

# Parrot Time

The Thinking of Speaking

Issue #32 March / April 2018

## Fiverr and Languages

The good, the bad, and the oddness of the talent merchant

### Why I Will Never Learn the IPA

Erik Zidowecki gives his view of the linguistic system

### Teddy Talks

Teddy Nee examines the island language of Bahasa





A woman in a blue sari is seen from the side, looking out from an arched window. The view outside shows a hillside with a fort on top, a long wall leading up the hill, and a dry well in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

Look beyond  
what you know

***Parrot Time* is your connection to languages, linguistics  
and culture from the Parleremo community.  
Expand your understanding.  
Never miss an issue.**

# Parrot Time

Parrot Time is a magazine covering language, linguistics and culture of the world around us.

It is published by Scriveremo Publishing, a division of Parleremo, the language learning community.

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The Internet has become the marketplace of the new Millineum. Pretty much anything can be bought online for a price.

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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ'ਚ ... ਕਾਏਾਂ ਕਰੀਦਾ?

*Learn a language,  
Make friends,  
Have fun!*



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## Letter From the Editor

If you have read a variety of magazines over the years, you will probably have noticed that the rules of formatting are very relaxed. In other words, there is little from one magazine to the next that seems familiar because they all have their own choices of layout, colours, graphics, etc.

In fact, there are probably only about two things which are common to most magazines. First, almost everyone has some kind of table of contents or index to help you find the sections you want more easily.



The other item is the "Letter from the Editor", which is a short, normally less than half a page, opinion piece at the start of the magazine. As you may have guessed, it is written most of the time by the Editor in Chief.

I have tried many times to research the reason for this commentary. I can find no historical reason for it, nor even a basic explanation of its purpose. It seems to be one of those universally accepted items that no one questions.

So I came up with my own explanation.

Now, the main job of the Editor is to keep track of everything that goes into each issue. They have the final word on what gets allowed, the formatting, etc. At the end of it all, this is basically a Wizard of Oz setup, a "don't look at the man behind the curtain", for the all-powerful Editor is a figure meant not to be seen, but to have their work seen in everything.

Facing the prospect of never having their voices heard unfiltered, the Editors created the *Letter from the Editor*, as their personal sounding board, in which they can say whatever is on their mind.

So, like the position of Editor itself is fixed, so is this writing outlet for them. being everywhere for no reason.

*Erik Zidowecki*

ERIK ZIDOWECKI  
EDITOR IN CHIEF



## Report: Single Source for Australia's Indigenous Languages

According to researchers in Australia, **the country's indigenous languages can be traced back to a single, common tongue.**

Published in the *Diachronica linguistics journal*, the report is the first to prove that all of the languages, more than 200 languages of which were spoken at the time of British colonization in 1788, derive from the same mother tongue, known as Proto-Australian. According to linguists, it was spoken about 10,000 years ago.

Linguists have long debated the subject in Australia.

"Until now, it was speculated that Australia was significantly more linguistically diverse than somewhere like Europe because it had not been proven that all Australian languages actually stemmed from the same lineage," said Associate Prof Mark Harvey from the University of Newcastle, Australia.

He went on to say that although there is an estimated 120 indigenous languages still existing, only about 20 are actively spoken today.

According to researchers, the language family had spread and diversified from a small area in northern Australia.

"Where you have the greatest diversity is where the original forms [of language] were, so your standard starting point would be the Kimberleys [in Western Australia] and the Top End [upper Northern Territory]".

The findings did not, however, fit well with the existing understanding of how the populations had moved across the continent, and this is important because people migration is usually regarded as a key factor in how languages spread, Associate Prof Harvey said.

"So there are still lots of questions about how we understand the pre-history of Australia," he said. **PT**

## North-East Board Created To Promote Doric

Ever heard of Doric? Quite possibly not. It is the name for Northeast Scots, which is the Scots language as spoken in the northeast of Scotland.

While it has an extensive body of literature in the form of poetry, ballads, and songs, it is not widely known.

**The North-East Scots Language Board has been formed in Aberdeen to promote Doric and the North-East Scots language.** It will be composed of representatives from Aberdeen's two universities and north east councils and will aim to promote other local dialects from the north east of Scotland as well.

One goal is to work with schools to make the dialect more accessible to children, and part of that is a Scots language course being launched at the University of Aberdeen.

Thomas McKean, director of the *Elphinstone Institute at the University of Aberdeen*, said "It's important that young people see themselves - and the language they speak - reflected back at them in public life. Just as children need to see diverse gender and race role models, they need to know that someone who speaks their native language can be a success in any walk of life."

"We want to open doors for the language that it hasn't been able to walk through before." **PT**



# Mark Your Calendar

## Polyglot Gathering 2018

**May 30 - June 3, 2018  
Bratislava, Slovakia**

The Polyglot Gathering is an informal event which takes place once a year and brings together polyglots (people who speak several languages) and language enthusiasts from all over the world. It is a five-day event with lectures, workshops and social activities for everyone who loves and enjoys languages.

If you think learning languages is a great leisure activity and you are learning new and new ones in your free time, where else will you find 400-500 people with this passion?

For more information and tickets visit [www.polyglotbratislava.com](http://www.polyglotbratislava.com)

## Montreal Language Festival

**August 21 – 26, 2018  
Concordia University,  
Montreal, Quebec**

The Montreal Language Festival, or "Lang-Fest" for short, is North America's premier celebration and conference for language learners and enthusiasts of all levels. Lang-Fest 2017 will take place at Concordia University's downtown campus in beautiful, eclectic, multilingual Montreal, Quebec.

LangFest attendees learn from and gain access to world-class language gurus, entrepreneurs, educators and industry professionals. You will be introduced to cutting edge tools, techniques and technologies to inform and inspire how you learn and use languages or teach them to others.

For more information and tickets visit [montreal.langfest.org](http://montreal.langfest.org)

## Polyglot Conference 2018

**October 27 - 28, 2018  
Ljubljana, Slovenia**

The Polyglot Conference is open to anyone and everyone who loves languages. The events are designed for anyone who loves language: teachers, interpreters, translators, students, scholars, language bloggers, linguists, writers and people who simply want to know more about languages.

You will meet other language enthusiasts, discuss new learning resources and techniques, learn about new linguistic research, speak in different languages to the many attendees from different parts of the world, and generally spend a weekend focusing on language in a way that most of us are unable to do in our normal lives.

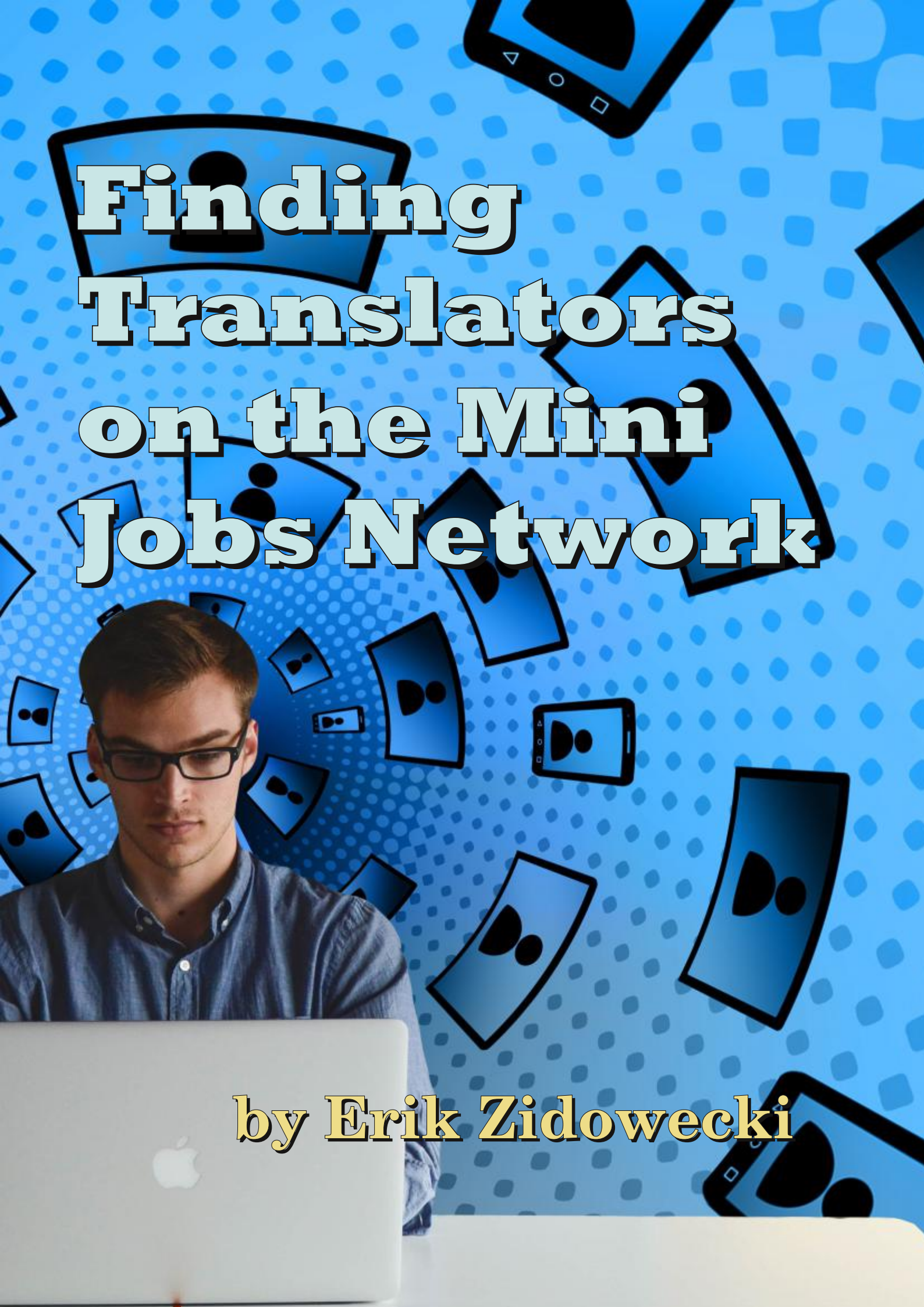
For more information and tickets visit [polyglotconference.com](http://polyglotconference.com)



# **Fiverr and Languages:**







# **Finding Translators on the Mini Jobs Network**

**by Erik Zidowecki**

**E**ver wanted to get a cover made for your newly completed ebook? Or how about having a logo designed for your new blog?

If you aren't graphically literate or perhaps just want something more "professional" than you feel you could make, you will be turning to the internet to see who might help you with these and other jobs. One of the biggest and most popular places to look is Fiverr.

Fiverr is essentially a small jobs marketplace where people are offering their skills, be it with graphics, music, video making, speaking, writing, or even being a digital assistant, to clients in the form of small work units, called "gigs".

(This is an English slang term that normally refers to a small job and is most commonly used with a band referring to a chance for them to play to an audience. It has nothing to do with the numerical "gig", as in "gigabyte".)

For example, you might need that great cover for your ebook. So you search on Fiverr

for a book cover designer. You will find a variety of sellers, each with their own profiles and offerings. You find one that looks good, who will make you a cover for \$5. He has other "gigs" he could do as well, like proofread your book, format it, or even write a review of it, and each of those could also cost \$5.

As you may have concluded by now, the site is called "Fiverr" because the most basic job will cost you \$5. A gig could cost more, like \$10, \$15, etc., as long as it is some increment of five. Many, as I did, falsely believed by the name that all jobs were just \$5, but I've seen gigs as high as \$135.

### **My First Encounter**

So, a few years ago, I had completed my first ebook and designed my own cover for it. When I asked a group of people about how the cover looked, they let me know! I ended up completely redoing the cover with their advice and had the book published on Amazon. It did moderate sales for a while, then stopped.

Now, if you have ever asked someone what





you could do to improve sales of your book, your probably know their immediate response, without even looking at it, will be “change the cover” or even “pay someone to make a cover” (the last being an insult if you made your own). I ignored that and decided to try using my original cover instead.

After that, I sold a few more copies, but then nothing again. Frustrated, I decided I should do what people say and go to Fiverr to find someone to make me a cover.

At this point in time, I had discovered CreateSpace, which is a self-published division of Amazon. You create a PDF of your book, including title and copyright pages, and a PDF cover, submit them, and they get sold as printed books. When someone orders one from Amazon, it is printed by CreateSpace and sent to the person, and you make a commission.

After I had made some books with CreateSpace, I figured I would sell my ebook as a printed book too, and I would need the cover to match the ebook one. This is what I was looking for on Fiverr: someone who could make a cover for both ebook and printed.

Having no experience at all, I contacted one of the first sellers I found offering to make book covers.

I asked her about making a book cover, for both ebook and CreateSpace, as well as a “3D” version, which is a picture of the cover made to look like a real book (a common practice among ebook people, since their books have no physical form, you want to give the illusion it does when marketing).

She replied that her normal rates are 3 possible covers, at \$10 each, another \$10 for the 3D version, and a final \$10 for the CreateSpace cover. Fifty dollars! I was shocked, but like I said, I was new to this and didn't know what to expect, so I went along with this and paid the money. Then I sent the informa-



tion I knew she would need: title and author for basic cover, dimensions and number of pages along with back cover text for the CreateSpace cover (which are *very* picky, since you are creating the front, back and spine of a book).

She came back in a few days with 3 possible ebook covers. They were good, but nothing I couldn't do on my own. I picked one and asked for a “revision”, which is Fiverr lingo for “change”. Some sellers offer unlimited revisions, some limited, some none. I asked for a single font change to the subtitle, to make it the same as my name on the book. She did that but also moved the subtitle to a different place. That was my first sign that things might not go right.

Before she did the revision, she had made a 3D version, so that no longer matched the final version, rendering it pretty much useless. Then she gave her CreateSpace version, which was just the cover with the background colour extended a few hundred pixels to the left and a line from what I had given her randomly slapped on it. It was completely unusable and I realized she had no idea what was required and could not fulfil my request.

Now, if I had more experience with Fiverr at that point or less experience with making my covers, I may have pressed the situation. Instead, I decided to cut my losses and make



do with what I had.

At this point, you accept the Seller completed the job, and you are asked to leave a rating and a review. My seller begged me for a good rating and I gave her now, even if she messed up half the stuff. Then you are asked if you want to tip the seller and leave a personal message with them. At this point, I had already spent over \$50, so I had no desire to tip, especially for unfinished work.

### Try Again

Now, I didn't tell you all that to complain about the Seller, but rather to show that if you don't have some idea of how things are done, you can easily get trapped in a bad transaction.

That experience left a bad taste in my mind regarding Fiverr, and so I put it behind me. However, a few months later, I realized I really wanted to have a graphic artist design for me a good logo for the parent company of this magazine, Scriveremo Publishing. This time, I was a little more picky and looked

through people's work before deciding on an artist. I found one who would do it for \$10, so I paid and waited for the results.

Two things about payment. First, the main method is Paypal, so you should have a Paypal account to use the system. Second of all, each time you make a payment, you have to pay \$1 extra. This goes to Fiverr, which is one of the ways they make money off hosting all of this. So not only are Fiverr gigs not just five dollars each, but they aren't even five.

Within a few days, this seller came back with 4 beautiful logos. With some difficulty, I selected one and asked for a few changes. She had no problem making the revisions and I ended up with a wonderful new logo. After that, I was able to leave a tip gladly with a promise that I would come back to her for more work. And indeed, I have, twice, and might a few more times.

So it is possible as well to find exactly what you want for a good price on Fiverr. It really depends on finding a good Seller and some luck.



## What About Languages?

Fair enough question. I had been needing to have a large number of basic words / items (almost one thousand) translated into different languages along with their parts of speech (masculine, feminine, adjective, verb, etc. as abbreviations) and definite articles (when applicable) proofread. Up until that time, I had been begging others to help, which severally limited me. Suddenly, one day, it struck me that I could not only get the list proofread by natives through Fiverr, I could get my basic list of words translated from scratch!

From the two previous interactions, you can guess that the results for getting people to help with languages were going to be rather hit-or-miss, and it was. If I were to explain each encounter, this article would go on for a few more pages, so I will try to condense the experience into easier general observations with anecdotes.

## The Ones that Worked

Right off, I can assure you that it is possible to get good translations from natives on Fiverr. I have no idea what the normal translation rates are among translators, but those don't matter because everyone on Fiverr is free to set their own. The Sellers usually offered a few different gigs with a certain number of words being the limit. Like if I wanted some Spanish translated, one Seller might have three gigs: one for \$5 and doing 200 words, the second for \$10 and offering 500 words, the third for \$15 and doing 1000 words. A second Seller might offer a single gig for \$5 to do 500 words, and each additional \$5 gig would be another 500 words. In other words, you needed to shop around. There were no fixed prices or rules.

For what I was asking, I got several lists proofread or translated on a budget of \$5 or \$10 dollars with no problems. A few times,



the person didn't quite understand about the parts of speech, since I am sure that is not something they normally get asked for, but they were able to accommodate my request.

When I requested a list for Danish, the Seller could not understand when I talked about common or neuter nouns for the parts of speech. He had never heard of those terms before but asked if it was related to adding "en" or "et" to the nouns. Once that was cleared up, he was able to do the translation easily.

There was one Seller, however, who simply could not understand my request. I had put in my list to be translated into Latin. She took a few days, gave me the list, but it didn't have the parts of speech. After a few more back and forths, she finally gave me a completed list, with parts of speech for English. Then she started nitpicking the wording of the initial order and I knew it was time to cut my losses and accept the job as completed.

## The Ones that Didn't

A fair number of my requests failed, sadly. Some people looked at the number of words and said they would not do it for what I was asking and wanted much more money. That is perfectly fair; this is an open market and we are free to haggle and look for other sellers. In some cases, one seller would say the job couldn't be done for less than \$25 only to

have the next Seller I ask say he could easily do it for \$5, no problem.

One of the early jobs I tried to get done had me request of a Seller if proofreading the list of English and another language could be done. When starting any gig, you have the option of simply submitting the work requirements to a specific gig and paying for it or you can contact the person first. Because of the strange nature of my request, I always contact the Seller first and politely ask if they can do it for the budget I propose. Then they can politely turn it down rather than initiating some kind of dispute through the Fiverr system.

This Seller said it could, no problem, but would take several days. A few days passed and I heard nothing, then one day I got heated message from him, accusing me of misrepresenting the job. He said there were over 4000 words to translate. I looked again at my list to see how he got that number. I figured out he had run a “word count” check on the entire document, which would have counted all the words, in both languages, all parts of speech and all definite articles. It also counted every equal sign (=) as a separate word. That was a particular problem since I used multiple equal signs to make dividing lines in the text.

I told him that his count was off, so he started complaining about my usage of the word “word”.

Now, I don't know how translators define it, but there are in the world things which require two or three written words to describe. In American English we have things like “living room”, “salad bowl”, and “garbage can”. These might be a single word in another language, like Italian, where they are “soggiorno”, “salatiera”, and “pattumiera”, respectively. Conversely, we have Italian “stanza de bagno” for English “bathroom”. So it is easy to dicker over how many “words” one has to translate.

I pointed out that he had agreed to do the job at the rate, and if he couldn't, then why did he take it. He countered that he had trusted my accuracy with the description.

By now, I knew he just wanted me to pay



more or get out of it. If I paid more, the job would have been done in bad blood, since I would have felt like I was being extorted. So I agreed that we just cancel the job. He gave me a bad review as a Buyer and I gave him a bad review as a Seller.

Lesson there: when a Seller starts complaining about the clarity of instructions *after* they have taken on the job and been working on it, that means they don't want to do it and want out without looking like *they* were the problem. Basically, trying to make it look like you violated the contract, not them.

### No Words

Then I had some that, for some reason, refuse to or just couldn't complete the translations into their supposedly native language because “words didn't exist”. Now, I would expect that kind of complaint from a “dead” language like Latin, but in any language, if new things are created and require a word, then the language either takes a loan word or creates a new one. That is the only way for the people to talk about it. Even if it is some weird combination, like “box with sound” or “stick to make markings”.

So when I asked for something I didn't think was too exotic, Tagalog, I got the job mostly completed, but about 100 words left blank, with the Seller claiming “they didn't



exist in Tagalog”. These were words like “curtain”, “owl”, “swimming pool”, and “species”.

This gave me a particular problem. If the Seller claims they don’t exist, then she obviously can’t give me them, so there is nothing more I can get out of her. So I had to accept the incomplete job. I could look up the remaining words and hope I got the right ones, but I couldn’t be *sure* then, so I would need to find someone to proofread them, taking me back to Fiverr.

So I gave the list to another Seller to translate into Tagalog, and she came back with the same claim, *but mostly on different words!* So I took both lists and combined them to fill in most of the gaps, but now I was even more fearful that they contained errors if both Sellers were this incompetent.

Then I tried Swahili, and that Seller had the same excuse!

### Machine Translations

The biggest problem and fear with working with anyone on translations, through Fiverr or some other business, is whether they are really capable or are using some kind of software to do a machine translation, like Google Translate. It is not hard to translate my list through Google Translate, and in fact, I often do to get a baseline of possibilities, then go through each one with online dictionaries to proof things. That is, I do what when I can’t get a natives help.

As you can guess, some of the translators on Fiverr are doing just that. One list I got translated had a few oddities in it which I noticed (having used GT a number of times) and so I tested it. Sure enough, the Seller had simply passed it through that. When I pointed out that I need the parts of speech, the Seller got defensive, saying they couldn’t do that. Gee, I wonder why.

Even stranger, some *promote* that they will be doing a “straight forward machine translation”. In other words, you are paying them to pass your stuff through GT. That is insane, to me. But then again, so is paying someone to use a Facebook group, which is free.



### Other Jobs

My luck with doing other jobs was also a mix of good and bad. Going back to the Seller who did my new logo, I also got her to do a mascot (drawn character used in promoting) for my book series and a new logo for my main site. Both of those came out wonderfully. I got a mascot for another series done by another Seller and those also came out beautifully.

Taking my first logo, I had it turned into an intro animation for videos. Five, actually, so we have a choice as to which to use. Loved those! On the not so great, I had a video ad made for one of my books and it was obviously made with some automated program for the Seller had little control over the appearance and it came out awkward. I also paid people to promote my books and while they seem to have posted them in many places, I saw no resulting rise in sales. Take that as you will.

### Conclusion

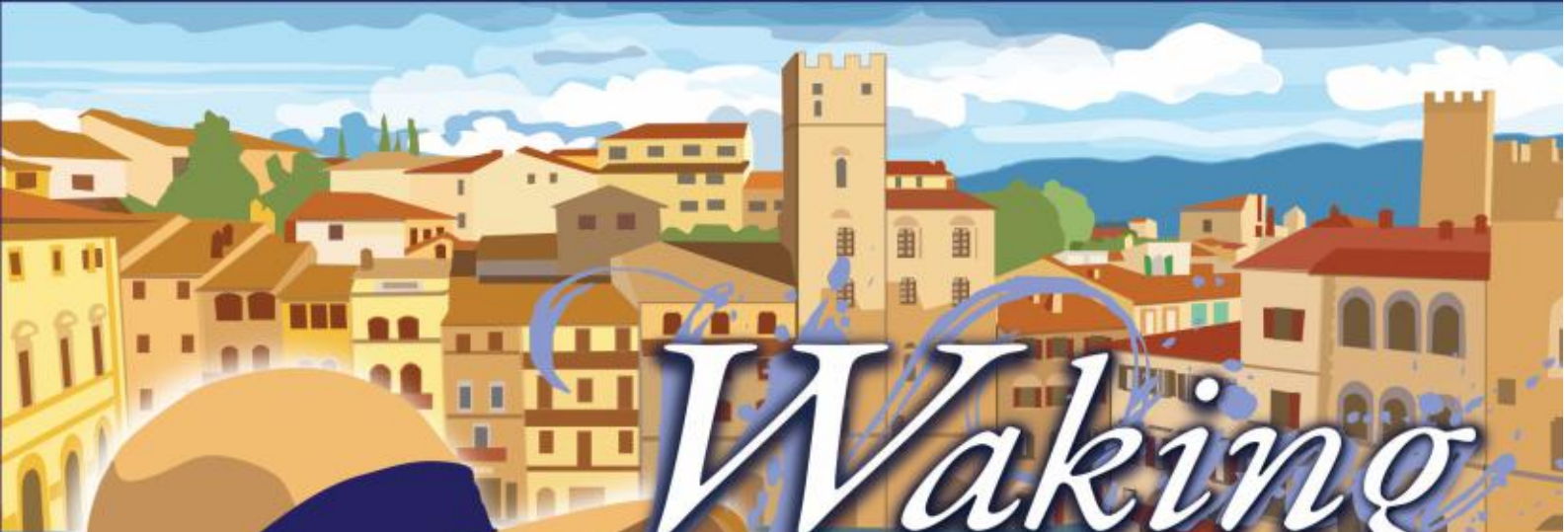
Fiverr is good for getting extra work done from other people, especially things you can’t do for yourself. But there are no guarantees that you will get what is advertised or what you paid for, so be prepared for some frustration as well. Some Sellers really want to help, some are incompetent, and some are just out to scam you. I have noticed a rather high turn over rate, however, so I don’t think the scamming ones stay long.

Good luck on your own projects. **PT**



With languages, you are at home  
**ANYWHERE**





# Waking Isabella

*...because beauty can't sleep forever*

*by Melissa Muldoon*



Waking Isabella is a story about uncovering hidden beauty that, over time, has been lost, erased, or suppressed. It also weaves together several love stories as well as a few mysteries. Nora, an assistant researcher, is a catalyst for resolving the puzzle of a painting that has been missing for decades. Set in Arezzo, a small Tuscan town, the plot unfolds against the backdrop of the city's antique trade and the fanfare and pageantry of its medieval jousting festival. While filming a documentary about Isabella de' Medici—the Renaissance princess who was murdered by her husband—Nora begins to connect with the lives of two remarkable women from the past. Unraveling the stories of Isabella, the daughter of a fifteenth-century Tuscan duke, and Margherita, a young girl trying to survive the war in Nazi-occupied Italy, Nora begins to question the choices that have shaped her own life up to this point. As she does, hidden beauty is awakened deep inside of her, and she discovers the keys to her creativity and happiness. It is a story of love and deceit, forgeries and masterpieces—all held together by the allure and intrigue of a beautiful Tuscan ghost.

"Waking Isabella" by Melissa Muldoon is a must-read for all fans of Italy, history, romance and intrigue. Eccellente! Muldoon magically weaves together the lives of Nora, Isabella and Margherita, spanning the course of many centuries, into a story that will mesmerize and haunt readers long after the last page is read. - Sheri Hoyte for Reader Views

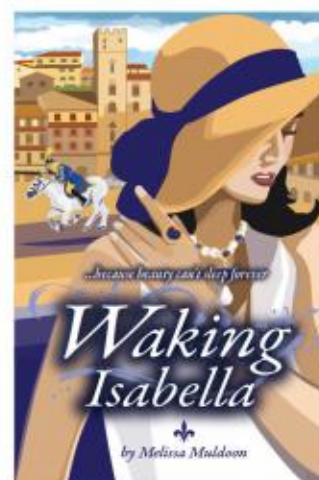
A latter-day Renaissance woman, Melissa Muldoon blends fact and fantasy, history and art, English and Italian in this richly woven tapestry. Waking Isabella, carries us from 16th-century Italy to modern-day Arezzo, from palace plots to wartime intrigues. A perfect read for Italophiles, art lovers and armchair romantics. Brava! - Dianne Hales, "La Bella Lingua"

Renaissance princess Isabella de' Medici steals the limelight as her influence transforms lives even across centuries. A beautiful story filled with intrigue, mystery, art, and redemption, Melissa Muldoon succeeds in transporting the reader to Tuscany with all its cultural festivities, history and people. A treat for lovers of historical fiction, the beauty of art, and the challenge of starting a new life and rediscovering love. - Italy Book Tours



Available in print and e-book on Amazon and other book vendors

Visit: [www.MelissaMuldoon.com](http://www.MelissaMuldoon.com) for more information





Why I Will  
Never Learn  
the IPA







**by Erik Zidowecki**

*This article was previously published in the "View From the Town" by Erik Zidowecki.*

I love alphabets. They were the reasons I first became interested in languages. I saw writing in Cyrillic and Mayan and was astounded to think that not only did that writing mean something, but that people actually communicate with it.

So I started picking up alphabets. I taught myself the Greek and Russian. Then I looked at other ways of representing the English alphabet and learned the military alphabet (a means of spoken spelling using words to clearly communicate the letters, like "ACD173" would be "Alpha Charlie Delta One Seven Three") and the American Sign Language alphabet. I even attempted to learn Morse Code, but didn't get too far with that.

I am telling you this so that you understand that I don't have a problem with alphabets in general. I love them. I do, however, have a strong dislike for the International Phonetic Alphabet (sometimes called the International Phonemic Alphabet), or IPA. It is a collection of various symbols which are combined to show, in writing, how words in any language are meant to be pronounced.

It is nothing personal. I know it has a purpose and that some people love it and use it all the time. I won't, though, and here are my main reasons:

## 1) It is unwieldy

The first issue is that it is made up symbols which would often be more at home on the pages of a scientific journal or mathematicians publication than on the pages of a language course book. While the letters are supposedly taken from Latin and Greek, many have been altered from

their source, inverted, or just completely made up.

Why is this a problem? Because this is the age of computers, where almost everything is transmitted and stored in a digital fashion, usually requiring input from a keyboard. It is common enough now for people to have multiple layouts so they can type in different languages, IPA setups are harder to find and install. Even if you find one which works, the number of fonts the symbols can be displayed in is very limited.

Now, to address this, years ago another notation system was created, specifically for representing IPA on computers. The Extended Speech Assessment Methods Phonetic Alphabet (X-SAMPA) is a way of entering IPA into a text system using just basic ASCII characters from the keyboard. However, it wasn't used as much once IPA was integrated with UNICODE.

## 2) It is overkill for most people

While the IPA does fulfil its role as a writing system for sound rather well, most people will never need it enough to learn it. Unless you are a linguist or a really dedicated language learner, learning another system to understand sounds is too much of a hassle.

Most of the time, we can get a basic concept of pronunciation from a written ex-





[ɪntəˈnæʃənət]  
[ĩrəˈnæʃinət]

planation and comparisons to the language we already speak. I know this makes many linguists cringe at seeing these approximations, but they are usually good enough. The learner supplements this with audio courses, media like radio or TV, or simply talking to another speaker. For this reason, most language course books and phrasebooks do not show any IPA at all. Even many dictionaries no longer contain IPA guides, for their publishers realize that the average person wouldn't know what to do with it.

### 3) It is hard to agree on

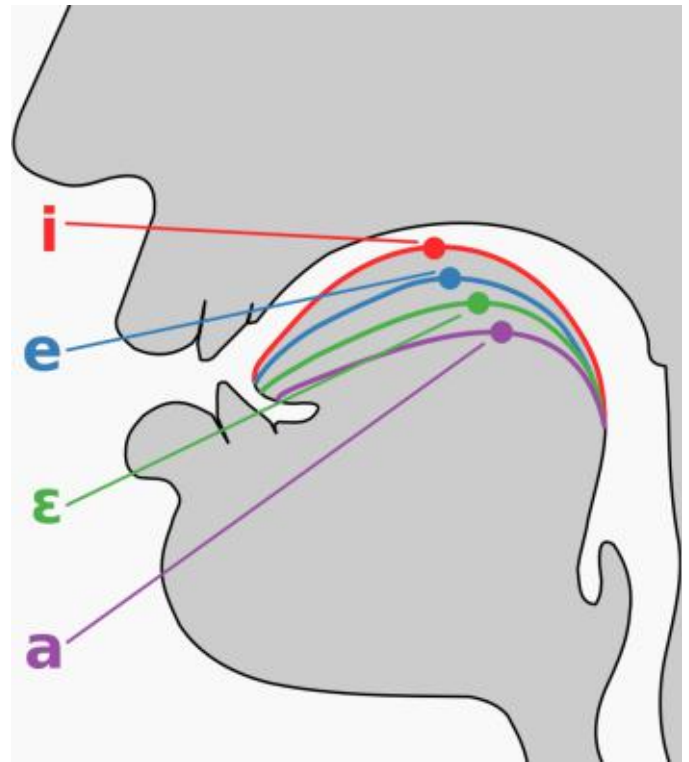
The IPA is standard. Mostly. That is, you can use the symbols to represent the sounds on a consistent basis.

However, pronunciation itself can be a tricky thing to nail down. How many times have you sat across from a native speaker of the language you are trying to learn and take turns at repeating the same word over and over? You are being corrected because you haven't been able to quite get that proper tone or inflection, and you are unable to hear a difference.

This sounds (pardon the pun) like a great place for IPA to be used. If you could just see the notation, you would be able to say it properly, right?

Maybe. But everyone hears things slightly differently and interpret the ways the letters should be applied in similarly diverse ways. What may sound like a simple word to convert to IPA is likely to start an argument with linguists. Now include local dialect differences or speaker accents, and you've got even more confusion.

I know many IPA lovers at this point are probably saying I am wrong (or worse) under their breath, but my own experience is that



people will argue over the precise notation for even the simplest of words.

For example, a while ago I wanted to make an “IPA Rules” written in IPA mug, figuring it would make a cool present for linguists. I asked a group of people how to properly write it. What I got was a heated debate among several people over the proper notation. Even when I made a graphic from one of the versions being tossed around, there was a disagreement about the font being used. I finally gave up.

That doesn't mean there isn't an answer. If you were to read the IPA transcription for the word “language”, you would probably get close enough to the proper sound to be accepted. I can almost guarantee you, though, that someone would be complaining about the representation being wrong.

So, if you are going to be having people picking over the IPA, why not just use a language approximation instead, like I mentioned before?

This is all my own opinion and personal experience, and so while I am sure that some will be nodding their heads in agreement with what I have said, others will be ready to correct my observations. I welcome both kinds of comments! **PT**

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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.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white striped sleeveless dress and red high-heeled sandals, stands in a street market. She is holding a pink bag and standing next to a red suitcase. To her left is a purple suitcase. In the background, there are several scooters and a yellow sign with Chinese characters. A white shopping bag with 'HEATTECH JAPAN TECHNOLOGY' is on the ground to her right.

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# Can You Speak Bahasa?



I have heard westerners asking me “Can you speak Bahasa?”. To my understanding, the word “Bahasa” means “language” in the Indonesian language. This word can be used to mean many kinds of languages, such as *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language), *bahasa pemrograman* (programming language), *bahasa isyarat* (sign language), *bahasa tubuh* (body language), *bahasa asing* (foreign language), etc.

What they mean by “to speak Bahasa” is actually “to speak the Indonesian language”. Indonesian is known widely as *Bahasa* in the western world. As an Indonesian, I find it a bit strange and I don’t know how it became known as that. No one ever knows why.

But remember that *\_Bahasa\_* is a Sanskrit loanword in the Indonesian language, so basically any languages that have adopted the translation of “language” from Sanskrit will have the similar-sounding word, such as Khmer, Thai, Javanese, and many more.

## Brief Introduction

Indonesian language (shortened as *Indonesian*) evolved from the Old Malay language which was used as the lingua franca for traders in the surroundings of Sumatera Island and Malay Peninsula. The living sister language of Indonesian is Malay language (shortened as *Malay*), spoken in Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam.

The speakers of Malay and Indonesian generally can understand one another, sometimes with a little bit of guessing, but they don’t need so much effort to comprehend because both languages share so many similarities.

The differences occurred predominantly in vocabularies and accents. Malay adopted mostly English loanwords, while Indonesian adopted mostly Dutch loanwords. You can see some examples in the list below.

These differences occurred because Malaysia was governed by the British, and Indonesia was governed by the Dutch. Because of this reason, both Indonesian and Malay languages evolved according to their respective countries’ history.

Malay	English	Indonesian	Dutch
Mesej	Message	Kantor	Kantoor
Lori	Lorry	Bioskop	Bioscoop
Televisyen	Television	Televisi	Televisie
Akaun	Account	Rekening	Rekening
Krismas	Christmas	Apartemen	Appartement
Beg	Bag	Tas	Tas
Besen	Basin	Wastafel	Wastafel
Bilion	Billion	Milyar	Miljard



**Writing System**

Indonesian is one of several Asian languages that adopted the Latin alphabet. Indonesia (called the Dutch East Indies before independence) adopted an alphabet that was based on the Dutch alphabet. It was called the Soewandi Spelling System.

In order to harmonize the spelling differences in Indonesian and Malay languages, Indonesia and Malaysia adopted a spelling reform plan. As a result, Indonesia had *Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan* (Perfected Spelling System) and Malaysia had *Ejaan Rumi Baharu* (New Rumi Spelling). This new spelling system led to the changing of some Indonesian letters. For example:

Old	New
oe	u
tj	c
dj	j
é	e
j	y
nj	ny
sj	sy
ch	kh

Besides Latin alphabet, an alphabet based on Arabic script is also used, mostly in Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore. It is called the Jawi alphabet. You can see the Jawi alphabet in the banknote of Malaysia, signboards, product labels, etc. **PT**



*Teddy is an avid language learner, blogger, engineer, and a collector. He has a dream to make this world a better place through language learning. Apart from learning languages, he also likes reading and playing ukulele. You can talk with him in Medan Hokkien, Indonesian, English, Chinese, Spanish, Esperanto, Portuguese, and French. Visit his blog at [www.neslanguageblog.com](http://www.neslanguageblog.com)*





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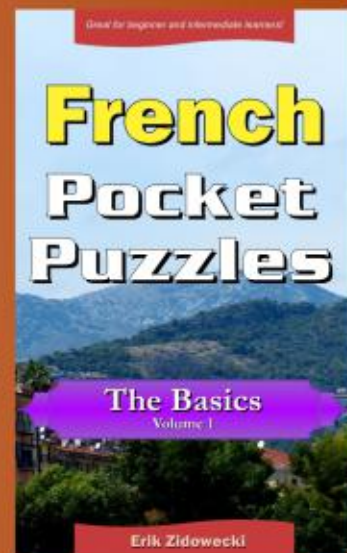
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# In FOCUS

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These photos are from Kendal Knetmann and show parts of Yellowstone National Park, USA



View of the mountains in Yellowstone National Park



A herd of Bison grazing on the plain



A lone deer is also out on the plain



Metal walkways take visitors over rougher terrain





Yellowstone National Park, USA



View of one of the waterfalls of the park



One of the many exhaust holes found all over the park



Care for a dip in one of the natural hot springs?



A geyser explodes, shooting boiling water into the air



Want to see your own pictures here?

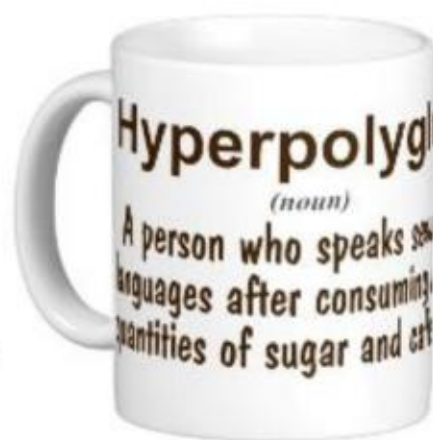
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**The shop has a wide variety of products.** Shirts, mugs, buttons, mouse pads, stickers, pillows, chocolate ... and a whole lot more. Shopping with Zazzle is highly flexible, because you can customize most projects with your own colors while selecting from a variety of styles.



**We've also got dozens of designs,** some for language in general, like the IPA shirt above, and some for specific languages, like this Polish button. And if you have an idea for something you would like to see in our store, please let us know!

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Melissa Muldoon is the “*Studentessa Matta*”. In Italian, “*matta*” means “crazy” or “impassioned”. She promotes the study of Italian language and culture through the dual-language blog [StudentessaMatta.com](http://StudentessaMatta.com). She has a B.A. in fine arts, art history and European history from Knox College and a master’s in art history from the University of Illinois. She has studied painting, language and art history in Florence.

*Dreaming Sophia* is a fanciful look at art history, but it is also a culmination of personal stories and insights resulting from Melissa’s experiences traveling and living in Italy, as well as her involvement and familiarity with the Italian language, painting and art history. Find more about *Dreaming Sophia* on the website, Pinterest and Facebook page:s



*Available on Amazon in print & E-book*  
**DreamingSophiaBook.com**



The world is full of languages, which in turn are full of proverbs and proverbial phrases. Some of them are very culture related, some instead very universal. The language of choice this time is Swedish. In Swedish the language is called “svenska”.

Swedish is the main language spoken in Sweden and the official language there and in Finland. It is the native language of the majority of Swedes. There are also five official minority languages: Finnish, Meänkieli, Sami, Romani and Yiddish. The number of native speakers is about 9,2 million. There are native speakers even in Estonia, although there the amount of speakers has declined drastically over the years, and only a handful remain to this day.

Swedish belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, and more specifically, to the North Germanic language sub-group. Danish, Norwegian and Swedish are known for their high degree of mutual intelligibility, and some argue that they could be considered dialects of a common Scandinavian language, but the matter is not simple, as they all have their separate orthographies and everything else defining an autonomous language. The Swedish dialect spoken in Finland has a pretty distinct pronunciation and some unique and archaic vocabulary, and it's called Finland Swedish, finlandssvenska. Considering the current amount of native speakers in Finland, 5,4 %, the language has a strong status there. Finland has a long history with Sweden.

The alphabet is Latin, with the unusual letter å. Swedish has two grammatical genders, common (en form) and neuter (ett form), and nouns have singular, plural, indefinite and definite forms. The form of an adjective defining a noun depends on the form of the noun.

Being an Indo-European language with Christian history, many of the proverbs, ordspråk, seem to be of international heritage. Many of them also have a direct equivalent in the neighbouring Finnish language which is not related but has been in close contact with Swedish throughout the history.

Here are some selected proverbs:



## 1. Av skadan blir man vis.

Translation:

From injury a person learns.

Direct equivalent in Finnish:

Vahingosta viisastuu.

Meaning:

People learn from their mistakes.



## 2. Av barn, fyllon och dårar får man höra sanningen.

Translation:

From children, drunkards and madmen people hear the truth.

English equivalent:

Children, fools and drunken men tell the truth.

Meaning:

In Finnish this proverb commonly mentions only children but otherwise it's the same:  
Lasten suusta totuus kuullaan.



## 3. Blod är tjockare än vatten.

Translation:

Blood is thicker than water.

Direct equivalent in Finnish:

Veri on vettä sakeampaa.

Meaning:

Family ties are stronger than other types of relationships.



## 4. Den som tiger han samtycker.

Translation:

Who stays quiet, consents.

Direct equivalent in Finnish:

Vaikeneminen on myöntymisen merkki.

Meaning:

No comments and therefore no opposition is interpreted as consent when new ideas are presented.



### 5. Även en blind höna kan hitta ett korn.

Translation:

Even a blind hen can find a grain.

Equivalent in English:

Even a blind pig may occasionally pick up an acorn.

In Finnish the proverb is like in Swedish, about hens, not pigs:

Kyllä sokeakin kana joskus jyvän löytää.

Finally one very Swedish proverb:

### 6. Blott Sverige svenska krusbär har.

Translation:

Only Sweden has Swedish gooseberries.

Meaning:

Sweden is a unique country.



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# Language Puzzles

Every issue we post a puzzle here for you to solve. It varies in language and type, so if this puzzle doesn't interest you, you can wait until the next issue, or try the puzzle anyways. You might learn something new!



This month's puzzle is a word quiz in Estonian. Find all the best matching English words to go with each Albanian word for parts of the body.



Pocket Puzzles Estonian - V3

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## Word Quiz #37 - Parts of the Body

Choose the best English word to match the Estonian word.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1) tedretähnid</b><br/>a) forehead<br/>b) freckles<br/>c) rib<br/>d) tendon</p> | <p><b>2) silmaiiris</b><br/>a) forehead<br/>b) fist<br/>c) iris<br/>d) tongue</p> |
| <p><b>3) pea</b><br/>a) forehead<br/>b) hand<br/>c) head<br/>d) parts of the body</p> | <p><b>4) kõht</b><br/>a) foot<br/>b) eyelash<br/>c) joint<br/>d) stomach</p>      |
| <p><b>5) lõug</b><br/>a) neck<br/>b) chin<br/>c) tooth<br/>d) heart</p>               | <p><b>6) küünarnukk</b><br/>a) arm<br/>b) thigh<br/>c) elbow<br/>d) bladder</p>   |
| <p><b>7) silmalaug</b><br/>a) moustache<br/>b) gland<br/>c) eyelid<br/>d) neck</p>    | <p><b>8) neer</b><br/>a) kidney<br/>b) throat<br/>c) joint<br/>d) breast</p>      |
| <p><b>9) rusikas</b><br/>a) iris<br/>b) fist<br/>c) neck<br/>d) lung</p>              | <p><b>10) pahkluu</b><br/>a) tooth<br/>b) kidney<br/>c) ankle<br/>d) hair</p>     |





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# Basic Guide to Punjabi



Punjabi (also spelled Panjabi) is an Indo-European language spoken in the Northern Indian state of Punjab and in Pakistan. It is written in both the Gurmukhi script and the Shahmukhi script.

Because of population, it is the tenth most spoken language in the world. Panjabi is also largely associated with the Sikh religion and most Sikh texts are written in Panjabi.

<b>Hello</b>	Hailō	ਹੈਲੋ
<b>Good morning</b>	sati srī akāla	ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ
<b>Good afternoon</b>	sati srī akāla	ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ
<b>Good evening</b>	sati srī akāla	ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ
<b>Good night</b>	sati srī akāla	ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ
<b>How are you?</b>	tusīm kivēm hō?	ਤੁਸੀ ਕਵਿ ਹੋ?
<b>Fine, thank you</b>	Ṭhīka hām, dhanavāda	ਠੀਕ ਹਾਂ, ਧੰਨਵਾਦ
<b>And you?</b>	atē tusīm?	ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀ?
<b>Welcome</b>	Savāgata hai	ਸਵਾਗਤ ਹੈ
<b>It is a beautiful day</b>	iha bahuta vadhī'ā dina hai	ਇਹ ਬਹੁਤ ਵਧੀਆ ਦਿਨ ਹੈ
<b>Have a nice day</b>	tuhāḍā dina cagā hōvē	ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਦਿਨ ਚੰਗਾ ਹੋਵੇ
<b>Goodbye</b>	alavidā	ਅਲਵਦਿਆ



<b>See you later</b>	bā'ada vica miladē hām	ਬਾਅਦ ਵੱਚਿ ਮਲਿਦੇ ਹਾਂ
<b>See you tomorrow</b>	kal'ha nū miladē hām	ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਨੂੰ ਮਲਿਦੇ ਹਾਂ
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	kī tusīm agrēzī bōla sakadē hō?	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ?
<b>Yes, a little</b>	Hām, thōrhī	ਹਾਂ, ਥੋੜ੍ਹੀ
<b>Yes</b>	hām	ਹਾਂ
<b>No</b>	nahīm	ਨਹੀ
<b>Nice to meet you</b>	tuhānū mila kē cagā lagi'ā	ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਲਿ ਕੇ ਚੰਗਾ ਲੱਗਿਆ
<b>Nice to see you</b>	tuhānū vēkha kē cagā lagi'ā	ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਚੰਗਾ ਲੱਗਿਆ

We do not teach Punjabi but here is the link to materials presented in Punjabi  
<http://lingohut.com/pa>

Here are the two links to the lessons for this page

Click to learn: <http://lingohut.com/pa/v216702/>

Click to learn: <http://lingohut.com/pa/v216713/>



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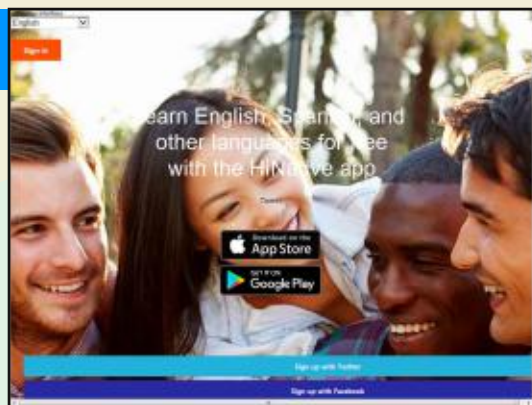


## General Language

### Hi Native

*Hi Native* is by the team of Lang-8, but it is for shorter texts and includes opportunities to ask for help with pronunciation. You can also ask for advice about travel and life in a target location. Another feature allows you to ask natives how 'natural' your text seems.

<https://hinative.com/>

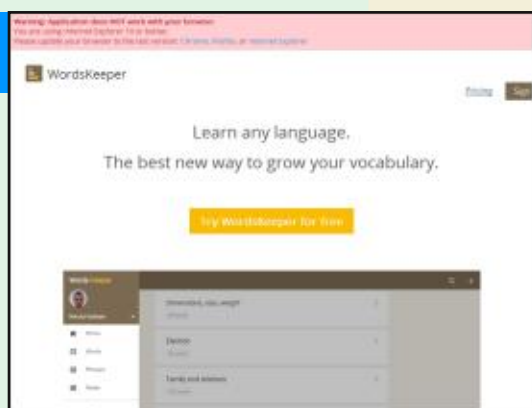


## Application

### WordsKeeper

*WordsKeeper* is a simple web application for foreign language learners. It lets users learn any language, build their own vocabulary, keep words, phrases, notes and much more in one place, grouped by category. They can also create learning groups and share with other users. Available in browsers from any device.

<https://words-keeper.com/>



## Specific Language

### Italiano Per Stanieri

*Italiano Per Stanieri* is an all Italian site for foreigners learning Italian. It has plenty of resources for levels A1-C1, including a variety of articles on there arranged by level and links to various other resources.

<http://italianoperstranieri.loescher.it/>

*Italian*





## Specific Language

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<https://www.englishradar.com/>

**English**

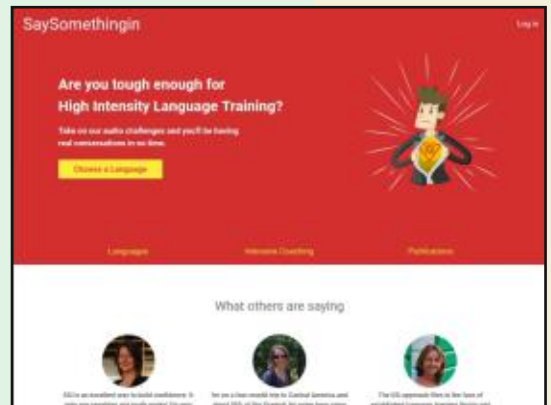


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**Celtic**



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Hi! My name is Siskia, and I'm the crazy mind behind The Polyglotist. I started learning Japanese in my twenties, but not before just about everybody scared me about how difficult it was going to be. I tried learning it every way I could, and failed. Then I started learning it my own way, and **succeeded**.  
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**Images:** Petey: Typewriter

### News Brief

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

### Mark Your Calendar

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

### Fiverr and Languages: Finding Translators on the Mini Jobs Network

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Images:** Erik Zidowecki: Seymour Mascot

Petey: Man with computer (splash); Woman on phone; Man holding cash; People writing; Man writing; Magnifier in Book

### Why I Will Never Learn the IPA

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

**Images:** Petey: Boy writing; Sound diagram; IPA word; Dictionary entry

### Teddy Talks - Can You Speak Bahasa?

**Writer:** Teddy Nee

**Images:** Petey: Beach; Currency

### In Focus

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki, Kendal Knetemann

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### Proverbs from the World - Swedish

**Writer:** Tarja Jolma

**Images:** Petey: Bandage; Girl; Family; Figures; Chick; Gooseberries

**Sources:**

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### Language Puzzles

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

### Basic Guide to Punjabi

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki, Kendal Knetemann

**Images:** Coat\_of\_arms\_of\_Punjab.svg, Jolle: Flag

Petey: View of city

### At A Glance

**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

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