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## **Introduction to the Sample**

The following is an excerpt from my ebook as a sample for you. It includes a small part of the “basic principles” section on what you should be doing when studying a language as well as part of the section on specific steps for the method.

Of course, if you want to read the whole text on these topics including many others, please consider purchasing a copy of the ebook for yourself. Thanks!

For more information and to purchase the Learn That Language Now ebook, you can go to:

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

Good luck in your language studies and let’s begin!

\*Begin Sample\*

## **Basic Principles**

### **Not Grammar and Vocabulary**

Often when people begin learning a foreign language, they think that all they need is a dictionary and a grammar book. That is, if you memorize a bunch of vocabulary lists and memorize a bunch of grammar rules, you should be able to speak and understand the language, right? Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Humans are not computers meant to parse language using learned grammatical rules and vast storage of word-to-word definitions gained from vocabulary lists. In fact, if you have ever tried to use one of those online translators for a language, you

will see that even computers cannot understand or translate language this way either!

Learning a language by going over grammar rules and studying vocabulary lists is probably the most ineffective and painful way to learn a language. Interestingly enough, this is one of the most commonly used methods in school classes. No wonder that most students are unable even to order a pizza in the language they are studying after they get out of class.

So, if this method is so ineffective, then why is it still being used?

If you don't really know much about learning languages, it probably makes sense. When you are listening or reading something in a foreign language and come across a word that you do not understand, it makes sense to look up the word, right? So, it might naturally make sense that by studying a whole vocabulary list, you will be able to conquer any sentence that comes your way.

Likewise, to understand what is being said in a sentence, you need to know the grammatical endings, particles, etc. that are being used. So, it might naturally make sense to learn these grammatical rules so that you will be able to conquer any sentence that comes your way.

If only it were this easy. Truthfully, memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules this way is quite painful and difficult. But, even if one were to learn everything this way, one still would not be able to produce natural-sounding sentences. The reason is that if you have ever studied a language this way or heard someone

who has learned a language this way speak, you will notice that they continually stop and make unnatural pauses.

The reason for this is that in their heads, they are spending a tremendous amount of effort trying to recall grammatical rules for what they are saying or spending time trying to translate from their native language to the foreign language. As a result, they are not able to speak quickly or naturally and they often end up making many mistakes regardless of the amount of time they spend thinking.

This is by no means speaking a language fluently or naturally. When you speak English, you spend no time whatsoever thinking of grammatical rules for the things you want to say next. You don't think "Okay, I just used the word 'wish' so that means in the next clause I'm going to have to change the verb into the subjunctive mood..." No, you just speak naturally without giving it a second thought. Because of this, you can speak natural sounding English without having to pause at all.

Having to think about these rules actually creates a barrier to speaking fluidly. Additionally, it's simply not how a language is spoken. Native speakers do not know what the "subjunctive mood" means unless they have learned it later in a grammar class. And even if a native speaker learns these terms or structures in a grammar class, that doesn't mean that he or she will begin to pause and think about them before each utterance he or she makes.

Native speakers do not know any grammatical rules but somehow are able to speak a language naturally without error. Even small children know to say "he plays" and never "he play".

You might say this is because native speakers learned their native language when they were children and that as a second language, foreign language learning is different. You are right that they are different. However, the fact still stands that in order to speak natural-sounding language at a fluent rate, you need to speak the language like a native, that is, you need to have a sense of what sounds “natural” and what doesn’t.

You need to be able to speak the language without having to think about grammatical rules or translating from one language to another. You need to be able to just speak without relying on any of these things.

For this reason, focusing all of your attention on learning grammatical rule after grammatical rule and learning vocabulary lists is highly ineffective towards attaining the ultimate goal of speaking and understanding a foreign language correctly and fluidly.

### **Real Sentences**

So, if you shouldn’t be focusing on the grammatical rules and vocabulary lists, then what should you be focusing on?

Full, natural sentences.

The meat of one’s language learning experience should be looking at and learning full phrases of the foreign language.

There are some flaws in the vocabulary list approach in that vocabulary lists give you one word in your native language and then one word in the foreign language. This method gives you

almost no information about how the word is used, what other words are often used with that particular item, how often the word is used, in which contexts it is used, etc.

Consider the English word "grasp". In English, we can use this word both in a physical sense, "he grasped the handle bars tightly" or in a more abstract sense, "he grasped the ideas quickly."

In a foreign language, they might have two different words for these two different uses. It might be possible that if you look up the word for "grasp" in a dictionary, it will give you the word "grasp" for the physical sense but not the abstract sense, or vice versa.

If you look at a vocabulary list and simply see the word "grasp", how can you know if it's used for both of these cases or only one of them?

Also, if we are only looking at a vocabulary list, how do we know which sorts of words are used with the vocabulary?

In the case of "grasp", we can see from the example sentences that there are no prepositions. But, for a word like "grapple", we might say "He grappled *with* the ideas." How then does a learner know not to say something like "He grasped *with* the ideas"? There is no way unless he or she has seen the example sentence "He grasped the ideas."

In this way, the full, natural sentences of "he grasped the handle bars tightly" and "he grasped the ideas quickly" provide us a lot more information than a simple vocabulary sheet could. This is

why full, natural sentences are much more powerful than simple word translations.

### **Building a Structure in Your New Language**

You'll notice that when native speakers of one particular language attempt to learn a foreign language like English, they will all make similar mistakes in the language. Maybe that mistake is confusion between "the" and "a" or maybe it is confusion between "I eat" and "he eats".

However, a speaker of a different language might not have any trouble at all with these same points.

Why is this? The reason is that each language has its own structure. When you learn your first language, you build up this structure and this provides you with the ability to speak the language naturally and hear what is correct and not.

This structure includes everything from sentence order to conjugations of verbs to usage of different types of words. For example, in English, the sentence "I'm going to eat pizza today" sounds natural. However, if you change the word order to something like "I am to eat pizza today going", it immediately sounds unnatural. This is because the first agrees with your built up structure for English and the second does not.

Once the structure is complete for your native language, even if you encounter new words, you are able to use them correctly within the structure. For example, if I tell you that someone's name is "Xff", you can then correctly make natural sounding sentences such as "Xff is going to eat pizza today". Or, if I tell you that using a computer to put information on a blank CD is

called “burning” a CD, you can then make natural sounding sentences like “I’m going to burn a CD today” without trouble at all.

This is all thanks to the structure for English that you have built up over years and years. Since it has been built completely, you can master the usage of new words without thinking about it at all.

This automatic structure system is highly beneficial when dealing with your own language, however, problems occur when attempting to learn a foreign language.

When you begin to learn a foreign language and try to create new sentences, that same English structure will automatically kick in and cause you to say sentences that comply with it whether or not it is natural in the foreign language.

In this way, you are speaking your foreign language with an English structural basis. This is not good since it will cause you to make unnatural sounding sentences. This is also the reason why speakers of a particular language who attempt to speak English will all make similar mistakes. The reason is because they all share the same structure for their native tongue and are relying on it for some part.

If you want to be able to create natural sounding sentences in your new language, there’s really only one way to do it and that’s building an entire new structure for it.

If you build a new structure for your foreign language, you will be able to tell what is natural and what is not the same way you can tell these things in English.

You'll also be able to use new words that you find in the future in a natural way. The best part is that this will all occur without much mental work on your part. Since you have the structure defined in your head, everything will flow into it naturally.

The big question now is, how can we create this new structure? There is really only one way to do this. Most teachers and textbooks would probably tell you that the way to do this is to learn all the grammar rules for the language but this is wrong. The only way to really do this is to get a lot of input in the language.

That is to say that you need to hear and read a lot of the language in order to build this new structure for your foreign language.

If you rely on grammatical syntactical rules that you learned from a textbook, you will find that you often make errors as well as spend a bit of time recalling and applying those grammatical rules.

On the other hand, if you have heard or seen one version of a sentence a hundred times and another version zero times, the version that you have heard and seen a hundred times will immediately "feel" right while the other one will "feel" wrong.

For example, if you were trying to learn English, you might be confused by the fact that there are a few types of past tenses. Is

it correct to say “I was sick today so I didn’t come” or “I have had been sick today so I didn’t come”? A native English speaker can tell immediately that the former is natural and the latter is not.

But someone trying to learn English does not yet have the structure to immediately see this. Furthermore, if someone were relying on their own non-English language structure when looking at these sentences, they might conclude that the latter is more natural than the former.

The solution to this is that if the English learner reads or hears a lot of input, he or she will quickly realize that the former is natural. If you read a book, you will run into the structure “I was sick” hundreds upon hundreds of times more than “I have had been sick”. If you hear the first that many times, it will become obvious that it is the correct version the next time you run into it.

### **Classroom vs. Natural learning**

So, there are two ways of speaking a language. There is the classroom way where one has learned a bunch of vocabulary lists and memorized a lot of grammar rules and there’s the natural way where one is able to speak based on what feels “right” which is how a native speaker speaks.

The classroom learner usually speaks the language in a slow way often stopping to think for a bit about what he or she is going to say next. This is obviously not an ideal way to speak a language since it requires a significant amount of mental effort and it results in slow, unnatural sounding language, often with many errors.

At this point though, you might stop me and tell me about someone you know who took language classes and then became able to speak a language quite proficiently. If taking a class, memorizing vocabulary lists and grammar rules will only result in a poor ability to speak and use the language, then how did these other people do it?

It is true that there are some people who took language classes and then became proficient in their chosen language. In fact, I was one of them. Before I realized these techniques and lessons that I am teaching you now, I had to spend quite a bit of time in Spanish classes.

The truth is, those people who are able to become proficient in a language through classes actually spent a lot of time outside of class studying. I was one of the best in my Spanish class, not because I did the homework the best or scored the highest on the tests (in fact, others often scored higher than me), but rather because I was passionate about the language and so I took time outside of class to study and use the language. This is what helped me get to a higher level than my classmates.

On the other hand, there is something very important to note here about classroom speaking and real speaking.

I also spoke in the classroom manner for a time. That is, I had to memorize vocabulary lists and grammar rules and I thought about these rules as I spoke because I hadn't yet built a structure for Spanish. Of course, my Spanish was slow and I had to pause a lot. It also probably sounded very unnatural.

However, these days I am able to speak Spanish in a more natural manner without having to pause and think about these rules. So, how was I able to accomplish this if I had originally learned the classroom way?

Besides the fact that I had spent time outside of the classroom studying the language, the other thing that happened was that I slowly became aware of what was natural and what was not natural by using the language in class.

Even though I was originally thinking hard about the grammar rules and that sort of thing, eventually my mind began to comprehend which parts were natural and which were not by repetition since I continually used the language.

At some point, I made the switch so that I was no longer thinking about the rules but rather speaking based on what felt natural to me. Because I had spent so much time studying the language, I slowly had been able to make my way into that area where I was able to speak with what "felt" right.

If you do learn a language the old classroom way, you will probably start out speaking where you have to think slowly and carefully about the rules but by continually doing this, you will eventually get a feel of what is right simply because speaking this way is also a form of repetition and input.

The key word, however, is "eventually". This is perhaps the slowest and most painful way to build your structure in the new language. The point is that the classroom method itself is just a roundabout way of achieving the same end goal that we could

get much quicker if we just went straight at the goal of building a great deal of input and repetition right away.

Namely, if we spent more time trying to build the structure in our new language through lots of input, we wouldn't need to stumble around for so long thinking about complex grammar rules to build our syntax.

I should also note that creating your own output too soon is dangerous. Since creating your own output is a type of repetition and since you haven't received enough input to have fully created a stable structure in your new language, your incorrect output will only strengthen the unnatural parts of the new structure in the language. It will take more time to correct these errors later.

Additionally, sitting in a classroom listening to other beginners make numerous mistakes will only help to reinforce an incorrect structure for your new language and slow your ability to make real natural progress in the language.

You can either start the classroom way by trying to employ complex grammar rules and then slowly reach the level of knowing what "feels" natural and what doesn't or you can just start right in on receiving a lot of input and go straight for that goal of knowing what "feels" right and what doesn't.

Clearly, we should go right for the goal since that is the quickest and most efficient way. But the important fact is that even if you do go the way of the classroom, you will not be speaking the language fluently in the manner in which they teach it. You will never speak a language fluently while thinking about complex

grammar rules and trying to apply them as you go. You will only be speaking the language when you have reached that level of knowing what is natural.

As for the underlying principle of your language study, you should always focus on full phrases from the language. This real input will provide you with the sentence structure and vocabulary information that you need in order to speak and write in a natural way.

In the next few chapters, I will teach you the best ways to use this principle in your language learning. I will teach you exactly how to use textbooks, audio programs and other resources and I will show you how to study so that you will make progress in your foreign language efficiently and in my opinion, in the most enjoyable way.

## **The Method**

Now that we have come to understand that an integral part of learning a new foreign language is developing a new structure for it and that full, natural sentences are the best way to build it, the question arises, how do we best implement these ideas in our studies?

As we know, in order to gain a sense of what is “natural” or not in a language, we need to see a lot of examples. That is, we need to gain a lot of input and the best kind of input is repetition. Repetition of natural language will condition our mind to feel “right” about that kind of language as opposed to something incorrect even if we don’t completely understand *why* it feels right.

For this reason, the meat of one's language learning will be based around input and repetition. This will provide the easiest and most efficient way to pick up new phrases, words and grammar points in the language no matter if you are a beginner or an expert in the language.

You will notice that the best audio programs and language learning systems all rely on repetition, as well. Living in a foreign country also relies on this mechanism since one will hear the language used throughout the day resulting in a great amount of repetition. By mimicking these methods for ourselves, we can take control and learn the language ourselves quickly and efficiently.

I will now teach the tool that best provides this kind of repetition and then we will go on to see how we can incorporate everything else into the method including audio programs, textbooks, foreign language classes, trips abroad, etc.

For any language, words are indispensable and most of your time will be spent learning new words. In the following section, I'll show you how to take advantage of this issue.

### **Note Cards**

Let's talk about the past for a little bit and then I'll introduce an improved way of using this technique.

Note cards, or flashcards, have long been touted by language learners as an excellent way to improve one's vocabulary. What are note cards? Note cards are small pieces of paper with information written on one side such as a question or a word in

your native language and the answer or word in your target language written on the other side.

In this way, you can test yourself by being prompted by a question or word on one side and then seeing if you are able to recall the answer or equivalent word that is written on the other side. Note cards come in varying sizes but I personally have used the 3 inch by 5 inch note cards which I will talk about later. However, note cards of any size are fine as long as you are able to carry them easily and write on them.

Often, when you read a text, you'll encounter a word that you do not understand and that you will need to look up in your dictionary. If all you do is look up the word and then move on in the text, you will find that the next time you encounter that word, you will have forgotten its meaning again and will need to look it up.

Sometimes, such a long period of time will elapse between your first encounter and second encounter with the word that you may even forget that you had seen the word before in the first place!

Note cards are the answer to this problem. By writing down the unknown words, you will have them ready for later study. By writing them down and studying them, you will learn them rather than continually looking them up and forgetting them.

Before the widespread use of computers, many language learners wrote their words down on real, physical note cards. This is still a great way to learn vocabulary but improvements

have been made that I will talk about later. For now, I'll show how note cards can be made with real paper.

The best way to make these note cards is to write on one side in your native language, drawing a line between each word to separate them and then flipping the card over and writing the equivalent words in your target language on the other side.

I like to flip the card end over end and write the words this way so that I can easily flip the card if I am in a tight space like an elevator or a crowded train.

Others like to write the words on both sides so that they turn the card sideways rather than flipping it upside down. Choose whichever one you are more comfortable with.

I have found that the optimal number of entries to put on each card is six. That is, six words in your target language on one side and the equivalent six words in your native language on the other side. If there are too many entries, it becomes difficult to find the corresponding entry when you flip the card.

Furthermore, as you learn the note cards, you will want to remove the note cards from your stack. If you have twenty words on a note card and you know all of them except one, it will be a waste to have to look at all the other nineteen words just so that you can keep practicing that last word.

Six words is a small enough number that there will not be too much wasted time in looking at the other words should there be one tough word on the card that you are having difficulty with.

On the other hand, if there are too few words on the note card, you will have a huge stack of note cards which can be bothersome for carrying around and you will need to maintain this huge collection of cards. When you start getting into the hundreds or thousands of words, it can be difficult to maintain this many cards.

Six seems to be the optimal number per card but of course, you can experiment with different numbers of words per card and see what works best for you.

Once you have a stack of note cards, you can begin to memorize them. In a later chapter, we will go over vocabulary memorization techniques that will greatly assist you and quicken your rate of learning vocabulary but for now we will just go over how to use the note cards.

You can either begin by looking at the words in your native language and attempting to recall the word in the foreign language or you can begin with the foreign language and attempt to recall the word in your native language. Eventually, you will want to be able to recall the words both ways.

Go through your note cards one by one learning the words. You can either go through all your note cards trying to learn all the words from your native language to your target language and then turn them around and learn the words from your target language to your native language or you can concentrate on one note card at a time and learn all the words from your native language to your target language and then your target language to your native language before moving on to the next card.

Choose whichever method seems to work best for you, as long as you are able to achieve the final result which is being able to recall the words both ways.

For me, since I often study the note cards when I do not have a long chunk of time, such as waiting in line to pay for something at a store, I usually concentrate on mastering one card at a time. Additionally, since I add cards and remove cards to the stack I am carrying around with me, it makes sense to learn cards one at a time rather than all the cards from native language to target language and then the reverse.

As you continue to learn and memorize the words, you will begin to complete note cards. That is, you will be able to recall the equivalents of all the words, both ways, on the note card. When you have completed a note card, you can remove it from the stack you are testing yourself with. This does not mean you are done with it yet. It just means that you have reached a point where you are able to recall words.

If you were to throw away the note card now, it is possible that you would forget the words on the note card after a period of time. It is important to go back and review your completed cards from time to time in order to store them in your long term memory.

Also, by saving the note cards, it provides you a concrete example of the amount of progress you have made in your language which can be a good motivator to learn more. We will talk more about motivators in a later chapter but I will note here that using note cards allows you to count the number of words

you have learned and can allow you to set new goals to continue your studies.

### **Problems With Paper Note Cards**

While note cards are a great innovation to record and learn new words, the computer has taken this concept to a new level and I strongly recommend using the computer.

Using paper note cards poses some problems. When you have memorized all the words on a note card for the first time, how do you know when to review that card again? When you have hundreds of note cards in your collection, how do you choose which ones to review and which ones to skip over?

For me in my studies, I quickly realized how unruly note cards can become. I had piles of cards stacked everywhere and it was difficult to tell which ones I had recently reviewed and which ones I should be reviewing.

Also, it was bothersome to have to make the note cards in the first place. While reading a book or some other text, I would have to juggle my dictionary, my place in the book as well as a pen and all the note cards. It took time and I ended up with a lot of messy note cards.

Computers eliminate this need to buy, create and store actual physical note cards. There is no longer a need to continually sort your note cards or worry about losing some of them.

\*End of Sample\*

To read the rest of this text and more on many other topics concerning language learning, please consider buying yourself a copy of the book. Your language studies will be greatly accelerated!

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