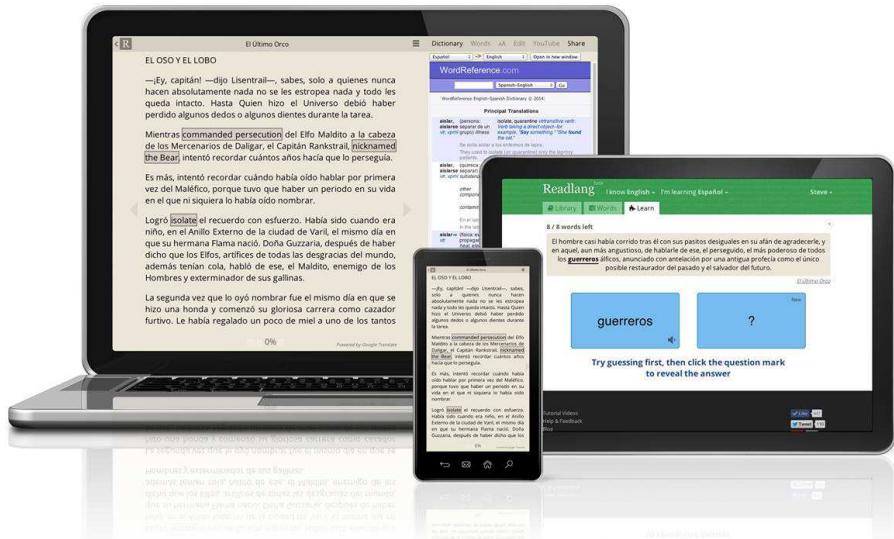


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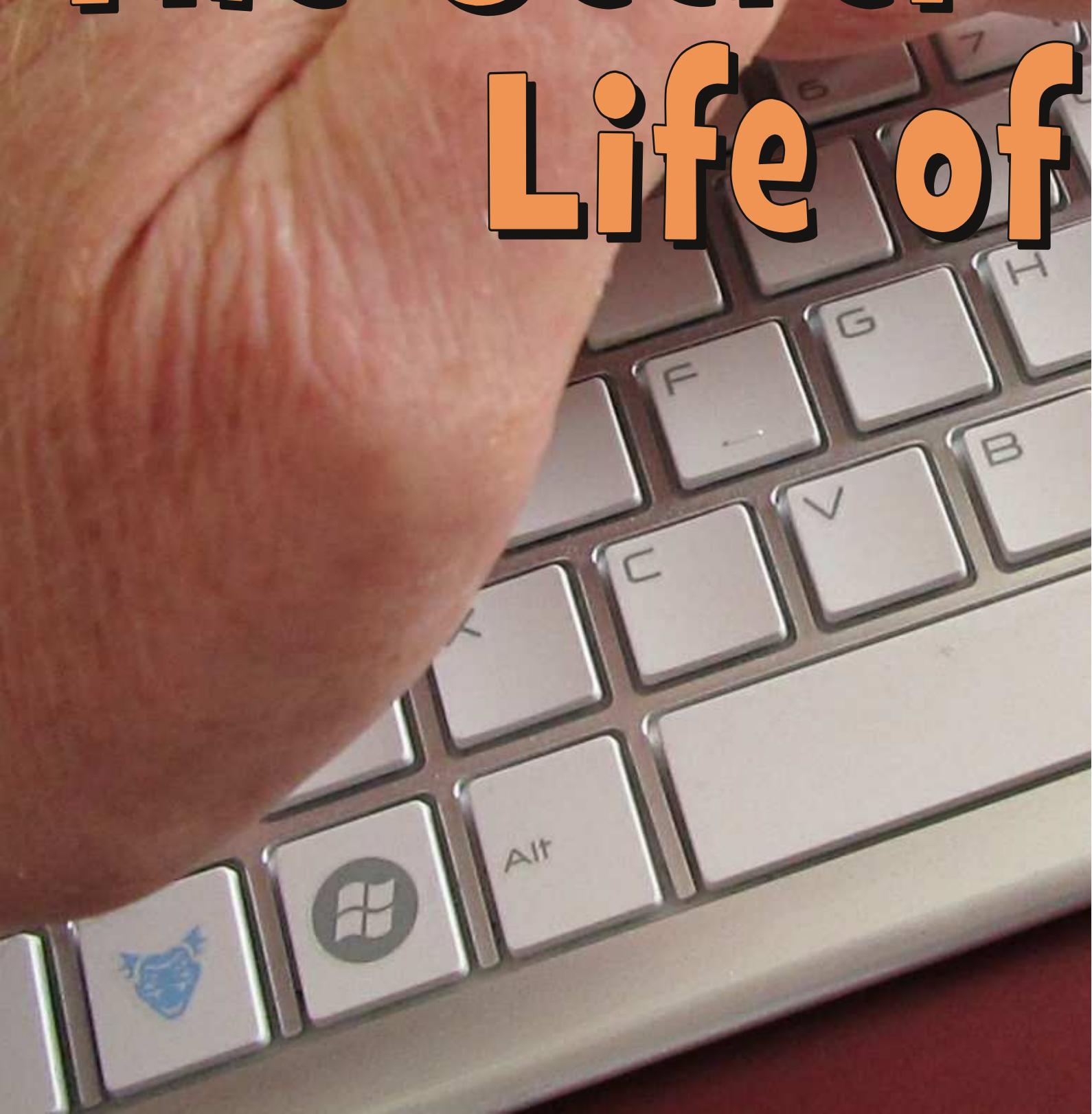
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# The Secret Life of





# Diacritics

# The Secret Life of Diacritics

For those of us who have grown up with English as our native language, we are very comfortable with our Latin alphabet. It is composed of 26 letters, 5 of which are vowels and the rest of which are consonants. Nothing tricky about it.

Well, at least when dealing with most of our English words. However, languages quite often “borrow” vocabulary from other languages, and those foreign words sometimes introduce strange spellings or even new characters.

For example, most of us have probably eaten at a small food and beverage shop called a “café”. This little restaurant gets its name from the French word “café”, meaning “coffee” or “coffee-house”. According to English pronunciation, “cafe” should probably sound similar to “cape” or “cage”, with the “a” being an “ay” sound and the “e” being silent.

But instead, the word is pronounced “cah-FAY” (/kæf.eɪ/), due to a little mark above the “e” which you probably mistook for a printing error the first time you saw it.

Another French word we have adopted with this strange, altered letter is “fiancée” (or “fiancé”, depending on if the person is male or female). This term is used to refer to a person who is engaged to the other, replacing the old fashioned “betrothed” for something more exotic sounding.

French people, or anyone who has studied French, will of course recognise the *acute* mark. It changes the normal



A Street café in Berlin

Latin “e” into a new sound without creating an entirely new letter. It is found in several languages using the Latin alphabet, including French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Irish, Hungarian, Galician, Czech, Icelandic, Kashubian, Luxembourgish, Occitan, and Slovak. Oh, and in English, as we have seen, in certain adopted words or names, like Beyoncé.

Some other English words you might have seen the acute mark used in are “cliché” and “risqué”, both from French and both having their final silent letter converted into something new. This acute sign is part of a larger group of added markings called *diacritics*.

A few of these words have been fully integrated with English and had their diacritics removed. One of those is “naïve”, which also comes from French where it is spelled “naïve”. We have learned how to pronounce the word and, in order to keep

spelling simple, removed the diacritic. “Café” is also in this process of naturalization, and you can often see it spelled just “cafe”.

This is what has happened to other words that were actually completely English but at one time were given diacritics to help in pronunciation.

Words like *hiäitus*, *coöperate*, *daïs*, and *reëlect* have dropped their markings to become *hiatus*, *cooperative*, *dais*, and *reelect*. Sometimes, hyphens are added (co-operative, re-elect) to make pronunciation clearer.

In the word “naïve” and the words listed above is a different diacritic, called a *diaeresis*. Its function is also different from the acute. While the acute mark changed the sound of the vowel, the diaeresis is used to prevent a pair of vowels from being pronounced as a diphthong (a combination of vowels with a specific, single pronunciation). Normally in English, “ai” is likely to be pronounced as “ay”, as in

"afraid" or "fair". With the diæresis, the vowels instead keep their own sounds and split the word into two syllables ("nah-EEV" /nə'iv/).

French isn't the only language to give English words with diacritics. If you are into spicy food, you have probably tasted a jalapeño pepper, or maybe as a kid you attended a party with a piñata. Both these words come from Spanish and have a cute little squiggle over the "n" called a *tilde*. This modifies the sound of the "n" to have an extra nasalized component, like there was a "y" after it, similar to the way "n" is pronounced in "onion" and "dominion".

## Orthography

First, it should be noted that having diacritics is not actually related to a language, since they denote sound in a writing system. Diacritics are part of the orthography, and for each language, it is possible to devise a writing system that includes all the sounds without the need for extra marks.

But changing the writing system might not even be necessary, since the spelling of the words could simply be modified most of the time. Looking back at some of the words we introduced (café, fiancée, naïve, piñata) these could be spelled to show the correct sounds as cafay, fiansay, nigheve, and pinyata. These might look awkward to our brains, but remember that Old English had a very similar look.

Second, sometimes the term "accent" is used instead of "diacritic", but it is import-



Children swinging at a piñata, a word and tradition taken from the Spanish

ant to realize that diacritics are used to denote many pronunciation changes, not just accent.

## History

The word "diacritic" comes from the Greek word "διακριτικός" (diakritikós), meaning "distinguishing". These marks are used to show that a letter should be treated differently from the normal usage. That change can affect stress, short and long sound, or create an en-

tirely new sound.

So why do some languages have them and some don't? English only has them from adopted words or specific names, while many other languages which also use the Latin alphabet use many of these notations.

Unfortunately, that is not an easy answer. Languages based upon Latin and using the Latin alphabet added in these modifiers as their spoken language developed. Latin itself uses no diacritics.

The very first diacritics were introduced in Ancient Greece and Rome. They evolved and spread to later European languages for two main purposes.

First, they helped define the pronunciations of letters and words, expanding the existing writing system without the need to add more letters. They also saved space when writing, which became very important as, during the early middle ages, when writing became more popular, ink and paper were expensive.

We have already seen an example of this in the word “piñata”. It was originally spelled “pinnata”, but to save space (and thus money), Spanish scholars invented the tilde to indicate the letter was doubled.

Looking at French, we know that the spelling of words is mostly based on the

*Essentially, they can be seen as "patches" to software which is being upgraded.*

way they were pronounced in Old French (1100-1200 AD). However, since then the spoken language has continued to evolve, so that the spellings no longer match. Some of these changes have led to letters becoming silent in many words (*ballet, faux*) and multiple homophones (*air, aire, ère, erre, ers, haire, hère*). To accommodate for the changing sounds, diacritics were introduced.

Essentially, they can be seen as “patches” to software which is being upgraded. Each change introduces some

# GENERIC ACCENTS



Some of the most popular diacritics

problem which can be fixed by adding something else and establishing a new rule to cover it.

France has a particularly interesting history regarding the accent (`), or grave, mark. It is the same as the acute (`) mark, but it faces the other direction.

In 1653, *L'academie Francaise* was established to protect and promote the French language, and one of the decisions they made was to introduce the usage of grave marks. What makes that so interesting is that they did this *not* to make spelling simpler, but to actually make it more complex.

The reason was that they wished to distinguish between the educated and the ignorant. The elite would use the spellings with the extra markings to set themselves above others. This is similar to the practice of using calligraphy or very formal writing for documents of high importance.

### Usage

Now it is time to look at the various forms. We have already looked at the acute, grave, diaeresis, and tilde

marks. These and others exist in numerous languages, sometimes for different purposes. It is also important to note that in some languages, letters with diacritics are considered to be completely unique characters while in others, diacritics are just additions to letters, and the letters with and without them are not considered to be different letters, just handled differently.

### French

The usual diacritic marks in French are the acute, the grave, the circumflex, the diaeresis, and the cedilla.

The acute over an “e” changes it to a longer sounding “ay” sound.

The grave mark over vowels (à, è, ù) does one of two things. Over “a” or “u”, it distinguishes between homophones: à vs. a, ou vs. où. When it is with an “e”, it represents the sound of /ɛ/, or “eh”.

As we saw already, the diaeresis shows that a vowel combination should be broken up, not spoken as a diphthong. The letter with this mark must be pronounced separately, and it

usually appears as *ë*, *ï*, *ü*, and *ÿ*.

The circumflex looks like a little triangle without a bottom, and as a single mark, it is called a “carat”. Over the vowels “a”, “e” and “o” (â, ê, ô), it changes these sounds to /a/ (“ah”), /ɛ/ (“eh”) and /o/ (“oh”). It is also sometimes used to distinguish between homophones. It may also appear on “i” and “u” (î, û), but since the 1990 orthographic changes to the language, most of those occurrences have been dropped.

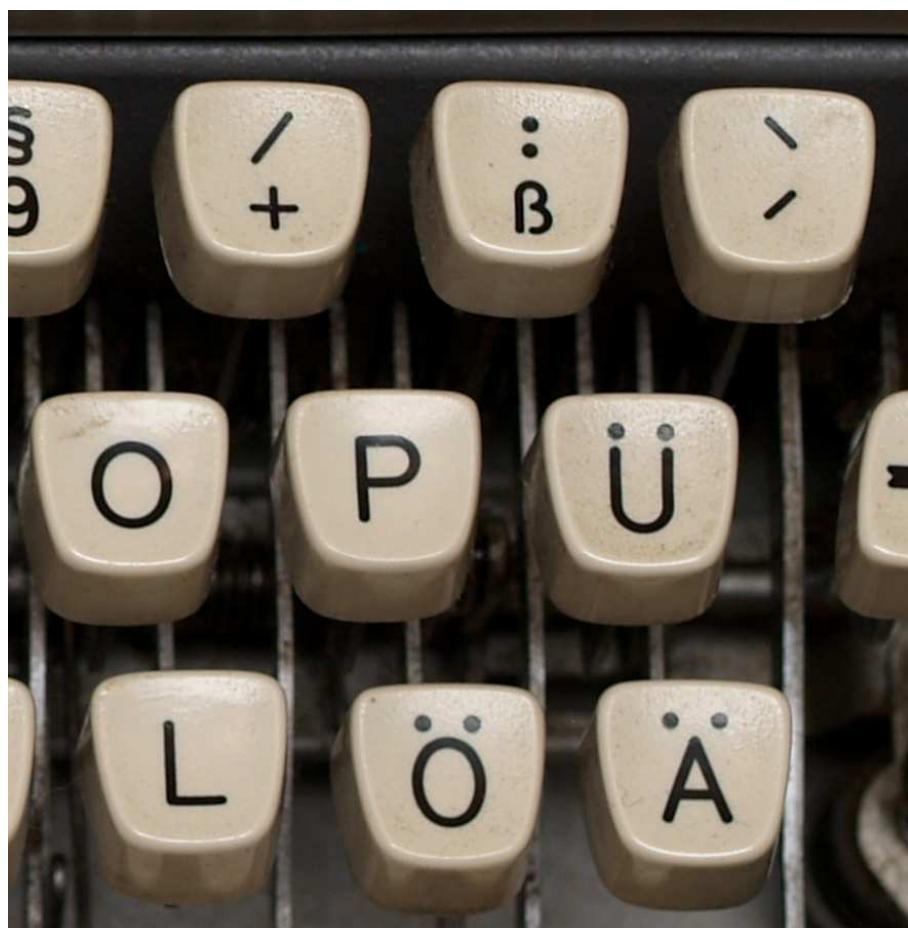
The cedilla is a diacritic that appears under a letter instead of over it. It is also the only diacritic in French that is used on a consonant instead of a vowel. It appears under the letter “c”, creating ç and being pronounced as “s” before the vowels “a”, “o”, and “u”, where it would normally be pronounced as “k”. It is not needed before “e”, “i”, or “y” because a “c” used before those always adopts the soft “s” sound automatically.

Similar to English, the tilde only appears in French over “n” in words adopted from Spanish.

## Spanish

Compared to French, diacritics in Spanish are fewer and easier. The grave mark is used over vowels (á, é, í, ó, ú) to mark stress (*la canción* [song], *también* [also]) or to differentiate between homophones (sí [yes], si [if]). The tilde is used on the “n” to change that letter’s sound.

The diaeresis is also used in Spanish, but only over the “u” (ü) and only before “e” or “i”. Normally, when “g” and “u” are used together before a



Part of a German 1964 Olympia typewriter showing the placement umlauts

hard vowel, both “u” and the vowel are pronounced, with the “u” sounding like an English “w” (guasón, guapo).

To make the “u” have the “w” pronunciation when it is in front of a soft vowel, the diaeresis is added (lingüística, pingüino).

More specifically, the diaeresis in Spanish forces two vowels to be pronounced as a diphthong. This is exactly the *opposite* way it is used in French and English, where it is used to separate diphthongs.

## German

So it seems that diacritics can have different usages for the same marks. If you are at all familiar with German, you have probably also made the

observation that the same character can have different names, for the two dot mark we have been calling a “diaeresis” is referred to as an *umlaut* for German, and it has a third usage.

The umlaut appears over three vowels in German (ä, ö, ü) and is used to represent *frontalization*, which is placing an “e” after the vowel, similar to how English adds a silent “e” to the end of words to make the vowels long.

German printers created the umlaut to save on printing. They were originally two small vertical dashes, but those got truncated into dots, thus the similarity with the diaeresis.

There is another shortened form in German,

# The Secret Life of Diacritics

compressing “ss” into a single letter, ß, called “eszett”. This is a ligature (a combination of two or more characters into a single glyph) and is viewed as a separate letter, while the umlaut is considered an addition; ä, ö, and ü are *not* considered separate characters. Since the spelling reforms of 1996, eszett is in the process of being phased out.

## Italian

The Italian diacritics are mainly the acute and grave and used in the same way as Spanish - to denote stress or differences between homophones. There is a very rare usage of a circumflex (î) in old documents to represent a contraction of “ii”.

## Nordic Languages

Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish have a circle mark, called a *ring* over the letter “a”, which may have once started as a diacritic but now makes “å” a distinct letter.

Two of these languages



A laptop keyboard with Scandinavian characters containing diacritics

also use various diacritics to differentiate between homophones: Danish has the acute mark and Norwegian uses the acute, grave, and circumflex (é, è, ê, ó, ô, â, and ô).

The Swedish alphabet includes three letters with diacritics (å, ä and ö) which are treated as separate letters and appear at the end of the alphabet. They are used almost exclusively for loanwords from German and French.

## Baltic Languages

Latvian has the several diacritics which have been added to existing Latin letters to form eleven entirely new ones. The names of these diacritics are the *macron* (ā, ē, ī, ū), the *caron* (č, š, ž), and the *cedilla* (ǵ k, l, n̄).

The macron, which looks like a bar or hyphen, is normally used to make a pronunciation long. The caron, which looks like an inverted circumflex, is normally used to palatalize a letter (give it a sharper sound which is created by pressing the tongue to the palate, or roof of the mouth).

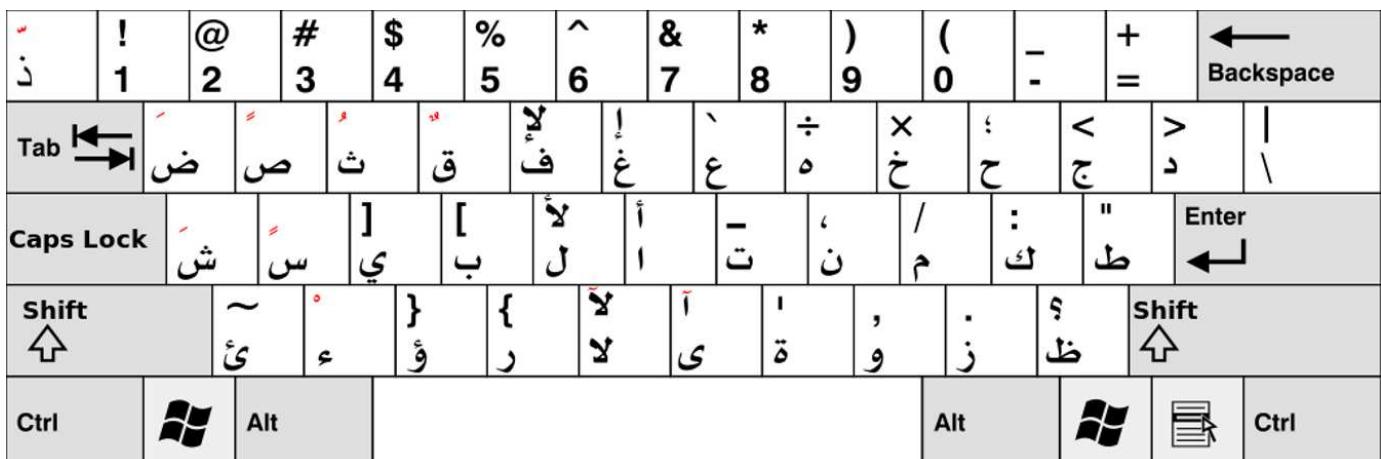
The cedilla, which we have seen already in French, is mainly used to soften a sound. Note that the cedilla appears *above* the “g” in Latvian.

Lithuanian also has the caron letters of Latvian (č, š and ž) and the macron (ū) acting as unique letters. It also includes the *dot*, or overdot, (ė), which gives the “e” a closed sound.

Another new mark is the *ogonek* (ą, ę, ī and ū), which



Faroese sign with diacritics



Arabic keyboard layout, capable of adding harakat diacritics

looks like a reversed cedilla and has the effect of giving a nasalized pronunciation.

As in Latvian, these letters with diacritics are considered to be unique letters.

## Other Diacritics and Languages

There are far more examples of diacritics in the languages using the Latin alphabet - too many to cover in this single article. These include *diaeresis*, *tilde*, *acute*, *grave*, *circumflex*, *caron*, *overdot*, *macron*, *overring*, *cedilla*, *ogonek*, *double acute*, *double grave*, *triangular colon*, *underbar*, *slash*, *crossbar*, *breve*, *sicilicus*, *titlo*, *apostrophe*, *hoi*, *horn*, *undercomma*, *double breve*, *tie bar*, *double circumflex*, *longum*, and *double tilde*.

These are used, both as additions to letters or in forming unique letters, in a variety of languages, including Afrikaans, Albanian, Asturian, Aymara, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Catalan, Cornish, Crimean Tatar, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Esperanto, Estonian, Faroese, Filipino, Finnish, Gagauz,

Galician, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Hungarian, Icelandic, Irish, Kurdish, Lakota, Latvian, Leonese, Lithuanian, Livonian, Macedonian, Maltese, Manx, Norwegian, Occitan, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Scottish Gaelic, Serbian, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Tamil, Thai, Turkish, Turkmen, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, and Welsh.

While we have been looking at how diacritics are used to modify letters of the Latin alphabet, there are also various markings in other languages and alphabets, including Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, and Korean.

## Are Diacritics Needed?

Some people now question if languages still need to use diacritics. As we have seen already, with the examples in English, people can learn how to pronounce the words properly without extra marks guiding them. How often do you still see “cafe” with the acute mark? “Naive” has completely lost its diaeresis

We also have unlimited capacity for printing, so using them to save space is no longer required, as we have

seen with the German *eszett* being phased out. The other part of this argument is that it is harder to use the dia-critics in print because so much is done on computers and it then requires specialized keyboards, popup menus for extra characters, or multiple keystrokes to insert a single character.

Lastly, it is possible to distinguish between words that are spelled the same without diacritics just by the contexts. No one thinks "I will lead you there" has anything to do with the metal. Would removing the acute from "sí" really make people think you saying "If, I would like some tea"?

With some reforms already changing spelling rules to remove them, as well as natural language evolution, it is possible that we will someday have diacritic free writing systems again?

I hope this peek into the world of diacritics will help make you aware of the importance of these little characters and understand their importance in the language world. **PT**

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## There Are No Wrong And Right Gestures, Only Cultural Differences

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**R**emember what your mom would say, actions speak louder than words, she was right. From eye contact to posture, nonverbal details reveal who we are and impact how others see you. Is non-verbal communication important in a conversation? Absolutely, words are important, but it turns out, we communicate most of the meaning of our conversation via body language and gestures.

The way you move, the way you stand and the way you listen tells others whether or not you care about what they are saying. When your words match your body language, they increase trust, clarity and rapport. When they don't, they trigger tension, distrust and confusion. Unfortunately, many people send negative and confusing nonverbal signals without even knowing it when speaking with someone from another country. When this happens, both clarity and rapport may be irreversibly damaged.

To become a better communicator, it's important to become sensitive not only to the nonverbal cues of others, but also to the nonverbal cues you may be sending. As you can imagine, communicating with someone from your own culture can be challenging but when speaking with a foreigner it can be perplexing. Nonverbal

communication gestures do not translate across cultures easily and can lead to serious misunderstanding. While translation systems are available for verbal communication, translators for nonverbal communication do not exist.

Nonverbal communication is composed of facial expressions, body movements, posture, gestures, eye contact, touch, space and voice. We must appreciate and identify that in one country a respectable gesture may mean something completely different in another country. In this article we will focus on 5 different hand gestures that are commonly exchanged:

- “Ok” sign
- Thumbs up
- Finger snap
- Beckoning sign
- Corona

Understanding the different meaning these signs may have in other cultures, will not only enhance your conversation but may keep you out of trouble while talking to someone from another part of the world.

## OK Signs

In the US, we use it to convey agreement, it assures people things are fine or when everything is perfect. In Brazil, Greece and Spain it conveys a different meaning! This sign is used to call someone an a\*\*hole. While visiting Brazil in the 1950's, Richard Nixon flashed the OK sign to the crowd and they responded with boos! In Turkey and Venezuela the sign is used as an insult toward gay people. In France and Australia it means zero or worthless. Lastly, in Japan this gesture means money.



## Thumbs Up

We use this gesture a lot in the US it means it is all great. But I recommend you do not use it among Middle Easterners and people from West Africa. People from Bangladesh, Australian and South Americans also find this gesture hideously offensive. It is assumed to mean that you want the receiver to stick it where the sun don't shine, up yours or sit on it.



## Finger Snap

Where I am from in Latin America, snapping your finger meant to hurry up. In the US and Great Britain, it usually is used when someone remembers something or gets an idea. In some cultures it used to get someone's attention but in many cultures it is just rude. So, to keep it safe, snap your fingers for the same reason the Ancient Greeks did -- to keep the rhythm set by musicians and dancers



## Beckoning sign (come here)

In the Philippians the beckoning sign is impolite and can be a cause for being arrested. In the USA it is used often to call someone over here. Careful by using this gesture in Japan it is very rude and only fit for a dog and or other animal. In Singapore, beckoning is an indication of death.



## The Corona

This gesture has been adopted by rockers and it is a sign of approval "rock on" for most Americans. Except in Texas, where football fans use it as a sign representing the horns of a bull. In other cultures, this is not the horn of a bull but instead of the devil and representing evil. In Buddhist and Hindi culture, it means the Karana Mudra which is used to dispel the evil. Watch out making this gesture in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Spain, Portugal and Italy since it is known as the 'Cuckold' and is used to tell a man that other men are enjoying his wife. In 1985, following the news that Texas Longhorns football team won the football game, five Americans were arrested in Rome for using this gesture outside the Vatican.



## There Are No Wrong And Right Gestures, Only Cultural Differences

We might not have translators for non-verbal communication but we have our phone or computers at our hands to learn and understand the meaning of the gestures we use. So remember before jumping to conclusions about the meaning of a gesture, consider the person's cultural background. Embarrassing moments can happen as a result of ignorance and by misinterpreting a gesture.

It is always ok to ask people from different countries and cultures about the meaning of rituals, mannerisms and gestures. It is a great topic to discuss with a friend from another country over a cup of coffee and a yummy pastry. There are no wrong and right gestures, only cultural differences. **PT**

Original post: <http://lingohut.com/blog/there-are-no-wrong-and-right-gestures-only-cultural-differences/>

**Kendal Knetemann** is the founder of [LingoHut](#) where free language lessons, activities and articles on making language learning uncomplicated. Communication is our thing!!! Like us on our [Facebook page](#).



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The screenshot shows the Google Translate homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with buttons for Polish, English, Spanish, Detect language, and a dropdown menu. Below the navigation bar, the main title is displayed in large, bold, orange text: "Google Translate Exposed: The Truth Behind Everyone's Favorite Translator". A sub-instruction "Type text or a website address or translate a document." is visible below the title. To the right of the title, the author's name "by Paul" is displayed.

Nobody would argue that Google Translate is perfect: machine-generated translations are notorious for missing the mark, often laughably so. Still, with over 200 million translations performed each day in over 90 languages from Albanian to Zulu, Google Translate has come a long way since its humble beginnings, and is by far the most widely used translation service in the world.

But how exactly does Google Translate work? As it turns out, the process isn't as straightforward as you might expect, and is the reason for some of Google Translate's successes, as well as its failures.

At first glance, one might expect that Google Translate would simply compile dictionaries of many different languages, and translate equivalent words from each one. However, as any language learner knows, translating literally or word-for-word will result in a nearly incomprehensible end result. Realizing this, the folks at Google base their translations not in dictionary entries, but in real texts that have already been translated by humans.

Google Translate's library is vast: it includes every European Union document since 1957 (all of which are professionally translated into over 20 languages), records from international companies that have been translated into multiple languages and up-

loaded onto the Internet, as well as thousands of articles and books that have surfaced on the web.

Google Translate then translates novel text by scouring this enormous database and finding the most common translation for a given word or phrase. Therefore, Google Translate's output is based on human-created professional translations, effectively avoiding the aforementioned issues involving literal or word-for-word translations. For example, if you seek to translate "How are you doing?" from French into English, Google will find several real-life translations in its enormous database, and select the most common choice.

So if you've ever entered something into Google Translate and been surprised by how accurate the translation was, this is why.

However, this approach isn't without its shortcomings. Specifically, relying on existing translations may provide ample material for some language pairs, but not others. For example, there are abundant translations from French to English, but markedly fewer translations from French to Japanese. So, then, what happens when you want to translate a text from French to Japanese, and Google can't find enough existing material to provide a direct translation?

# Google Translate Exposed: The Truth Behind Everyone's Favorite Translator

When this happens, Google uses an intermediary step that has matches in both the source language (in this case, Spanish) and the target language (Japanese). Given the ubiquity of English as a worldwide lingua franca, this intermediary step is almost always English.

So what does this mean for our Spanish-Japanese translation? Unable to find direct matches from Spanish to Japanese, Google will first translate the text into English, and will then further translate this new English text into Japanese. In other words, it involves two translation iterations instead of one.

You might be asking if this is necessarily a bad thing. If the translation from Spanish to English is good, and the translation from English to Japanese is good, what's the problem? Well, on a basic level, think of the popular game "Telephone". No matter how hard everyone tries to accurately replicate the original message, after several iterations, it ends up getting distorted. In this sense, Google Translate's multiple iterations of translation is similar to playing "Telephone".

But let's look at this more specifically. Say we have a simple Spanish-language sentence: *Eres muy linda*. This translates to "You're very cute", and Google translate correctly produces this, as we see below.

The screenshot shows the Google Translate interface. The source text 'Eres muy linda.' is in the left input field, and the translated text 'You are very cute.' is in the right output field. The interface includes language selection dropdowns at the top and various interaction icons at the bottom.

Importantly, however, Spanish adjectives inflect for gender. Whereas *linda* is used to describe women, *lindo* is used to describe men. Because of this, the above sentence is necessarily being spoken to a woman.

However, given that adjectives in English do not inflect for gender, Google translate failed to capture this difference. As a result, see what happens when we translate this text from English to French:

The screenshot shows the Google Translate interface translating the English sentence 'You are very cute.' into French. The source text is in the left input field, and the translated text 'Tu es très mignon.' is in the right output field. The interface includes language selection dropdowns at the top and various interaction icons at the bottom.

Unfortunately, this is not the same as our original sentence. Indeed, *mignon* does mean "cute", but it is used to describe men; *mignonne* is used for women. Therefore, in its English translation, Google Translate lost track of the fact that the original sentence was directed towards a woman. The nuance was lost.

Aside from showing that it's dangerous to use Google Translate to flirt in a foreign language, this example illustrates the problem of using English as an intermediary step when translating between two other languages. In doing so, we impose English-language grammar on the original text, and then use that as the basis to come up with a final translation. But English, like any other language, does not have every single conceivable grammatical feature (such as inflecting adjectives for gender). As a result, we necessarily lose some grammatical nuance if we use English as an in-between for our original and target texts.

So, is Google Translate bad? No – it's great for getting the general meaning for a text you don't understand, and sometimes, it can provide really authentic translations. But it certainly can't replace the human touch – and especially when it uses other languages as intermediary steps.

Thus, if you want a really good translation, don't look to Google: a trained, human professional is a much better choice. Or – even better – learn the language yourself, and become your own translator. **PT**

*Paul is an English teacher who lives in Argentina. Paul writes on behalf of [Language Trainers](#), a language teaching service which offers [foreign-language level tests](#) as well as other free language-learning resources on their website. Check out their [Facebook page](#) or send an email to [paul@languagetrainers.com](mailto:paul@languagetrainers.com) for more information.*

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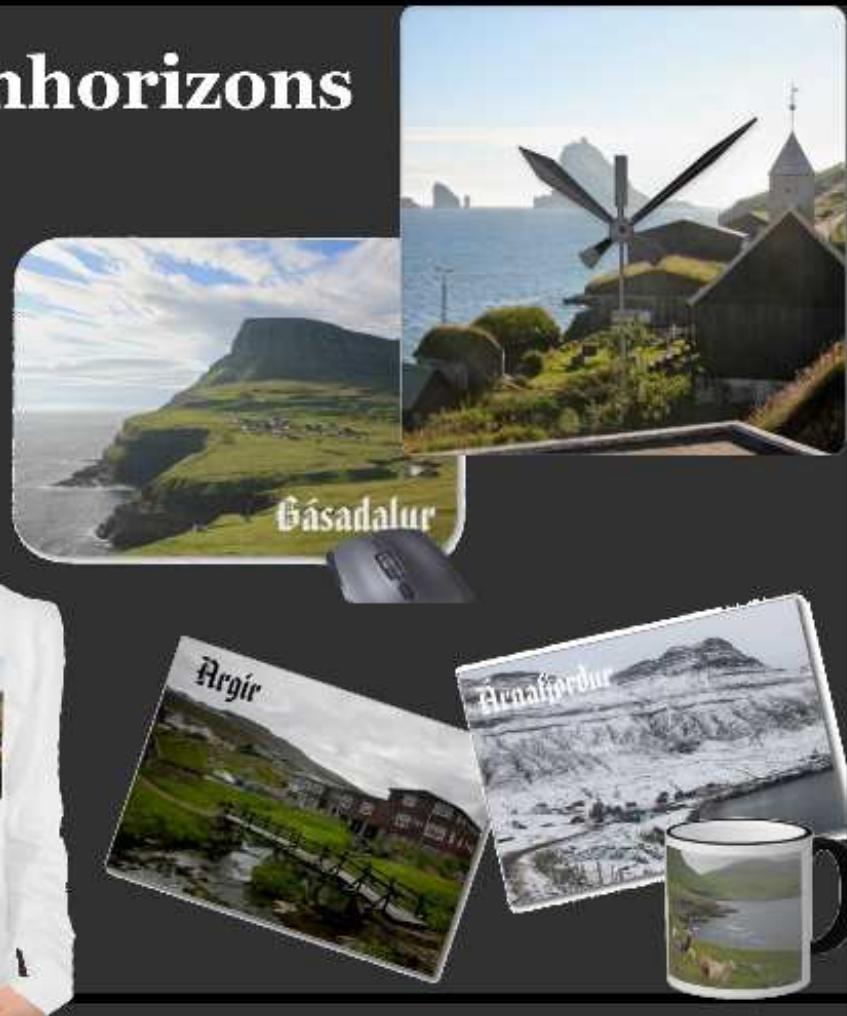
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### Queen

146 min

Adventure / Comedy / Drama  
7 March 2014 (India)

Country: India / France / Netherlands  
Language: Hindi / English / French / Japanese / Dutch

*Things get worse when she realizes just how lost she is, being in another country and unable to speak the language (something I am sure many of us who have travelled can relate to).*

This month's film review is for the Bollywood hit *Queen*. It follows a young Indian woman as she tries to deal with rejection.

Rani is deep in celebrations with her family as they prepare for her wedding day, but just two days before the wedding is to take place, her fiancé, Vijay, meets with her privately and announces the marriage is off. He acts distant, and the only real explanation is that they are "too different" now.

Devastated, Rani locks herself in her room for a few days, barely eating and not allowing anyone to come in. When she finally emerges, she has made a decision: she is going to go, alone, on the honeymoon trip to Paris and Amsterdam which her parents have already paid for. Her family takes her to the airport, and while she arrives in Paris safely, she is far from being well. She seems almost frozen as she tries to cope with her sadness.

Things get worse when she realizes just how lost she is, being in another country and unable to speak the language (something I am sure many of us who have travelled can relate to). This is also the first time she has been away from her family, so she is feeling

truly alone.

Among her trials, she is freaked out when trying to eat a fish she ordered in a restaurant (unable to understand the menu), almost mugged, and stalked by the Eiffel Tower, which she had dreamed of visiting as a married woman. She is eventually taken under the protection of a woman who works in her hotel named Vijayalakshmi (or, ironically, Vijay, for short). Vijay is part Indian and the two soon become good friends: Rani is very conservative while Vijay is more wild, so the two help balance each other. With Vijay's help, Rani comes out of her depression and learns to enjoy her time in Paris.

It seems over too soon, and Rani must continue on to her second leg of the trip. She and Vi-



Female Vijay listening to a depressed Rani in Paris



Female Vijay and Rani dancing along the streets as Rani learns to enjoy Paris

jay part at the train station, with Vijay giving her a package to take to a friend in Amsterdam. Once Rani arrives there, she checks into a hostel which Vijay has arranged for her after cancelling her original hotel booking, in the hopes that Rani will more likely have fun if she is with other people.

However, to Rani's horror, she must share a room with three men. She figures out that she can sleep in the hallway instead, but the men will not let her do that, instead giving her the room for the night while they sleep in the hall.

At first, Rani is withdrawn again, but soon, she starts to interact with her roommates. They are French Tim, Japanese Taka,

and Russian Oleksander, who are travelling together, and Rani joins them in their adventures.

She eventually learns a deeper meaning behind their activities. Taka lost his parents and belongings during a tsunami, and Tim and Oleksander now travel with him, trying to help him forget. They have become his family, which makes Rani realize how fortunate she is to have her large family back in Delhi.

Rani also learns more about her own skills when she is challenged by an Italian chef, Marcello, whom she accidentally insulted on her first day in Amsterdam when she suggested changes to his food. He invites her to a food festival where she can use his kitchen to prepare food, and if people eat it, then he will forgive her for trying to change his. While people are slow to try her spicier cuisine, it quickly becomes a hit, earning her plenty of money and Marcello's respect.

Coming down from this high, however, she meets Vijay, who has followed her to Amsterdam when he found out she had left Delhi. He has decided that he wants her back when he realized she wasn't still crying over him.

During the film, we have seen how they met and the way their relationship was prior to the marriage. It seems that Vijay was the one that aggressively pursued her originally. It is from that which the film gets its title "Queen", which is not only the meaning of



Tim, Rani, Oleksander and Taka having fun in a boat in Amsterdam



Vijay and Rani at a table, trying to work out their relationship

## At the Cinema - Queen

"Rani", but what he also refers to her as, figuratively praising her. Once they became a couple, he became oppressive, not wanting her to take a job because it might seem that he couldn't provide for her. He is overtly concerned with how things appear to others and not with her happiness. The "difference" that led him to cancel the marriage was caused by him smothering the life in her that he had been attracted to at the start. We understand that Rani had actually been very lucky to avoid the marriage.

But now, Vijay wants her back. While they are talking on the street, we can see him bouncing back and forth between being romantic and dominating, even getting into a fight with Oleksander when the Russian tries to protect Rani.

Rani agrees to meet with Vijay on the next day, her last day in Amsterdam, at a local cafe. It will also be the last day for her friends, and while they had planned one last shared adventure at a large rock concert, Rani knows she cannot do both, so they part ways after checking out of the hostel.

This is definitely a "feel good" movie, in that you follow a person from a bad situation in their life to a better one in the end. Unlike some shallow plots, however, we easily find a connection with most of the characters, and actually feel invested in their lives.

There are some very funny scenes in the film as well. When Rani is calling her family from Paris via Skype, they also get to see a



The four friends exploring the night life of Amsterdam

very well endowed Vijay, and both Rani's father and younger brother are *very* interested. While in Amsterdam, the guys take Rani to a shop so she can buy gifts for her family, but she is unaware that it is a sex shop (having never seen any of the stuff before), and they are laughing at how she is interpreting the use for various items.

There is also plenty for language learners. Not only do we see Rani struggling with communicating with others without a common tongue, but there are also several languages spoken throughout the film, most notably Hindi and French, but also with English, Dutch and Japanese thrown in.

I really enjoyed this film, far more than I expected, and while the ending is rather obvious, it is handled beautifully. I can definitely recommend *Queen* as a film to see. **PT**

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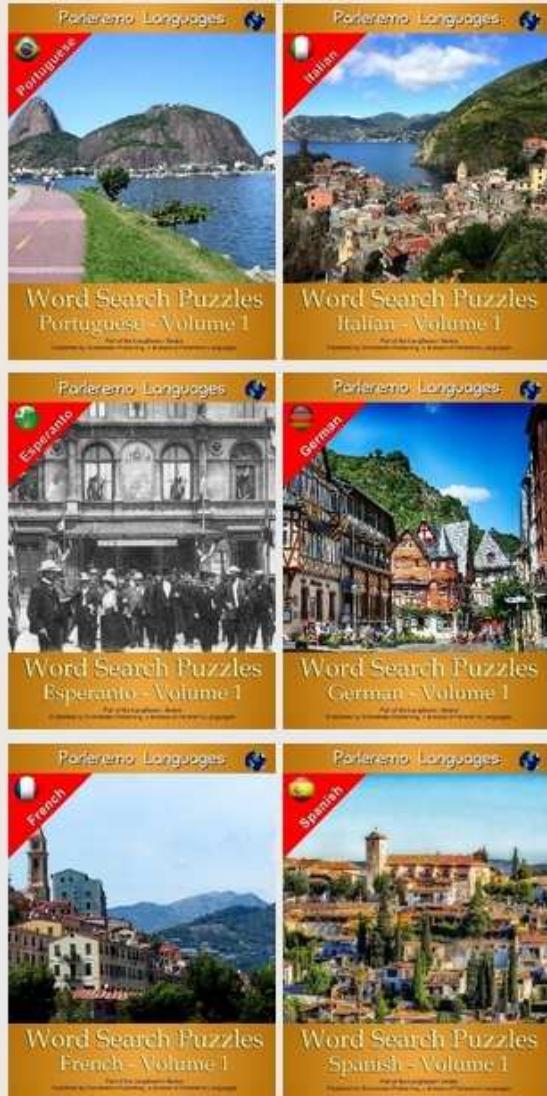
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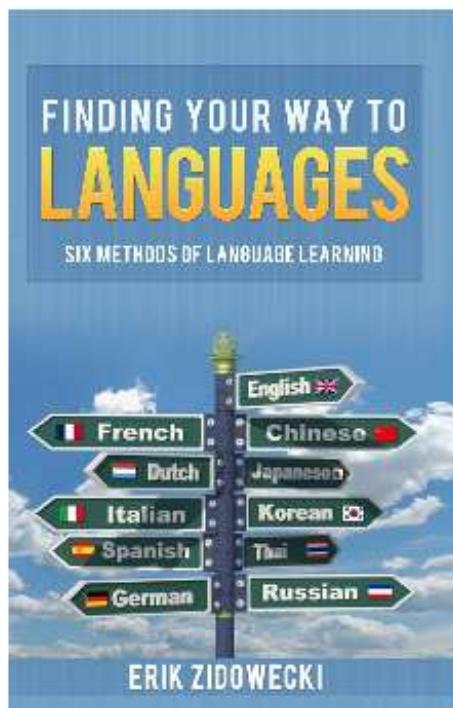


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# Book Look

### The A to Z of Learning German: 26 ideas to make learning German more exciting and fun!

by Angelika Davey

Language: English

Item Rating: 

All you German learners out there should pay particular attention to this month's book review. *The A to Z of Learning German: 26 ideas to make learning German more exciting and fun!* by Angelika Davey is available both as a printed book and a Kindle ebook on Amazon.

The author was born in Germany and spent most of her childhood in Lower Saxony until she moved to Wiltshire, England, in 1982. In 2006, she began her own German tuition and translation business. She became interested in writing her own books after writing blogs and translating other's books. In February 2013, she published her first book.

You can find her blog writings and translation services at *Angelika's German Tuition and Translation*. She can help you with learning German, doing business in German, having your website translated into German, and other services.

*The A to Z of Learning German* is broken into 26 parts, with each section's title beginning with a letter of the alphabet. That might sound obvious from the title, but it wasn't until I was several chapters in until I realized that. It is a subtle touch to the book which helps organize it.

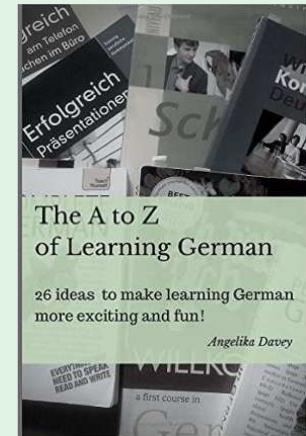
Each section also has a "Final thought" paragraph at the end, which gives a recap of what was discussed. This is another subtle touch which I liked, neatly tying the chapter into a clean summation.

Angelika's advice throughout the book ranges from the very basic and generic, which can be applied to most language learning, to the more precise and exact, relating specifically to German and German culture.

The first kind is expressed chapters like "Dare to speak", "Listen to some German as much as possible", "Write as much as possible", and "Read as much German as you can". In all the language learning advice books I have reviewed, these four tips - Speak, Listen, Write, and Read - are prominent, because they form the cornerstone not only of learning but of communication itself.

Naturally, Angelika discusses these points, but she also gives you more specific information with regards to learning German. The writing section suggests some software to aid in your practice, while the listening and reading sections give links and suggestions for free sources online to use.

In fact, the book is full of links to countless free online resources a learner could use for everything from listening to music to finding a language partner to help you. She continues this beyond the book by providing a page with all the links on her own website.



There were some new terms and concepts I learned from Angelika that really interested me. First is the term “stammtisch”, of which Angelika says “A Stammtisch in Germany is a reserved table for people who meet up regularly in a pub.” This sounds like a great way for people who are studying a language - or languages - to get together and share each other’s company as well as love of languages. That kind of experience makes me wish (not for the first time) to be living in Europe.

Personal experiences and anecdotes also litter the pages, giving the reader a more intimate look into Angelika’s life both as a teacher and language learner. A great example of this is when she talks about eating Zwieback (a crisp sweetened bread) as a child. It was a daily ritual she shared with her grandparents, and its inclusion in the book serves two primary purposes. First, it makes a close connection with the German culture that only a native is likely to experience normally. It also acts as a metaphor for looking forward to our daily routine of studying.

Although I am not German and have never seriously studied German, this section also surprisingly struck a chord with me because had learned the word “zwieback” in some of my cultural studies and loved not only the sound of the word but also the earthy quality of this traditional food. It was one of those gems I always look for in other cultures.

Another cultural reference is yodelling, and Angelika manages to find a use for the stereotypical German form of singing in learning German.

Perhaps the most important paragraph in the whole book to me is the one that addresses the feeling common to most language learners at one point or another over their frustration at being unable to pick up a language which seems to be so easy for the local children to learn:

“Don’t forget that German children hear the German language every day and nothing else. Adult students hear German once a week for an hour or more and when the lesson has finished, your own life takes over again. You work in English, you spend time with your family and friends speaking English. You are very busy and before you know it, your next German lesson is about to happen. Is it really surprising that you can’t remember what you learnt last week?”

There is a lot of great advice and material in *The A to Z of Learning German*, and even if you aren’t learning German, you are sure to come away with lots of ideas and tips for approaching your own language learning. The book is a pleasant read and I would certainly recommend it for your own personal library or getting it for a friend who is learning German! **PT**





## Languages Around the Globe

A community dedicated cultural exchange and awareness through language.

Santa Cayuga Afrique Riffaids Monta Gwich'in Mar  
Wik Yaqo Ainu River Orang Tuyaca Macushi Malak Taguvaya Sialao  
Armenian del Chocho Zoque Miwok Huave Mohave  
Crimean Khantry Tiwa Cuicatec Tatar Guarani Salish Cerapass  
Kayan Totonač Quichua Neo-Aramaic Upper Pomo Zapotec  
Bunu Mansi Mazatec Judeo-Arabic Gelao Saami Mohawk  
Forest Mansi Lower Agta Tlapanec Agta Tamazight  
Bera Franconian Tibetan Popoloc Chiricahua Tanaana Ma Saami  
Bay Golani Wapishana Macuna Apache Mixtec Creole Greek  
Chora Roman Ojibwe Macuna Apache Mixtec Creole Greek  
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Tundra Turk Otomi A Siona Patamora Purme Te'un  
Choctaw Mountain Mono  
Slavoy Siberian Ute  
Evenki Linea  
West Siberia  
Nenets Nenets  
Wanano  
Kumagaša  
Lingay  
Mony  
Mbaya Iaída  
Pame  
Pima-Tarim  
General  
Gwich'in Mar  
Sialao  
Mohave  
Cerapass  
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Tepehua  
Buryat  
Chiquitano  
Tucano  
Assiniboin  
Suriname  
Selkup huati  
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Birri  
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Greek  
Nenets  
Wanano  
Kumagaša  
Lingay  
Mony  
Mbaya Iaída  
Pame  
Pima-Tarim  
General

Languages Around the Globe is a social media community and blog for language enthusiasts, linguists and those looking to explore a world full of cultures through language exchange. Offering reviews on cost effective or free language learning resources including programs, software, and books and support other like-minded bloggers and organizations.

LATG is also dedicated to promoting awareness for endangered languages around the world and the cultures they embody. A language loses its last speaker every two weeks. Without proper documentation the knowledge and history contained within these words will be lost forever.

Come join our community at:

<http://www.latg.org>



# Where Are You?

This mystery location is both the largest city and capital of a European country which, until 1993, was combined with another country, forming a distinct nation. It has a population of over 1 million and the lowest unemployment rate in the European Union.

The city has an almost mythical founding. During the 8th century, a duchess and prophetess, along with her husband, arrived on a rocky cliff. There, she foresaw "a great city whose glory will touch the stars". She ordered a castle and town to be built on that spot, and gave it the name by which it is known today. Its name is derived from an old Slavic word meaning "ford", in reference to its position.

Over the next thousand years, that small town grew into a thriving city. It was an important place for trade where merchants from all of Europe settled, and it included a slave market.

The city particularly flourished during the 14th century reign Charles IV, the Holy Roman Emperor, and it was transformed into an imperial capital, making it the third largest city in Europe at the time. He also founded a university, which is today the oldest university in Europe, and began construction on a cathedral.

The city and country was invaded by members of the Warsaw Pact in 1968, but in 1993, both gained complete independence, becoming the capital and republic they are today.

**Can you name this location and country?**

**Last month's answer: Santiago, Chile**



# Basic Guide to Papiamentu

Papiamentu (or Papiamento) is a cool creole language, spoken on the islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao.

We are presenting a list of simple words and phrases in Papiamentu to help you show your island intelligence.



**Good morning.** Bon dia.

**Good afternoon.** Bon tardi.

**Good night.** Bon nochí.

**Hello.** Bon dia

**How are you?** Kon ta bai?

**Fine, thank you.** Bon, danki.

**What is your name?** Con bo nomber ta?

**My name is ...** Mi yama...

**Nice to meet you.** Dushi na enkontra abo.

**Goodbye** Ayó.

**Yes** Si

**No** Nò

**Please.** Por favor.

**Thank you (very much).**

(Masha) Danki.

**You're welcome.**

Di nada.

**I do not understand.**

Mi no ta komprondé.

**Where is the toilet?**

Unda e baño ta?

**Excuse me.  
(getting attention)**

Ablif?

**Excuse me.  
(begging pardon)**

Despensa.

**I can't speak Papiamento well.**

Ami nò papia papiamento bon.

**Do you speak English?**

Bo papia ingles?

**Help!**

Ousilio!

**Look out!**

Kuidou!

**This is a really nice magazine.**

Esaki ta un masha dashi revista

**You should share it with all  
your friends.**

Abo mester dividí e ku henter  
bo amigunan.



# Language Boat

immersion language learning

Language Boat is a blog about language learning in natural environments. Here you will find personal narratives about language learning experiences, in addition to tips, ideas, technical stuff like grammar, pronunciation, etc., cultural observations, and language resources.



[languageboat.com](http://languageboat.com)

# ITCHY FEET

A travel & language comic by Malachi Ray Rempen



ITCHY FEET is a weekly comic about travel, life in foreign countries, and learning new languages. Readers can expect an astonishing array of exaggerated facial expressions, humorous situations involving foreigners and foreign lands, and ordinary silliness.

Every Sunday!

By Malachi Ray Rempen.

[www.itchyfeetcomic.com](http://www.itchyfeetcomic.com)



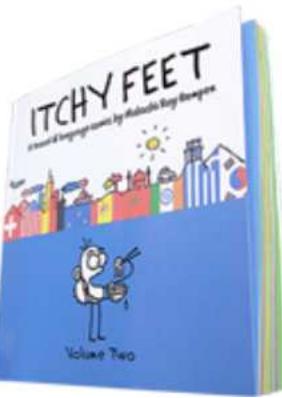
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## At A Glance

# General Language

# **1st International Collection of Tongue Twisters**

This site claims to be the world's largest collection of tongue twisters in many languages.

<http://www.uebersetzung.at/twister/index.htm>

### ***Multiple languages***



# Language Tandems

Scrabbin

Scrabbin is international and you can connect with native speakers from all over the world through email, voice chat or live!

<http://www.scrabbin.com/>

## ***Multiple languages***



# Specific Language

## Haiti hub

This site is the very first step in a much larger project aimed at helping people learn to speak and understand Haitian Creole.

<http://www.haitihub.com/>

---

*Haitian*



## Romanian 101

This site is designed as a starting point for people who want to learn more about the Romanian language.

<http://www.101languages.net/romanian/>

---

*Romanian*



## Newspapers & Magazines

### Cinematografo

Italian online magazine dedicated to film and film reviews.

<http://www.cinematografo.it/>

*Italian*



### Himma Daga

The first and only website which presents news in Gothic.

<https://airushimmadaga.wordpress.com/>

*Gothic*



### Bulgarian Factor.org

News from Bulgaria and abroad, technology, science, entertainment news, political news

<http://www.factor-news.net/>

*Bulgarian*



### 5abi

Punjabi language portal in the Gurmukhi script providing news, views and information about the Panjab and the Panjabi communities.

<http://www.5abi.com/>

*Punjabi*



## Credits

### Letter From the Editor

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Images:**

Pete: Travelling frog

### Broadening The Mind Travels The World

**Writer:** Olivier Elzingre

**Images:**

DFJW: Music Festival at the FGYO

Buyerlerdeqalardim: International students at Khazar

Hiroko Hayashi: International students with Japanese children

Pete: Ship travellers; Euro-band street musicians; Girl in Amsterdam

### The Secret Life of Diacritics

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Images:**

Kikos: Street café in Berlin

JR Goleno: Pinata party

京市 : Popular diacritics

Arbor: Typewriter keys

Mulder1982: Faroese sign

Tomasz Sienicki: Laptop keyboard with Scandinavian characters

-)~commonswiki: Arabic keyboard layout

Pete: Keyboard (title)

**Sources:**

- "Diacritic" Wikipedia <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diacritic>>

### There Are No Wrong And Right Gestures, Only Cultural Differences

**Writer:** Kendal Knetemann

**Images:**

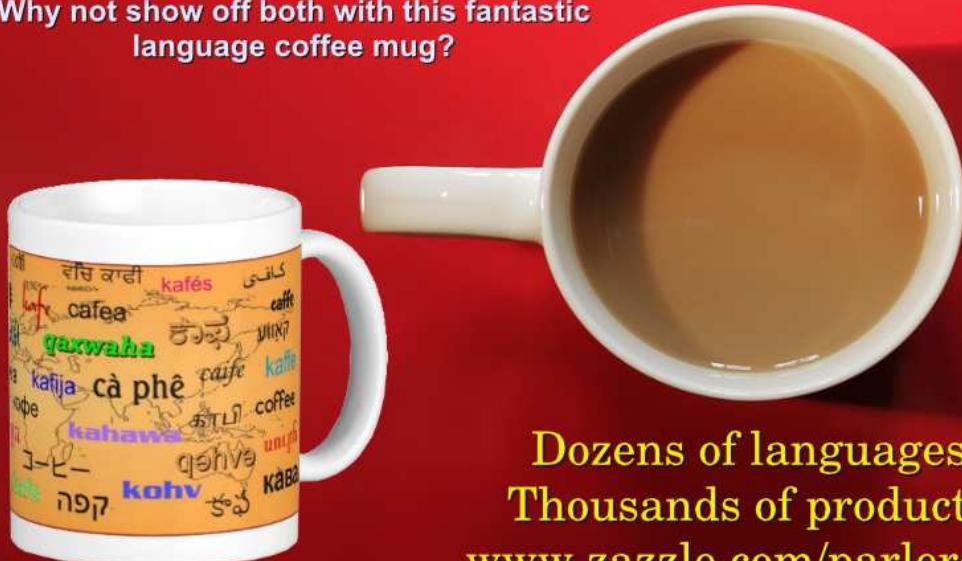
Jeremykemp, Moogle516, Night Gyr: Corona gesture

unknown: OK; beckon; thumbs up; finger snap

Pete: Girl with thumbs ups (title)

# In what language do you drink your coffee?

You love languages and you love coffee.  
Why not show off both with this fantastic  
language coffee mug?



Dozens of languages!  
Thousands of products!  
[www.zazzle.com/parleremo](http://www.zazzle.com/parleremo)

We have a variety of fun language  
goodies in our store. Not just mugs...  
we also have shirts, buttons,  
keychains, candy, chocolate, pillows,  
boxes, aprons, and tons more!



## Google Translate Exposed: The Truth Behind Everyone's Favorite Translator

**Writer:** Paul

**Images:**

Petey: screenshots

## At The Cinema - Queen

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Sources:**

- "Queen" Internet Movie Database <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3322420/>>

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## Where Are You?

**Writer:** Sonja Krüger

**Images:**

Petey: Mystery image

## Book Look

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

## Basic Guide to Papiamentu

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Images:**

Petey: Flamingo; Beach

## At A Glance

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

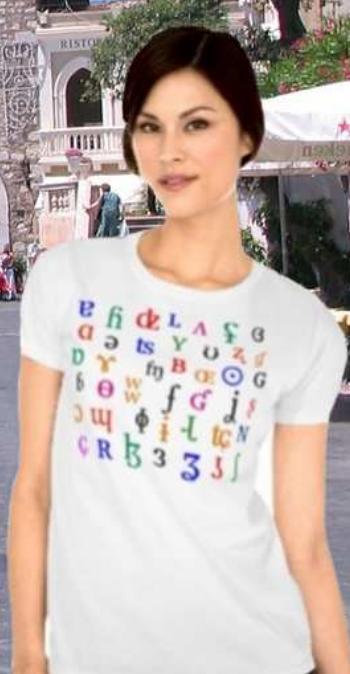
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A woman with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt featuring a colorful grid of IPA symbols, stands in a sunlit outdoor plaza. She is positioned on the right side of the frame, looking towards the camera. In the background, there's a stone archway, a building with a "RISTORANTE" sign, and a Heineken tent. Other people are walking in the distance.

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