



## More than words: Real Life Stories

1. **What is your name and what is your course of study?**

Ayush Soni, Business Master's.

2. **What languages do you speak, are interested in, or that you relate to in any way?**

I have a multicultural background, having grown up in central India. Hindi is my native language, which I speak fluently at home. However, my education took place in an English Medium School, where I honed my proficiency in English. Additionally, during my undergraduate studies, I studied French as a foreign language subject. Growing up, I was fortunate to have friends from diverse linguistic backgrounds, including Bengali, Marathi and Punjabi speakers.

3. **At what point in your life did you realise how important and how valuable knowing multiple languages was?**

During my university days, I came to a profound realisation about the significance of being multilingual as I encountered individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Understanding the importance of a shared language opened doors to new perspectives on the world. It allowed me to engage in meaningful conversations with people from various walks of life, fostering a deeper understanding of their cultures and traditions. Embracing multiple languages enriched my experiences and broadened my horizons, enabling me to explore the beauty of different cultures.

4. **How has being able to speak more than one language helped you in your personal life?**

Speaking more than one language helped me in various ways. First and foremost it helped me to make new friends. Speaking a common language

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helped me to instantly connect with the other person. Discovering that someone speaks the same language as me not only sparks an immediate rapport, but also opens up a plethora of relatable topics that I can actively engage in.

5. **How do you think knowing more than one language has helped you, or will help you, in your professional life?**

Knowing a different language certainly helps in professional life: it gives me variety of opportunities to network and meet new people. For example, I signed up for the MFL mentorship program and through this I got the opportunity to meet fellow mentors and amazing staff. Through MFL events and training sessions I learned new skills like public speaking, and teaching etc.

6. **What career/s do you hope to go into in the future?**

Marketing, Teaching or Journalism.

7. **What has been the most impactful thing about learning a language on your life to date?**

Being able to look at things from a different perspective and learn new vocabulary through this process.

8. **What has been the most unexpected benefit of learning languages during your life?**

I get lots of free stuff! That includes food, gifts and discounts from stores and restaurants, all because I was speaking or trying to have a conversation in the same language.

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**9. What has been the most challenging aspect of learning languages during your life?**

It takes patience to learn new languages and you also need people around to practise with.

widely spoken language in the world. It would certainly help me to make new friends and have a nice conversation with different people.

**10. What is your favourite word or phrase in a language other than English?**

My favourite quote is from Sanskrit. It is "*Atithi Devo Bhava*" - this famous saying means guests are like God and it is the spirit of the Indian tradition and culture when we welcome guests. It truly reflects the rich and cultural heritage and warm hospitality of the people of India.

**12. How has being an MFL Mentor supported your journey with languages?**

Through being a mentor I've learned various skills. Being able to stand in front of the class and share ideas would be the best experience I have had through this programme. I have learned new words in Welsh and it has also helped me in knowing and having deeper understanding of Welsh culture.

**11. Are there any other languages you wish you could speak?**

I wish to learn French. I have studied it as an undergraduate but I want to learn it again and speak fluently. I also wish to learn Spanish as it's the most

**13. Has anyone or any one particular moment or thing, inspired you on your language learning journey?**

My parents are multilingual and they speak four languages. They

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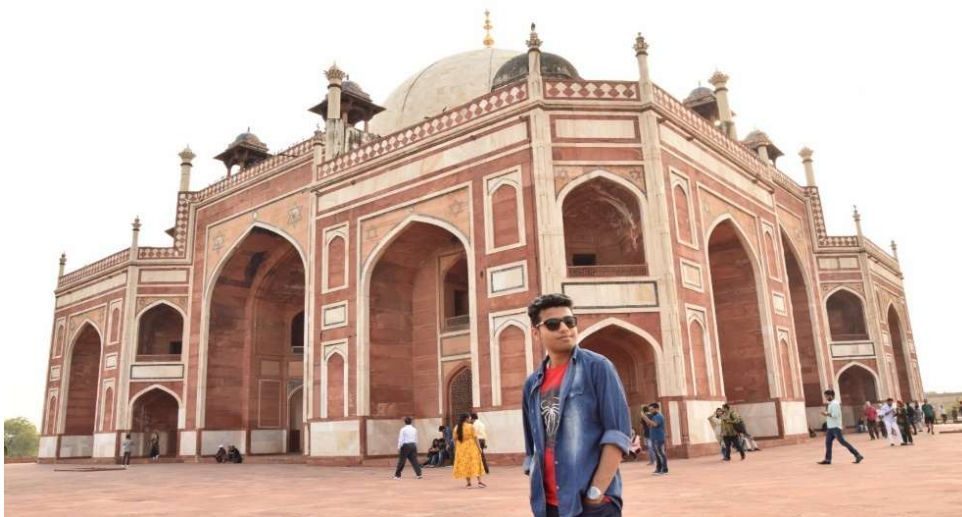
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always inspire me to learn new languages.

**14. If you could give one piece of advice to students thinking about learning another language, what would it be?**

I would highly advise students to learn new languages. It's a great opportunity, it's fun to learn and more than 40 percent of the population speaks more than one language, and it gives you a fantastic chance to meet new people, make friends and wider your perspective.



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