

Parrot Time

The Thinking of Speaking

Issue #34 July / August 2018

How it All Started: PluraLing

Guy Catz talks gives us the
story of his new app

Reviving Calabrian Greek

Learn what is being done to save it

Toki Pona and Tok Pisin

Teddy talks about both



A woman in a blue sari is seen from the side, looking out from a stone archway. The view outside shows a hilltop fort with a small tower, a long wall leading up the hill, and a dry lake bed in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

Look beyond
what you know

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and culture from the Parleremo community.
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Parrot Time

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Cover: Those small programs on our portable devices, called "apps" (short for "applications") are used for almost everything, including language learning. But will we ever put our phones down long enough to actually talk to someone?

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



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Where languages live!

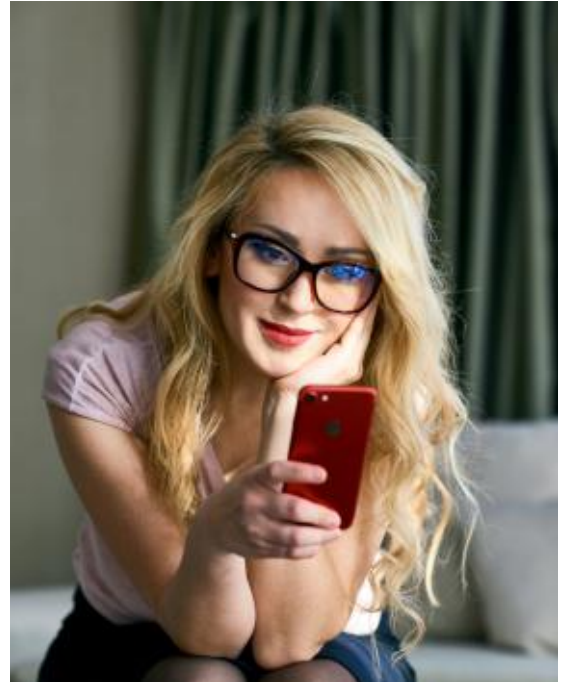
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New Apps, Old Languages

If you have used a portable electronic data device, like a phone, tablet, or pad over the past few years, then you have probably also used one of the programs on it, called an "app".

An app, short for application, is simply a computer program written for a more portable device. But don't let the size deceive you. They can be just as powerful as many computer programs even if their screen space is greatly reduced.

As you would expect where I am going with this is that there are many apps out there related to languages. They range from simple dictionaries and phrasebooks to full courses with interactive learning and all the way to real-time voice controlled language interpretation. Since anyone can make an app, not just a big company like Berlitz, the quality of these apps will also range from "can't live without" to "smash my phone".



Language learning sites like *Duolingo* and *Memrise* offer their own apps so you can take your learning on the go. Of course, you can also get *Anki*, one of the original learning apps.

In our first article of this issue, we are introduced to a new language learning app, **Pluraling**, by its creator, Guy Katz. Be sure to read about how and why it was brought to life and maybe even try it out with a special promo code at the end of the article.

While we have new apps coming to life, we still have languages dying. Guest writer Giuseppe Delfino introduces us to the endangered language **Calabrian Greek** and the efforts to revive it. Perhaps you can help save or at least spread the word.

Checking in with Teddy Nee, we learn about two lesser-known languages: the constructed language Toki Pona and the creole language of Tok Pisin.

Other sections include things a basic intro to Amharic, a puzzle in Hiligaynon, a review of a French film, and a review of an Italian book series.

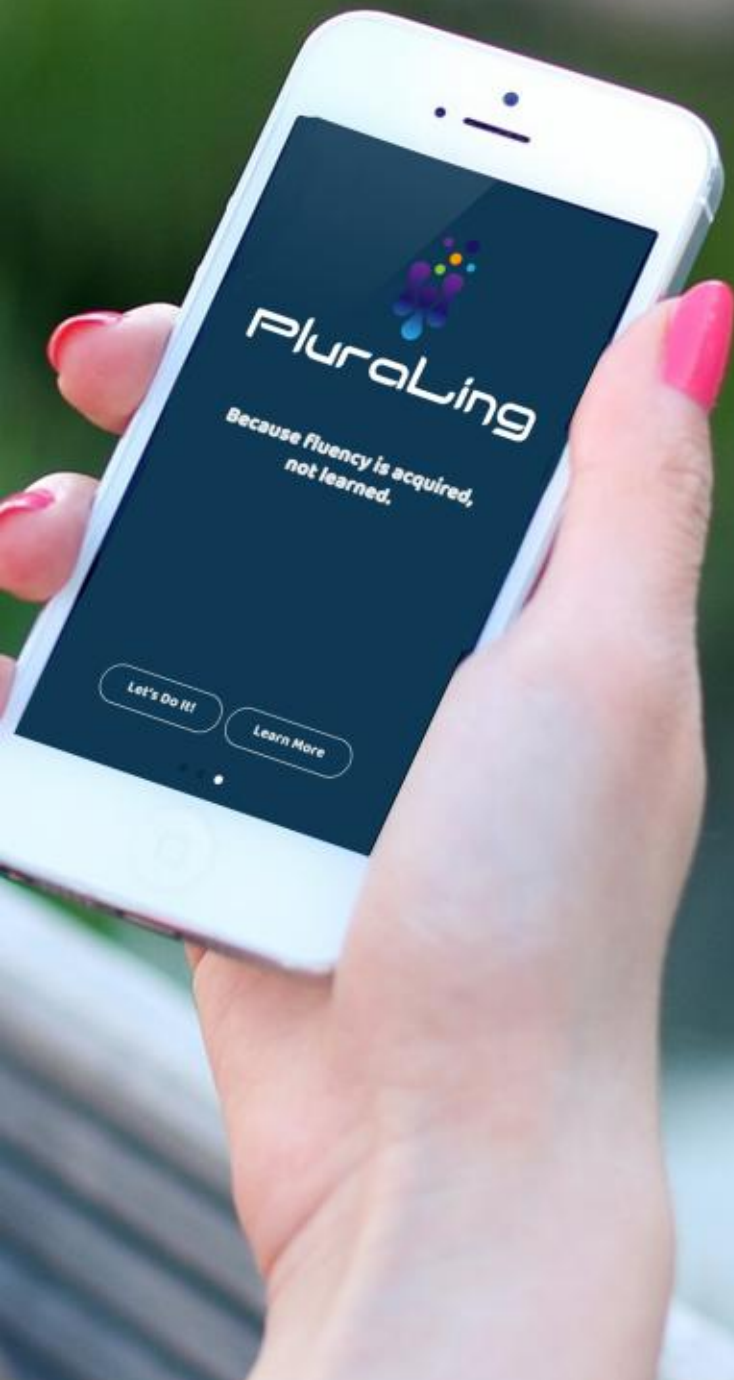
Please enjoy this issue of Parrot Time and share it with others!

Erik Zidowecki
ERIK ZIDOWECKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF

*How it All
Started:*



Pluraling



by Guy Catz

This article has two parts.

- How I came to build PluraLing.
- What PluraLing is all about.

Briefly, what PluraLing can do for you?

- Learn to speak fluently without grammar whatsoever, exactly as our young kids acquire their first language.
- Ability to speak a simple conversation on day 1!
- Skip material you already know, automatically.

How I came to build PluraLing

This is my story, of how I started my journey with languages.

Traveling abroad, I really wanted to learn to speak with the locals. I started looking for method and apps that will work for me. Most apps teach a single language and so I thought this is indeed required because “learning Chinese is not the same as learning French” as was put in one app. I always wondered how babies and young kids do that. Do they all follow different learning structures? Is it really that different?

Fast forward a few years. I routinely checked the app stores for something that can help me. I did find a few that were remarkably better than others. Still, none could, in a rather short span of time, allow me to be able to converse, even simply. I wasn't getting the confidence I needed required to speak.

One approach was significantly better than others, especially if one wants to improve his or her speaking abilities and it was indeed the same method for all languages, as I suspected long ago. This was the Pimsleur method. I was able, after departing from many dozens of \$\$, to speak Arabic with my grandmother, only 2-3 weeks into the program and only 30 minutes a day. Next, without neglecting my Russian side, was able after a single month to



sit down with my other grandmother and slowly speak casual conversation for over 10 minutes! Admittedly, I understand not more than 60% (which is a lot by the way) But the best part, I was able to ask questions and point to what I don't understand. Progress came fast with these tools in mind. Pimsleur helped me getting into the correct mindset with languages. It gave me the tools to understand how to unlock a language.

Next was Thai. I started to learn Thai without actually being in Thailand and when we traveled there, locals (as well as myself) were amazed. My speaking abilities were improved with Pimpleur more than with any other app. It really worked.

The thing I like about the method is that it gives you a whole situation to talk about. Grammar didn't matter. It felt natural. I was able to deliver a whole idea, get answers and feedback instantly when conversing with others and do all that after even a few lessons. It gave me confidence.

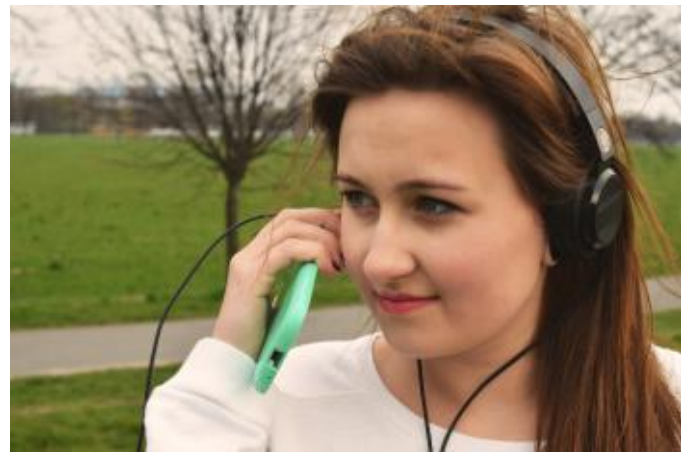
After the fairy dust had settled with Pimsleur, I realized there are a few things that hold me back within the method. It was too slow for me, as well as for others. Second, as an off-line, static method without any feedback from the method itself, I was repeating many phrases I already knew. And by design, it cannot be fixed because you can't start a new lesson without the “hello, how are you” first. It won't make sense. If only there was a button that could tell the method “don't teach me that phrase never again”. “Don't ask me how to say ‘green apples’ because I already know how to say ‘I like green apples a lot’”. But

there isn't such a button in Pimsleur. One might think that this can be solved with a simple spaced repetition system but it can't. There is no relation between cards in a simple SRS.

So I had to keep listening to those phrases I already know so well, again and again and then again. It was frustrating. With Pimsleur, it had a toll on my progress, it was just too slow. Third, some phrases I didn't hear correctly. The Thai language has some pretty difficult sounds. If only I could take a glimpse on the word. "Was that /dg/ or /ch/?" crossed my mind many times.



With other apps I was forced to actively learn grammar rules and / or learn to read, at least to some extent. Otherwise, I couldn't make any progress. Of course, reading is important to be able to speak correctly, I understand that and I actually am learning to read the languages I deal with and it does help. But, I don't want it in the same app or at least at the same time. I want focus. I want to learn to speak, then focus on reading on another day. Mixing the two uses, for me, different aspects in my brain which don't mix well. Trying to refine my method to a bare minimum, I wanted an app that didn't exist.



Considering all the problems above, and being a developer myself, I rolled up my sleeves and sat to work. The end result is PluraLing. An app which focuses on a situation. A situation is simply a short conversation that could be used as a whole. You won't need anything else and grammar won't matter! I worked hard and solved all these problems I encountered.

With PluraLing, I can learn a single situation which I can use as a whole and it doesn't even take an hour to master. With PluraLing, phrases I know well will not be shown to me, like in a simple SRS app but. Furthermore, and this is where PluraLing goes beyond, we also accommodate these features:

1. Phrases I really know will never be shown again. For example, if PluraLing sees that I know and understand "I ate an apple yesterday", then phrases like "I ate yesterday" and "I ate an apple" and also "an apple" are dismissed and will not be shown again.
2. There is a connection between all phrases in the situation and so a priority mechanism can be established. No more random group of cards. If I don't know a sentence or a phrase, PluraLing will not just show it again in a few minutes, but also show simpler, related phrases. When you master these, it will show me the one I didn't know. Using the same example above, if I forgot the phrase "I ate an apple yesterday", then PluraLing will show me very soon the phrases "I ate yester-

day” and “I ate an apple”, thus reducing the complexity of the learned sentence for me.

3. If you learn something from one situation, then you won't learn it again in future situations. PluraLing keeps track of what you understand. This is a real time-saver.

4. All that is done automatically for every situation. All I need to do in order to bring new content, is recording. The algorithms will take care of everything.

In PluraLing we understand that:

- single words memorization will not help you speak fluently.
- Learning phrases and ideas IS the key to fluency.
- Understanding grammar rules will not help you speak. On the contrary, it might even hold you back.
- We acquire fluency with our ears and by repeating. It's that simple.
- We must use the content we learn as soon as possible and so it must be real, it must be interesting. And it must feel and be used naturally in a conversation.

What PluraLing is all about

Would you like to make Grammar intuitive? Would you like to be able to deliver the right message and communicate effectively? How can we make the most of our learning time? How do we make sure that we study in the most efficient way? The answer can be found by observing how young kids acquire languages.

Babies and kids learn to speak and understand without much effort while gaining total fluency. Do they actively learn grammar or understand the sentence structure? Consciously, not at all. Conscious grammar learning is not enough and surprisingly, memorizing rules can actually hold you back.

Languages are being taught by parents the same way all over the world, in any culture, only by listening, repeating and speaking. So is in PluraLing. Parents introduce new content while increasing complexity as understanding grows and so is in PluraLing.

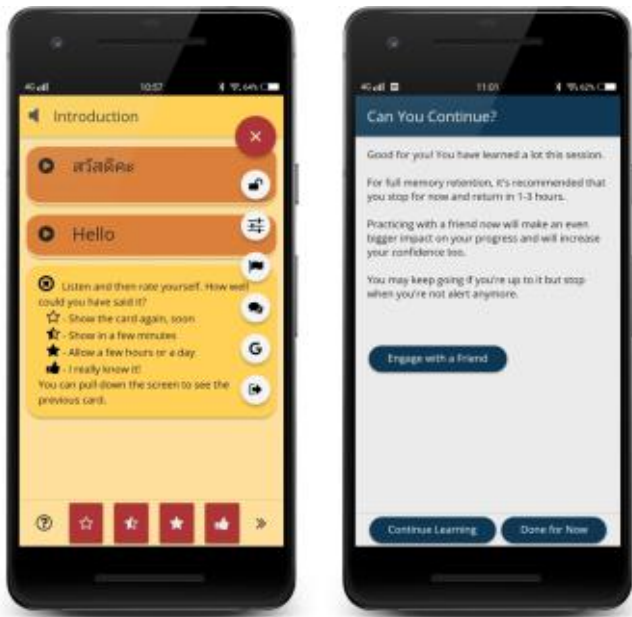
PluraLing teaches you like a child, bypassing grammar, sentence structures and tables, letting you focus on fluency, giving you the tools to speak right from the start! PluraLing adjusts itself, listen to and react to your learning velocity.

PluraLing starts simple but is getting fast to your level and does so automatically using priority algorithms that know what is considered simple or complex for you based on your knowledge and will increase or reduce complexity over time. PluraLing observes your learning style and keeps track of it all the time. It lives and breathes with you as you gain progress.

And progress you will and as you do, you will encounter phrases that are just a bit above your level, phrases that you are ready to learn, no more, no less. This is not just a simple cards app but rather one that is based on your knowledge. It's prioritized, ordered and always in context.

PluraLing delivers bite-size content (Situations) you can master fast. A situation is a set of well-organized, dynamic spaced-repetition-based cards. These cards are related to





each other in a complexity-oriented way. Each phrase knows its place in your learning eco-universe so that simpler-to-you phrases will be dismissed faster while little more complex ones will be reviewed shortly.

A natural ability to use the material in a real conversation from day one! PluraLing's logic, intelligence and wisdom will take you right to that place.

So how do we do that? We have developed a system that reduce to a minimum the time and efforts required to acquire fluency.

1. By scientifically eliminating unnecessary waste that is often part of the learning path, such as single-word memorizing (as the only method of studying), such as listening without context, such as learning grammar tables and rules and trying to rationalize the language acquiring process. We make no grammatical analysis.

2. By understanding that your level may vary within the scope of different situations. Thus we have developed a dynamic way to fast pinpoint your level and focus on what is slightly above your current level of competence, always keeping you intrigued and challenged. Your calculated level is always validated behind the scenes and so it stays accurate over time.

3. By always showing you relevant content that can be used immediately.

4. By changing what you are about to learn based on your current progress. We call that your foreseen learning material. This is the next level of SRS learning. No more unrelated, unprioritized, static cards game.

5. By never showing you learning material you absolutely know well already.

Why PluraLing? Because fluency is acquired, not learned. All recordings are real and all translations are hand-made. **PT**

Guy Catz is a language lover and programmer who currently lives in Thailand with his family, after nearly 20 years in the IT industry as they were pulled back to their old love - traveling. They moved there six years ago from Israel.

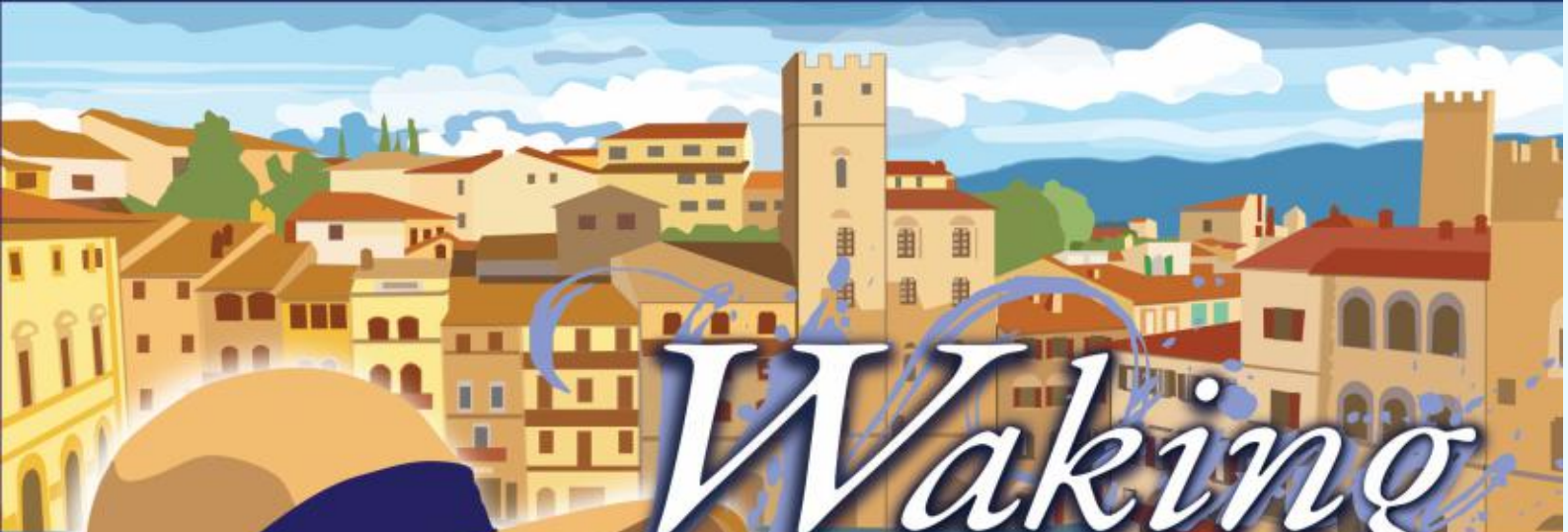
Their kids speak four languages and are currently in the process of acquiring the fifth. After watching closely the process of language acquisition by young kids, Guy has decided to build PluraLing. He can be reached at Guy.Catz@PluraLing.com

You can use the promotion-code **PARROT** which gives you two months ads-free experience.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0XE0ZsiWeo>



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

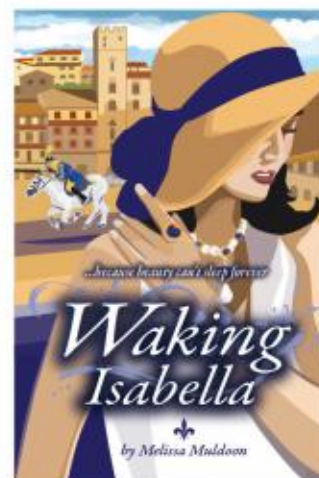
A latter-day Renaissance woman, Melissa Muldoon blends fact and fantasy, history and art, English and Italian in this richly woven tapestry. Waking Isabella, carries us from 16th-century Italy to modern-day Arezzo, from palace plots to wartime intrigues. A perfect read for Italophiles, art lovers and 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 for more information







Calabria is the southernmost region of Italy. In this land of ancient history and culture - even though it is, unfortunately, less well-known than other places in the Italian Peninsula - a particular Greek variety is still spoken.

The name of this Hellenic dialect spoken in the “toe of Italy” is known as “Calabrian Greek” (whose endonym is “Greko”), and in this article, I am going to write a brief profile about it.

WHERE IT IS SPOKEN

Today 16 Calabrian municipalities, all of these in the Metropolitan City of Reggio di Calabria, recognise Greek according to Italy’s law 482/1999 concerning its historical linguistic minorities (which include Greek itself): Bagaladi, Bova, Bova Marina, Brancaleone, Cardeto, Condofuri, Melito di Porto Salvo, Montebello Jonico, Motta San Giovanni, Palizzi, Reggio di Calabria, Roccaforte del Greco, Roghudi, Samo, San Lorenzo, Staiti.

However, Calabrian Greek - which has a hundred speakers, almost all elderly people - today can be only found in Bova, Bova Marina, Galliciano (a small outlying suburb hamlet of Condofuri), Roghudi, and in some quarters of Reggio.

Despite this, during the 13th century, Greek was spoken throughout Southern Calabria - roughly from Catanzaro to Reggio - and even in North-Eastern Sicily. This means that from

Giuseppe Delfino is a member of the group “To ddomadi greko” cited in the article. He’s a L2 Calabrian Greek speaker and activist for it since 2004.

that century onwards Greek influence was reduced more and more due to the pressure of the Italo-Romance varieties.

ORIGINS

The origins of Calabrian Greek has been a matter of debate within Romance and Modern Greek philology.

Throughout its history, Calabria experienced two waves of Hellenism:

- The Classical one = Calabria was the heart of the Ancient Greek colonisation of Southern Italy later known as “Magna Graecia” (“Greater Greece” in English) during the 7th & 8th centuries BC. Examples of Greek “poleis” in present-day Calabria are “Rhegion” (Reggio di Calabria), “Lokroi Epizephyroi” (Locri), and “Kroton” (Crotone);

- The Byzantine one = in the 6th century AD, Calabria was annexed by the Eastern Roman Empire during the Gothic War (535-553). During this period Calabria became one of the main centres of the Byzantine Monasticism.

In the years 1059-1060, the region was conquered by the Normans, but in Calabria, Greek remained the main language, as we have already seen, for another two centuries.



In the middle of these waves, the Roman rule started in the 3rd century BC. The question is: “Did Greek manage to survive in the Roman-age Calabria?”.

The most important of the theories questioning about the origin of Calabrian Greek is that argued by German linguist Gerhard Rohlfs (1892-1986). He stated that there is linguistic continuity since Antiquity (although with Byzantine influences). According to him, it was impossible that Greek disappeared before Latin, since Greek was a language of a huge prestige and spoken as a second language by the Roman élites themselves; moreover, he found several archaic features in “Greko” which can not be found any more in Greece, for example, the use of the infinitive verb, today totally absent in Standard Modern Greek.

Rohlfs’s theory seems today to be the most accepted within the academic world, although some scholars still argue Calabrian Greek is of medieval (Byzantine) origin since in any case, it remains more similar to Modern Greek than to Ancient Greek.

“IF YOU SPEAK ME, I LIVE”

This is the name of the crowdfunding campaign which has been set up (because Calabrian Greek’s situation is dramatic) by a group of young language activists - led by

Maria Olimpia Squillaci, native Calabrian Greek speaker and PhD in linguistics at the University of Cambridge - of the Metropolitan City of Reggio di Calabria, “To ddomadi greko” (“The Greek Week” ; named after the Summer School held every year in Condofuri by Dr. Squillaci).

The goals of this crowdfunding campaign are twofold:

- 1) The establishment of three free and permanent linguistic laboratories in Reggio, in Bova, and in Condofuri in order to teach Calabrian Greek to children and adults;
- 2) A documentation centre related to the Greek concept of “filoxenia” (which can be translated as “hospitality”).

The official site of the campaign “If you speak me, I live” (“An me platèzzise zìo” in Calabrian Greek) - available in Italian, English, and Standard Modern Greek - is:
<https://semiparlivivo.wordpress.com>.

EXAMPLES OF THE LANGUAGE

The most famous song in Calabrian Greek is “Èla mu kondà” (“Come close to me”), written by the poet Mastr’Angelo Maesano (1915-2000):

"Èla mu kondà"
Calabrian Greek

"Come close to me"
English translation:

"Esù miccèdda ti ìsse an tin oscìa
ce egò pedì ti ìmme an ton jalò,
arte ti ejenàstise megàli
egò thèlo na se prandestò.

"Girl, you come from the mountain
and I am a boy from the seaside.
Now that you've grown up,
I want to marry you.

Èla, èla mu kondà
ti egò ìmme manachò (x2)

Come, come close to me
because I feel alone (x2)

O potamò èrkete an tin oscìa
ce katevènni kàtu ston jalò.
Ùlla ta aspària dispamèna
èrkonde na più to glicìo nerò.

The river comes from the mountain
and goes down to the seaside.
All the thirsty fishes
come to drink fresh water.

Èla, èla mu kondà
ti egò ìmme manachò (x2)

Come, come close to me
because I feel alone (x2)

San èrkete to mìnna tu majiù
òlo to kòsmo fènete chlorò,
ce ciòla ta puddìa tragudàu
jatì ìrte to kalò kerò.

When the month of May comes
the whole world appears green,
and even the birds sing
because the weather is fair.

Èla, èla mu kondà
ti egò ìmme manachò (x2)

Come, come close to me
because I feel alone (x2)

San i zoi dikì-mu ène palèa
parakalùme pànda to Christò,
Den thèlo dè na fàò ce dè na più,
na ciùmithò methèsu manachò.

When my life becomes old
We always pray to the Lord.
I don't want to eat or drink,
I only want to sleep with you.

Èla, èlamu kondà
ti egò ìmmo manachò (x2)"

Come, come close to me
because I feel alone (x2)"

MAIN SCIENTIFIC WORKS ON CALABRIAN GREEK

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- Karanastasis A., *Γραμματική των Ελληνικών Ιδιωμάτων της Κάτω Ιταλίας*, Academy of Athens, Athens, 1997;

- Karanastasis A., *Ιστορικό λεξικό των Ελληνικών Ιδιωμάτων της Κάτω Ιταλίας*, Academy of Athens, Athens, 1984-1992;

- Rohlfs G., *Historische Grammatik der unteritalienischen Gräzität*, Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Munich, 1950 (Italian translation by Sicuro S., Congedo, Galatina, 2001). **PT**

Adventures in the Land of Maybe

An American girl's island-hopping, party-crawling, tallow-tasting, scarf-knitting, tongue-twisting, car-stalling and sheep-stalking attempts to understand what it means to be Faroese.




landofmaybe.wordpress.com

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.

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. To her right is a white shopping bag with 'HEATTECH JAPAN TECHNOLOGY' printed on it.

languageboat.com



Toki Pona and Tok Pisin



What comes to your mind when you see these two words? Do you think that they are languages from the same country? Both have the acronyms of TP, so they should be related, right? I

have learnt both languages separately at different time, and my choice of learning one does not affect the decision to learn the other one. Whether they are related or no, the answer could be yes and no, let me tell you more.

Toki Pona: The Language of Good

I started to learn Toki Pona seriously last year, on October to be precise. However, I have read about it many times on the internet. I still don't have any Toki Pona speakers living nearby and have never met any of them in real life. Neither do I have communicated completely in Toki Pona. No worries, Toki Pona was not created to be an auxiliary language.

"Created", you say?! Right, Toki Pona is a constructed language (conlang) created by a Canadian linguist named Sonja Lang, and it was introduced in 2001. The creation of Toki Pona is inspired by Taoist philosophy, which focuses on simple concepts to express maximal meaning with minimal complexity. Believe it or not, it has only 120 words (this number does not include loanwords, such as names).

Now, let's take a look at the next language.

Tok Pisin: The Language of Papua New Guinea (PNG)

Tok Pisin, English, and Hiri Motu are three official languages of PNG. You may wonder why the word "Tok" sounds like the English word "Talk". They are indeed referring to the same meaning. Tok Pisin is an English-based creole used as a commercial and administrative language by over 2 million people in PNG.

If you know English quite well, Tok Pisin can be extremely easy for you to learn. I started to learn Tok Pisin at the end of March. Much to my surprise, Toki Pona helped me in learning Tok Pisin. In other words, I see similarities that are incorporated into Tok Pisin and Toki Pona.

How do Toki Pona and Tok Pisin resemble each other?

1. *Simple concept*

In English, we have different words that refer to pretty much the same but slightly different object, such as mansion (a big living place), house (a general living place), hut (a small living place). Why on earth an English learner need to know 3 different words if they actually can use simpler way to describe that object.

A "house" in Toki Pona is "tomo", a car is "tomo tawa". You see there is an extra word of "tawa" that means "to move, moving, or anything related with motion". So, "tomo tawa" actually means "moving house" or "car", with the adjective comes after the noun.

"Laik" is a verb in Tok Pisin means "to like, to want, to love". When you use this word with an object, the verb gets a suffix "-im", for instance "mi laikim yu tumas" means "I like you



very much”. You can also notice that “tumas” sounds like “too much” but here, it means “very much”, which is still pretty similar. Many words in Tok Pisin are pronounced the same or similar with its corresponding words in English but written as how it is pronounced. What I mean here is when OO in English is pronounced as U, it is written as U in Tok Pisin.

2. Grammar

Toki Pona has a word “li” that is put between any subject except “I” and “you” and its verb. Tok Pisin has “i” which function the same way with that in Toki Pona. Since Toki Pona is a constructed language, the creation of “li” may be inspired by Tok Pisin.

Compare these sentences that mean “He is a good person”.

(Toki Pona)

Ona li jan pona (He li person good)

(Tok Pisin)

Em i gutpela man (He i good person)

The possessive pronoun comes after the noun in both Toki Pona and Tok Pisin. Tok Pisin puts an extra word of “bilong” in between the noun and pronoun. Guess what, “bilong” is “belong” in English but written as how it is pronounced. For example, here are the translation of “my house”.

(Toki Pona)

Tomo mi (house me)

(Tok Pisin)

Haus bilong mi

3. Limited Vocabulary

The vocabulary of Toki Pona and Tok Pisin is quite limited, so it will be quite difficult to discuss about heavier topics, such as science or engineering. Toki Pona was deliberately created with limited vocabulary because it was not meant to be an auxiliary language, so real life communication can’t really be done with this language. Meanwhile, Tok Pisin lacks a lot of professional terms because it is

meant to be a simple language that is more suitable for daily conversation.

4. Resources

Both languages have quite a lot of online resources, making it easy to learn. Here are what I usually use.

A. Dictionary

(Toki Pona)

<http://tokipona.net/tp/janpije/dictionary.php>

(Tok Pisin)

<http://www.tok-pisin.com/>

B. Articles

(Toki Pona)

http://tokipona.wikia.com/wiki/lipu_lawa

(Tok Pisin)

http://tpi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran_pes

C. Songs

Believe it or not, there are songs in Toki Pona but almost everything is created by Toki Pona fans instead of a real singer, so please don't mind the quality. You can find quite a lot of songs in Toki Pona and Tok Pisin on YouTube by using the keyword "Toki Pona song" and "Tok Pisin song". **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.neeslanguageblog.com





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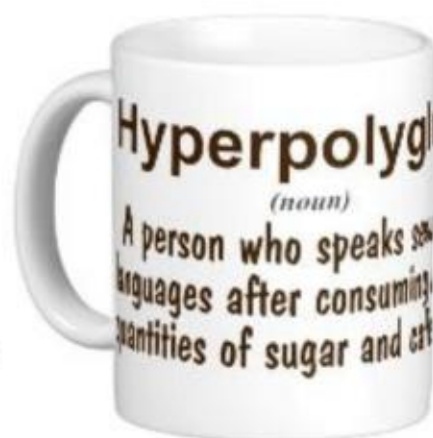
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Melissa Muldoon is the “*Studentessa Matta*”. In Italian, “*matta*” means “crazy” or “impassioned”. She promotes the study of Italian language and culture through the dual-language blog StudentessaMatta.com. She has a B.A. in fine arts, art history 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.

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

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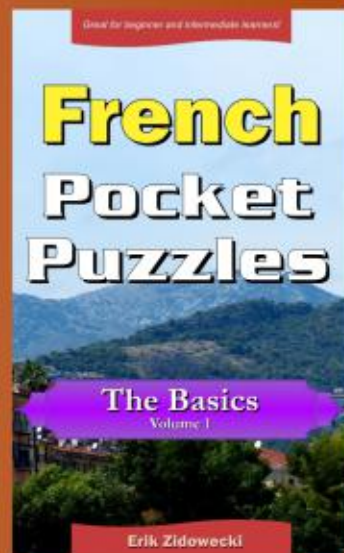
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In FOCUS

Show us where you've been!
These photos are from Kendal Knetemann and
show parts of Paris, France



The Basilica of the Sacred Heart of
Paris, commonly known as
Sacré-Cœur Basilica



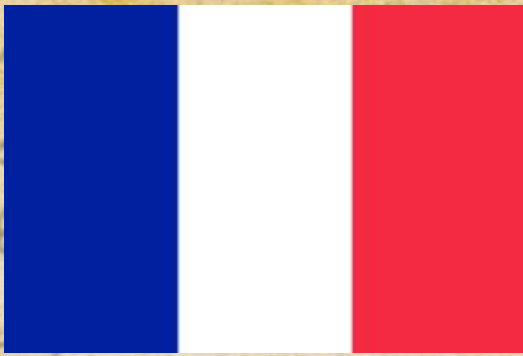
The Arch of Triomphe de Carrousel



Fountain of River Commerce and
Navigation in the Place de la Concorde



Protest in one of the streets



Paris, France



Waterfront from one of the rivers



View of the Eiffel Tower (far background) from one of the domes



Partial view of the Eiffel Tower from the ground



Inside a pastry shop



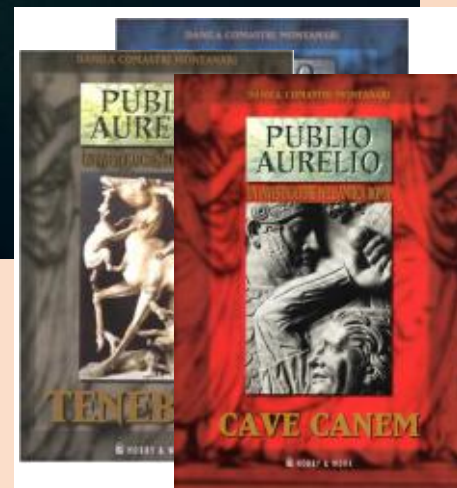
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Book Look

Publio Aurelio - un investigatore nell'antica Roma (series)
by Danila Comastri Montanari
Language: Italian (some books translated into several languages)

Item rating: ★★★★★

Reviewed by Tarja Jolma



This review focuses on a series of books by the Italian author Danila Comastri Montanari, namely Publio Aurelio - un investigatore nell'antica Roma (Publius Aurelius Statio - an investigator in ancient Rome). The name of the series comes from its main character: a relatively young, intelligent, curious, liberal, adventurous and open minded senator who ends up investigating and solving crimes at very young age. All the titles are either only in Latin or also specified in Italian.

Comastri Montanari has written the first novel of the series, *Mors tua*, already in 1990, but I didn't come across my first book of this series until the summer of 2002 while in a temporary bookstore inside a big tent in a seaside town in Italy. The title, *Morituri te salutant*, caught my eye immediately. It was a crime story, in Italian giallo, with an interesting sounding main character and a murder case located in ancient Rome, more specifically in the world of gladiators. In the beginning of there were a few drawn maps: "la Gallia Cisalpina", the city of Rome at the time, and barracks of the gladiators. After that comes a list of characters appearing in the book, with their name and occupation. In the end there are also three glossaries: Greek and Latin terminology used in the

book, historical persons, and geographical locations (names have changed since the times of Ancient Rome). I was impressed and fascinated and got both of the two novels available. They were crime stories located in ancient times with lots of information about how life could have been then, and I felt lucky to have found the books, although I was mildly concerned about the possibly challenging vocabulary. Having the glossaries and maps was a big help, though.

It turned out quickly that my expectations for the book were not too high. I went through the above mentioned background information before starting to read the actual novel and many times while reading it. The main character, Senator Publio Aurelio Stazio, soon proved to be very interesting. He is depicted as an intelligent, humorous, well-read, fair, adventurous, flexible, experienced and open minded patrician. He is very wealthy, well connected and single (but clearly attracts women), which all proves to be very useful for his investigations – and historically interesting, as there are many references to famous historical

people as well, like the emperor Claudius. The senator's servants and friends are an essential part of the picture as well, especially his secretary Castore, a freed slave who is a curious character: lazy, cheating, lying, stealing but also usefully cunning and bold, and therefore very able in helping his master/friend in their investigations and out of difficult situations. Their unconventional relationship quickly defied my ideas of master-slave relationships, even though I knew slavery was not practiced similarly in different times and countries. Castore is the opposite of the intendant Paride, also a freed slave, who is very honest and reliable. The issue of slavery in ancient Rome is very much present in the reality of Senator Aurelio and his peers.

The amount of references to historical events, places, persons, customs, food, clothing, living, religion and other details about life in ancient Rome in the adventures of Senator Aurelio is captivating, as are the complex human relationships and interesting plots. The author Danila Comastri Montanari, born in Bologna, Italy, in 1948, has majored in Pedagogy and Political Sciences, been a teacher, traveled a lot, and then after her first novel, *Mors tua*, dedicated full time in the narrative literature and, more specifically, historical crime fiction. Her profile in the end of *Morituri te salutant* says studying the past is her hobby, and it shows in this book series. She's also described as a smoker who appreciates spirits, evades from diets and visits spas and archeological excavations, and reads detective fiction, essays about history and anthropology, Latin, Greek and Chinese classics. She's said to be a fanatic user of Internet and she maintains a few websites and uses her Facebook profile daily. She also has a fan club that shares information.



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"One of my favorite parts of learning a language is the ability to poke your head into a culture that is not your own."



Review - Publio Aurelio - un investigatore nell'antica Roma

I started with two novels of this series and was eager to get more of them when I realized there were many more. There are several references to senator Aurelio's past, how it all started, but it is not the topic of the first novel, *Mors tua* in 1990, but of the third novel, *Cave canem* in 1993. The story begins in Rome "anno 772 ab Urbe condita", i.e. 19 Anno Domini (the timing is always given in the novels). Aurelio is 16 years old at the time, and he starts resolving the crime Paride's father is accused of. Along the story his own father dies, and so Aurelio becomes *paterfamilias*, the head of the family. At the end of the first story of the book – there is a longer one after this development story of his – it's already year 44 Anno Domini, and Aurelio leads an adult life in all of the other novels which are in total 20 from 1990 to 2017. Since then some of this senator-detective's adventures have been translated into other languages as well: German, French, Romanian, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, Polish, Japanese and Russian. There are also a few audiobooks in Italian.

If possible, I recommend starting from the novel that tells how it all began, *Cave canem*, since Aurelio's youth is often referred to in the other novels, but the novels are still independent stories and as such perfectly ok to read in any order. The books do awake the desire to know a bit more about the reality those times, so reading them has resulted in googling pictures and information and further reading. **PT**

Tarja holds a Master's degree in Italian Philology with studies in Finnish, Spanish, and cultural history and also has experience in teaching Finnish (L2) for foreigners. Her daily work as a tv-subtitler writing subtitles for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing consists mainly of her native Finnish language, but all kinds of language skills are useful. She simply can't stop studying languages, especially the ever challenging and fascinating Mandarin Chinese.

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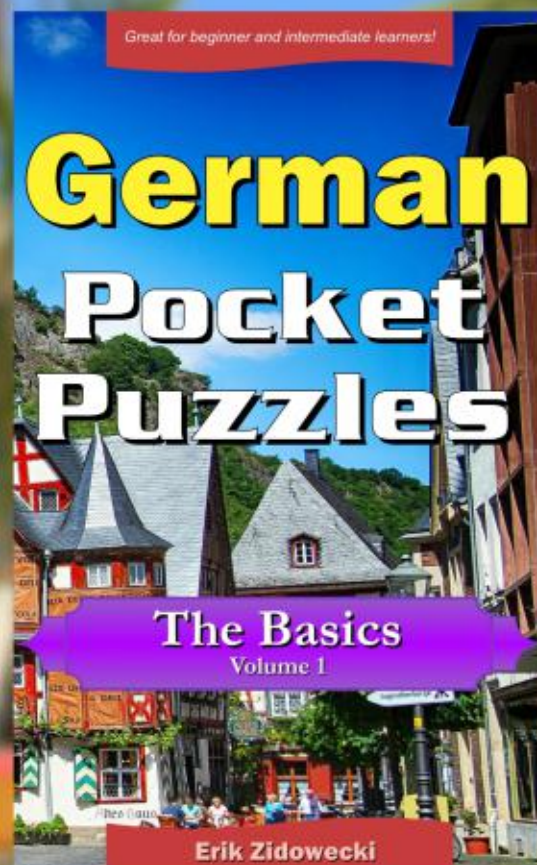
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The main goal of this project is the establishment of three permanent and free linguistic laboratories in Reggio di Calabria, Bova, and Condofuri in order to teach the language to children and adults, so we can give Calabrian Greek a future.

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At the Cinema



The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec



The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec

1h 47min

PG

Action / Adventure / Fantasy
14 April 2010 (France)

Country: France / USA
Language: French / English / Spanish

The production quality of the film is extremely high and has, as befits it, an almost comic book feel to it. Sadly, the only language spoken is French, even by the ancient mummies.

The French film *The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec* is absurd. Let's just get that out of the way from the start.

It is done in a very straight forward way, with everyone taking everything seriously, but there is also a sense of "yes, we know this is strange, but let's just move forward."

Events really start when, in 1910s Paris, a 136 million year-old pterosaur egg hatches through the telepathic powers of one Professor Espérandieu. The flying dinosaur escapes from the museum where the egg had been kept and attacks a cab containing a former prefect and a showgirl.

As more and more people report seeing the monster, the President of France orders the situation to be handled immediately by Inspector Albert Caponi, a foolish man more concerned with food than the flying reptile.

Meanwhile, our heroine, Adèle Blanc-Sec returns from Egypt, where she has found (so she believes) the Ramesses II's mummified doctor/physician, Patmosis. Her plan is to use the telepathic powers of Professor Espérandieu to revive the mummy who could then save her sister Agathe, who herself is comatose after a tennis accident.

Unfortunately, by the time of her return, Espérandieu has been arrested and found guilty of bringing about the pterosaur. He is scheduled for execution. When her attempt to bribe for his release fails, Adèle tries to break him out of the prison using a variety of disguises.

While Adèle fails at rescuing Espérandieu with disguises, she is able to make a daring rescue while riding the pterosaur who has been semi-tamed by Andrej Zborowski, a researcher at the museum the original egg came from and who is completely enamoured by Adèle.

Just as they start to celebrate, however, the pterosaur is shot by big game hunter Justin de Saint-Hubert, who has been brought in to track down and dispose of the flying creature. Being telepathically linked, Espérandieu is fatally wounded as well, but he manages to perform a ritual to bring the mummy back to life before he himself dies.



The pterosaur, newly born and hungry



Espérandieu trying to lure in the creature with meat

Adèle watches as the mummy starts moving, then politely speaking with her. She is stunned but quickly recovers her wits and shows the undead man her barely alive sister. Sadly, it turns out the mummy is actually the Pharaoh's physicist, and knows nothing of medicine.

Our heroine is about to fall into despair when the Egyptian speculates that the power Espérandieu used to revive him was very great and probably affected others around them, including the other mummies in the museum. With that new hope, the two sneak into the museum and track down the Pharaoh and his entourage, brought back to life.

I don't want to give the entire story away, for there are still questions to be answered. Will the sister be made well again? Will Andrej ever win the affection of Adèle? Does Inspector Albert Caponi lose his job, get a promotion, or finally get the lunch he has been longing for?

The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec is adapted from a comic series, with the film being a unique combination of different stories.



Inspector and hunter, dressed as sheep to catch the creature



Andrej, Adèle, and Espérandieu guarding the pterosaur

The production quality of the film is extremely high and has, as befits it, an almost comic book feel to it. Sadly, the only language spoken is French, even by the ancient mummies.

I've actually watched this film twice, which is a rarity for me because it has to be interesting enough for me to sit through it a second time.

I would warn you that if you have seen the trailer for the film... ignore it. The advertisement suggests that Adèle spends most of the film in the desert, when actually that is just a small part at the beginning when she is hunting for the mummy. The real story is what takes back in France. I guess they wanted to make it appear more like an "Indiana Jones" type of adventure.

I would definitely suggest this film to anyone liking quirky adventures, even if you don't know or aren't learning French. I find myself liking French films (*L'auberge Espagnole*, *Jean de Florette*), yet I avoid French and France. I don't know what causes this disconnect, but I hope the French keep making fun films like this. **PT**



Adèle and her mummy



The world is full of languages, which in turn are full of proverbs. Some of them are very culture related, some instead very universal. The language of choice this time is Tver Karelian, a minority language – also considered as a dialect of Karelian language – in current Russia, about 200 km from Moscow towards Saint Petersburg. In Tver Karelian the language is called "tverinkariela".

Tver Karelians don't have a country, and it's not easy to estimate how many they are and how many speakers the language has. They are descendants of those Orthodox Karelians who fled from Kexholm County (Finnish: Käkisalmen lääni) in the 1600s to avoid taxation and lutheranization by Sweden. There may be almost 60 000 Karelians and 15 – 20 000 Tver Karelians.

In the past their language was discriminated against since Stalin did not want a strong people close to Moscow, so their schools were closed, newspapers and magazines abolished, publishing work banned and so forth. Nevertheless, Tver Karelians managed to bring their traditions to the modern day. In 1990 a Tver Karelian cultural society was started. In 1993 voluntary native language teaching was started, and a Karelian-Finnish department was founded in the University of Tver. There is a newspaper called Karielan Šana. They have maintained their traditions well in the Karelian villages, and many people speak the language.

Tver Karelian belongs to the Uralic language family, also called Finno-Ugric. It's related to languages like Estonian, Hungarian, Sami languages, Veps and Komi – and of course Karelian. Karelian often means just a regional dialect of Finnish, but in this article, we talk about a Karelian language. Tver Karelian is so different from the northern dialects of Karelian that it has also been considered a language of its own. Plenty of Finnish people have roots somewhere in Karelia, either the Finnish side or current Russia, and many are interested in learning Karelian and contributing to its survival and vitality. There is also a friendship society called Tverinkarjalaisten ystävät ry ("Tver Karelian's friends").

Here are some selected proverbs about family and home.

1. Jogo linnulla on oma pežo kallis’.

Literal translation:

[Every bird thinks its own nest is dear.](#)

This is basically the same as “home sweet home”.



2. Mittyöt kannot, muozet i vežat.

Literal translation:

[How are the stumps, so are also the saplings.](#)

The word “sapling” refers to offspring, so “stumps” refer to parents. This is more or less like “the apple does not fall far from the tree”.



3. Opašša lašta, šuurella takka pane.

Literal translation:

[Guide the child, put a burden on the big one.](#)

Teach and guid a little child but give responsibilities to and demand more from an older child.



4. Lapšet kažvetah i huolet kažvetah.

Literal translation:

[Children grow and worries grow.](#)

The idea is, the bigger the child, the bigger the worries he/she causes.



The Tver Karelian teacher and researcher Irina Novak has taught Tver Karelian both in Finland and in Tver Karelia, and I had the pleasure of attending her one week-long intensive course in Helsinki Summer University in June 2018. Most of the students were at least partially of Karelian descent, even though not of Tver Karelian. She has included many proverbs, poems and riddles in her teaching material meant for native Finnish speakers, and the proverbs above are all from her course material. PT

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!

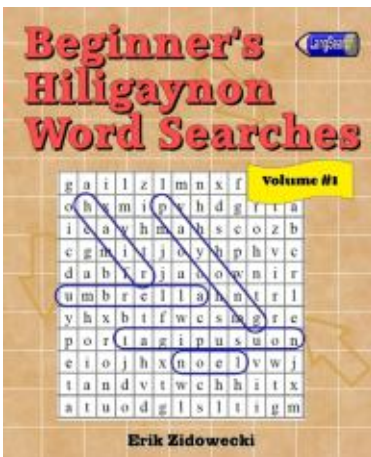


This month's puzzle is a beginner's Hiligaynon (Ilonggo) word search. Find all the English and Hiligaynon words in the matrix of letters. Words can be in any direction.

Puzzle #34

h	n	a	h	o	s	l	u	p	e	r	d	a	m	v	i	k	x	l	y	m	v	b	i	n
j	w	d	j	f	a	b	r	a	g	x	o	y	p	a	s	a	s	h	u	z	g	x	x	v
x	x	u	l	i	w	u	e	n	y	l	f	u	i	u	m	v	v	y	u	k	w	v	v	i
o	h	w	z	r	h	a	w	k	b	m	a	l	b	r	s	g	p	a	c	y	p	k	e	n
z	l	x	x	l	f	t	u	k	x	b	d	p	f	l	a	d	w	b	w	h	o	d	l	i
n	g	g	p	t	x	r	p	a	s	u	a	b	o	c	d	p	s	n	r	e	l	w	k	s
e	i	e	l	b	a	t	g	t	i	y	p	r	p	y	y	b	k	x	i	u	k	p	n	i
n	r	o	g	r	j	x	o	y	f	r	a	e	y	s	r	e	j	k	s	f	a	o	a	a
a	a	x	x	g	n	n	k	l	h	n	y	v	o	j	w	j	x	y	t	a	h	r	h	r
l	f	j	s	l	a	r	k	j	g	l	s	a	b	v	k	z	o	t	l	w	e	e	l	a
p	f	m	u	l	r	s	k	e	a	z	p	o	n	a	s	u	t	u	p	s	l	n	w	u
r	e	n	p	g	j	b	e	y	z	i	i	i	i	t	l	j	g	l	h	s	a	r	k	e
i	e	o	m	p	s	e	t	m	u	h	a	b	o	n	e	v	s	d	j	u	x	a	z	h
a	r	g	m	v	j	c	g	z	a	x	f	w	i	g	i	n	w	s	v	w	k	k	a	s
e	n	i	n	f	w	z	f	k	b	l	o	g	j	a	b	l	t	o	x	n	b	b	e	a

Find all Hiligaynon and English words in the puzzle.



Beginner's Hiligaynon Word Searches - V1

www.scriveremo.com

Hiligaynon

- lamesa [n]
- kamero [n]
- pulsohan
- habon [n]
- dyirap [n]
- pasas [n]
- dapay [n]
- eroplano [n]
- kahel [n]
- putusan

English

- table
- lamb
- wrist
- soap
- giraffe
- raisin
- hawk
- airplane
- orange
- ankle

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Basic Guide to Amharic

Amharic is one of the Ethiopian Semitic languages and serves as the official working language of Ethiopia with over 20 million speakers.

The language is written left-to-right in a system developed from the Ge'ez script, called Fidäl or Abugida. This is your chance to get a look at some basic Amharic.



Hello	tadiyasə	ታዲያስ
Good morning	'ənədämənə 'ädäru	ከንደምን ከደሩ
Good afternoon	'ənədämənə walu	ከንደምን ዋሉ
Good evening	'ənədämənə 'ämäšu	ከንደምን ከመሹ
Good night	dähəna 'ədäru	ደህና ከደሩ
How are you?	'ənədetə näwotə?	ከንዴት ነዎት?
Fine, thank you	dähəna näñə፤ 'ämäsägənalähu	ደህና ነኝ፤ ከመሰግናለሁ
And you?	'ərəsəwosə?	ከርስዎስ?
Welcome	'ənə፳nə dähəna mät'u	ከንኳን ደህና መጡ
It is a beautiful day	qonəğo qänə näwə	ቀንጆ ቀን ነው
Have a nice day	mākamə qänə yəhunələwo	መካም ቀን ይሁንልዎ
Goodbye	dähəna yəhunū	ደህና ይሁኑ
See you later	bä፳la 'ənəgänañälänə	በኋላ ከንገናኛለን

See you tomorrow	nägä 'ənəgānañalänə	ነገ ከንገናኛለን
Excuse me (when bumping into someone)	yəqərətə (dənəgätə käsäwə garə sigač'u)	ይቅርታ (ድንገት ከሰው ጋር ሲጋጩ)
May I help you?	mənə lərədawotə?	ምን ልርዳዎት?
Do you speak English?	'ənəgəlizāña mänagärə yəčəlalu?	ከንግሊዘኛ መናገር ይችላሉ?
Yes, a little	'äwo: tənəšə tənəšə	አዎ: ትንሽ ትንሽ
Yes	'äwo	አዎ
No	'äyə	አይ
Nice to meet you	səlagāñāhuwotə däsə bəloñalə	ስላገኝሁዎት ደስ ብሎኛል
Nice to see you	səlagāñāhuwotə däsə bəloñalə	ስላገኝሁዎት ደስ ብሎኛል

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

Korean

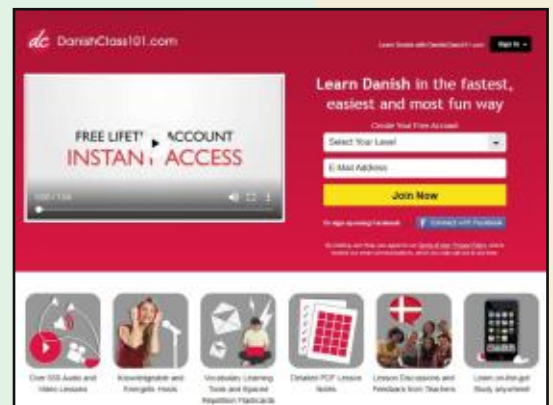


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Letter From the Editor - New Apps, Old Languages

Writer:Erik Zidowecki

Images:

Petey: Woman on phone

How it All Started: PluraLing

Writer:Guy Catz

Images:

Guy Catz : various screenshots

Petey: Man with computer; Woman with earbuds

Languages in Peril - Calabrian Greek

Writer:Giuseppe Delfino

Images:

Petey: Calabria waters; Calabria town; Calabria street (splash page)

Sources:

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Teddy Talks - Toki Pona and Tok Pisin

Writer:Teddy Nee

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Petey: Dancers; Villagers

In Focus

Writer:Erik Zidowecki

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Book Look - Publio Aurelio - un investigatore nell'antica Roma (series)

Writer:Tarja Jolma

At The Cinema - The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec

Writer:Erik Zidowecki

Sources:

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<<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1179025/>>

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Proverbs from the World - Tver Karelian

Writer:Tarja Jolma

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- <https://www.karjalanliitto.fi/karjalaisuus/karjalan-alueet/tverin-karjala.html>

Language Puzzles

Writer:Erik Zidowecki

Basic Guide to Amharic**Writer:**Erik Zidowecki, Kendal Knetemann**Images:**

Petey: Flag; View of city

At A Glance**Writer:**Erik Zidowecki

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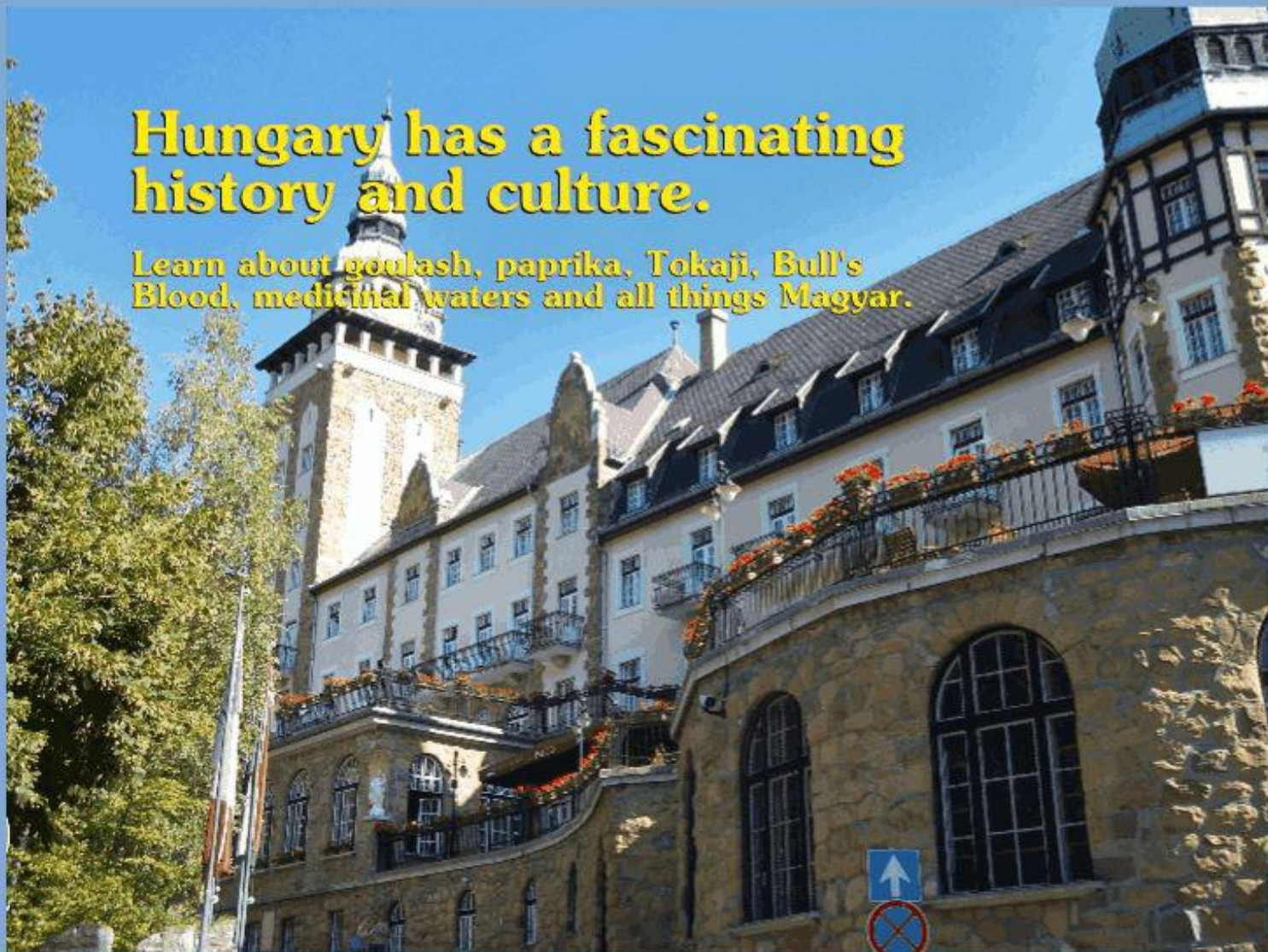
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