



More than words: Real Life Stories

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

Basma Alaufi, Law with criminology LLB.

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

I speak Arabic at home with family and in my country, Oman. I can also speak English and I started learning the basics of Spanish at school but continued to self-study at home. I'm interested in learning Japanese because I watch anime and Italian because I love art.

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

When I was 10.

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

It has helped me understand other cultures and go deep on my interests through languages.

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

Knowing more than one language has been extremely beneficial, especially English as it gave me the chance to earn my scholarship. Also, Spanish gives me an advantage in my home country since it is uncommon for people to speak it.

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

International law.

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

The opportunity to think about work and travel outside my country.

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

Practising with others. It's sometimes hard to find people to practise with.

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

In Arabic there are different ways of saying "I miss you". The normal translation would be '*ashtaqtulik*' but the other word I like is '*wahashtani*' - as if you were telling a person that your heart became empty, so my days are bad and empty without you.

10. Are there any other languages you wish you could speak?

Italian and Japanese.

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

This project has given me confidence and strengthened my desire to continue learning languages.

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

Thinking about my career as a bilingual international lawyer and my grandfather, may God have mercy on him, spoke seven languages, and that motivates me to be like him and learn from him.

13. Do you have any funny stories to share about your language learning experiences?

When I was in middle school in Nottingham, I barely knew how to say my name! I found myself in a lot of embarrassing situations but here I am speaking the language fluently now!

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

Do not be afraid of failure and try to speak to yourself in the language, and continue!

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